

DENB 2406

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 2005

COURSE II

PAPER A3 (b) CHAUCER, LANGLAND AND GOWER

Thursday, 19 May, 9.30 am to 11.30 am

2005

Time allowed – Two hours

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

You may write on Langland or Gower or on both of them in comparison with each other or on either or both of them in comparison to Chaucer.

Trinity Term 2005

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

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

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1. 'It is surely time to dismiss the false antithesis of Chaucer as new and adventurous, Langland as traditional and conservative' (J.A.W. BENNETT). Discuss either this or any other antithesis of the two writers that you find false or fruitful.

2. 'The "broken terrain" of Langland's composition...is that of the mind; the locus of action is as changeable, as unlimited as the growing capacity of the dreamer's vision to wander through eternity or to interpret the images in the troubled mirror of middle-earth' (ELIZABETH SALTER). How true is this?

3. 'A bok for Engelondes sake'. Consider with reference to Gower *and* / *or* Langland, or to *either* / *both* in relation to Chaucer.

4. 'Often in *Piers Plowman*...intertextual echoes from Scripture ...elaborate a network that, by its very extension and coherence, seems to confirm itself and to bear out language's capacity to disclose truth about the world' (J. CHAMBERLIN). Discuss.

5. '*Hic quasi in persona aliorum, quos amor alligat, fingens se auctor esse Amantem...*' [Here in the person of others who have been in love's bonds, the author, feigning himself to be a Lover...]

Discuss the *Confessio Amantis*, with comparative reference to Chaucer, if you wish.

6.

....he was als faste
Out of a man into a Ston
Forschape...

(*Confessio Amantis*, Bk. I. 414-16)

Examine 'transformation' in Gower and / or Langland, if you wish in comparison also with Chaucer.

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7. '[*Piers Plowman*] uses the concept of transgressing borders, not only between heaven and earth, but between...genders, between the spiritual and the substantial, and between the divine and human' (M.C. DAVLIN). Do you find this a helpful approach to Langland?

8. '3e wyte, 3e wyse men, what this is to mene' (*Piers Plowman* C XIII 64).

What do we know about the 'audience' of Langland / and or Gower, and what value does it have for understanding their work?

9. Consider 'What kynnes þyng is Kynde?' (*Piers Plowman* B IX 25).

10. 'Of metre, of rime and of cadence' (*Confessio Amantis* IV 2414).

Discuss the verse-technique of Langland or Gower, if you wish comparing them with each other and / or Chaucer.