

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

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HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 2003

COURSE II

PAPER A.2 ENGLISH LITERATURE 1100-1530

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Wednesday, 21 May 2003, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

Time Allowed – Three hours

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Answer *three* questions. 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 *three* questions. You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the quotations and questions.**

1. Do you find more of homage or of resistance to the other languages of a trilingual England in Middle English works written before 1300? (You may confine your answer to a single author or work if you wish.)
2. How important is the regionalism of any **one or two** Middle English works or authors?
3. Where in Middle English Literature do you find the fullest representation of social conflict **or** social harmony?
4. What advantages do **one or more** Middle English authors find in substituting birds or animals for human characters?
5. 'Almost every entry of women into medieval texts, as writers or characters or implied readers, triggers a debate as to their ethical or spiritual status.' In what ways do such debates promote their author's cause?
6. Where in Middle English literature do you find especially powerful qualities of narrative poetry? What effects do they achieve, and by what means?
7. Discuss the uses made of the Bible in **one or more** Middle English works or authors.
8. 'The need for penitence pervades most medieval literature.' Discuss its importance in any **one** major author or genre.
9. What can an author achieve by casting a work as a dream that could not be achieved by more direct forms of narrative or exposition?
10. What kinds of personae are represented by the 'I' of the lyrics?
11. 'Hold the heye wey, and lat thy gost thee lede' (Chaucer, *Balade de bon Conseyll*). Are any medieval literary journeys ever either wholly literal or wholly allegorical?
12. 'Why is it that we are so reluctant to describe any Middle English literature as "courtly", even in those cases where we know a work was written for the highest members of the court?' **Either** attempt to answer this question, **or** explain why you dissent from its premise about the non-applicability of the term 'courtly'.

13. What evidence would you adduce to argue for **or** against the common authorship of poems of MS Cotton Nero A.x?
14. How far is it possible, or helpful, to consider the Middle English mystics as a single group?
15. How much evidence is there that medieval authors regarded chivalry and chivalric ethics as problematic, and in what did the problems consist? (You may confine your answer to one author if you wish.)
16. How varied were the medieval representations of Arthur **or** Gawain, and what considerations do you think motivated such variations?
17. Lydgate praised Chaucer's style for its 'sugarit eloquence', Skelton's Jane Scrope because it was 'pleasaunt, easy and playne'. How far do the poetics of any **one or two** writers in the Chaucerian tradition represent a conflict between those two attitudes?
18. How far, and in what ways, do the dramatists of the cycle plays **or** the morality plays succeed in making virtue more attractive than sin?
19. 'The Scottish poets of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries are characterised by the self-consciousness with which they pursue their craft – even their vocation.' Discuss with reference to **one or more** of these poets.
20. How far is it possible to justify the customary inclusion of the ballads on a medieval examination paper?
21. Discuss any area of prose of the period (e.g. devotional, dissenting, narrative, humanist) that seems to you to break significantly new ground.