

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 2002

COURSE II

Paper A4 Old and Middle English Texts

Tuesday 21 May 2002, 9.30 a.m.

Time allowed – Three hours

Answer question 1 and *two* others. You may write on the same text in more than one answer, but you should not repeat material. You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the quotations and questions.

Do *not* turn over until told that you may do so

Answer question 1 and *two* others. You may write on the same text in more than one answer, but you should not repeat material. You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the quotations and questions.

1. Translate **three** of the following passages, and comment briefly on matters of textual and linguistic interest, and particularly on any words or phrases whose meaning is debatable:

(a)

Fyrd eall geseah

hu þær hlifedon halige seglas,
 lyftwundor leoht; leode ongeton,
 dugoð Israhela, þæt þær Drihten cwom,
 5 weroda Drihten, wicsteal metan.
 Him beforan foran fyr ond wolcen
 in beorhtrodor, beamas twegen,
 þara æghwæðer efngeðælde
 heahþegnunga Haliges Gastes
 10 deormodra sið dagum ond nihtum.

(b)

Tuwa het se Hælend her on ðissum life
 mid nette fixian, and hy fengon sona
 heora net full fixa, for micelre getacnunge:
 æne ær his þrowunge, be ðam þe we nu secgað,
 5 and oðre siðe eft, æfter his æriste.
 Nu bærst heora net on ðisum fixnoðe,
 for ðære getacnunge þe we ær sædon,
 and þes fixnoð getacnað þa halgan Gelaðunge,
 þæt is eall Cristen folc þe on God nu gelyfað,
 10 on ðam syndon ægðer ge yfele ge góde,
 and hy sume misfarað, swa swa we sædon ær.

(c)

Þis is a seli deað þet makeð cwic mon þus, oðer cwic wummon, ut of þe
worlde; ah sikerliche hwa se is þus dead in hire seoluen, Godd liueð in hire
heorte, for þis is þet te apostle seið, *Vivo ego, iam non ego: vivit autem in me*
Cristus: ic liuie, nawt ic, ah Crist liueð in me þurh his inwuniende grace; &
5 is as þah he seide, wortlich speche, wortlich sihðe & euch wortlich þing
ifindeð me deade; ah þet te limpeð to Crist, þet ic seo & here & wurche i
cwicnesse. Þus riht is euch religius dead to þe worlde & cwic þah to Criste.
Þis is an heh steire, ah 3et is þah an herre.

(d)

He glent upon Sir Gawen, and gaynly he sayde,
'Now sir, heng vp þyn ax, þat hatz innogh hewen';
And hit watz don abof þe dece on doser to henge,
Þer alle men for meruayl myzt on hit loke,
5 And bi trwe tytel þerof to telle þe wonder.
Þenne þay bo3ed to a borde þise burnes togeder,
Þe kyng and þe gode knyzt, and kene men hem serued
Of alle dayntyez double, as derrest myzt falle;
Wyth alle maner of mete and mynstralcie boþe,
10 Wyth wele walt þay þat day, til worþed an ende
in londe.

TURN OVER

2. **Either (a)** 'Ælfric finds the English congregation oblivious of its great [Christian] inheritance, slack, insubordinate, frivolously newfangled' (J.C. Pope). Discuss with reference to the set homilies.

Or (b) What can we learn from any **one or more** of the set texts about their likely contemporary audience?

3. **Either (a)** 'The real "source" of *Exodus* is the Christian tradition in which the poem must have been written' (Peter J. Lucas). Discuss.

Or (b) Examine how any **one or more** of the set texts adapts its sources, **and/or** analogues, for its purposes.

4. **Either (a)** '[the] social changes of ownership and the geographical movement of copies and versions of [*Ancrene Wisse*], as well as the adaptations of it, throughout its history, between one sex and the other, one class and another, one region and another, and back again, manifest its exceptionally dynamic character' (A. I. Doyle). Consider **some or all** of these aspects of the manuscript history of *Ancrene Wisse*.

Or (b) What does a knowledge of the manuscript history of any **one or more** of the set texts contribute to our understanding of that work?

5. **Either (a)** Discuss the similarities and differences of genre among the four poems of MS Cotton Nero A.x.

Or (b) To what extent is the concept of originality applicable to *Gawain and the Green Knight*?

6. Discuss how any **one or more** of the set texts employs a variety of genres.

7. Discuss the interpretative difficulties that you have encountered in your study of any **one** of the set texts.

8. 'It has been argued that the aim of reconstructing the "author's original" is not only hopeless but misconceived, since it is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of the work itself' (Bella Millett). Discuss with reference to any **one** of the set texts.

9. **(a)** To what extent do the alliterative styles of any **two or more** of the set texts differ?

Or (b) What part should a consciousness of alliterative technique play in editorial **and/or** interpretative decisions about any **one or more** of the set texts?

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