

DENB 2407

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 2003

COURSE II

A4 Old and Middle English Texts

Friday, 23 May 2003, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

Time allowed – Three hours

Answer 1 question 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 to do so

Answer 1 question 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)

- Hi woldan [g]it wurdian arwurdlicor þa godas,
and forgeafon him steorran, swilce hi ahton heora geweald:
þa syfan tunglan, sunnan and monan,
and þa oðre fif, þe farað æfre
5 ongear þone roder to eastdæle werd,
ac hi gebigð seo heofon underbæc æfre.
Ac þa steorran swapeah scinon on heofonum
on frympe middaneardes, ær þa manfullan godas
wurdon acennede, odde gecorene to godum.
10 Hi worhtan eac anlicnyssa þam arwurpum godum,
sume of smætum golde, and þa asmeadan mid cræfte,
sume of hwitum seolfre, sume eac of stanum,
sume of mislicum antimbre, be þam þe heora mihta wæron.

(b)

- To þam medelstede magan gelædde
Abraham Isaac, adfyr onbran
(fyrst ferhðbana no þy fægra wæs).
wolde þone lastweard lige gesyllan,
5 in bælblyse beorna selost,
his swæsne sunu to sigetibre,
angan ofer eorðan yrfelafe,
feores frofre, ða he swa ford gebad,
leodum to lafe langsumne hiht.

(c)

Grickisch fur is imaket of reades monnes blod & þet ne mei na þing
bute migge, ant sond, & eisil, as me seid acwenchen. Þis grickisch fur
is þe luue of Iesu ure lauerd, & 3e hit schule makien of reade monnes
5 blod, þet is, Iesu Crist ireadet wið his ahne blod o þe deore rode, ant
wes inread cundeliche, alswa as me wened. Þis blod for ow isched up
o þe earre twa treon, schal makien ow Sareptiens, þet is, ontende mid
tis grickisch fur, þet, as Salomon seid, nane weattres, þet beoð
worldliche tribulatiuns, nane temptatiuns, nowder inre ne uttre, ne
mahen þis luue acwenchen.

(d)

'3e ar welcum to my cors,
Yowre awen won to wale,
Me behouez of fyne force
Your seruaunt be, and schale.'

5 'In god fayth,' quop Gawayn, 'gayn hit me þynkkez,
þa3 I be not now he þat 3e of speken;
To reche to such reuerence as 3e reherce here
I am wy3e vnworþy, I wot wel myseluen.
Bi God, I were glad, and yow god þo3t,
10 At sa3e oþer at seruyce þat I sette my3t
' To þe plesaunce of your prys - hit were a pure ioye.'

2. **Either (a)** Discuss the distinctive features of Ælfric's style as evidenced in homilies 14, 20 and 21.

Or (b) It is generally rightly assumed that Anglo-Saxon theology was mainly derivative in doctrine, pastoral in approach, and practical in the application of inherited teaching (C.L. Wrenn). Discuss with reference to the set Ælfric homilies
3. **Either (a)** It is at once an historical poem about events of extreme importance and it is an allegory of the soul, or of the Church (J.R.R. Tolkien). How does *Exodus* combine literal and spiritual senses?

Or (b) Discuss the ways in which the poet of *Exodus* adapts traditional Old English poetic style, vocabulary and phraseology to his Old Testament subject matter
4. **Either (a)** Is *Ancrene Wisse* a good title for the widely disseminated and freely modified text which is now commonly designated thus?

Or (b) The Bible provides most of the material of the Rule – the medieval Bible, a vast indivisible unity, but perceived only by glimpses (Geoffrey Shepherd). Discuss.
5. **Either (a)** *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* has been described as a 'composite' romance. Discuss the bringing together by the poet of different narrative elements and stylistic features.

Or (b) Medieval patrons of letters ... were both courtiers and provincial magnates (Malcolm Andrew and Ronald Waldron). Discuss the 'provincial' character of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
6. *From Memory to Written Record* is the title of M.T. Clanchy's study of changing attitudes to documentation between 1066 and 1307. Discuss the interaction of 'oral' and 'literate' culture in any **one or more** of the set texts.
7. Differences observable between manuscripts of the same text 'testify to a freedom to change the wording and style of a text in a way that postprint culture permits only if the original author makes the changes' (Elizabeth J. Bryan). Discuss with reference to **one or more** of the set texts.
8. Discuss (with reference to **one or more** of the set texts) ways in which these texts either conform to or question the genres to which they appear to belong.

9 **Either (a)** Describe in detail the metrical and rhythmical features employed in **one** of the set texts (you may treat the homilies by Ælfric as a single unit for this purpose).

Or (b) Describe in detail the employment of rhetorical schemes and tropes employed in **one** of the set texts (you may treat the homilies by Ælfric as a single unit for this purpose)