

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 2004

COURSE II

Paper A5 The Development of Standard Literary English to c.1750

Friday, 28 May 2004, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

Time allowed — Three hours

Answer Question 1. and two others. You may use the same text in more than one answer, but you should not repeat material. In the course of your three answers you must show knowledge of all three periods (Old English, Middle English to c.1500, early modern English c.1500-1750). You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the question.

Trinity Term 2004

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

Answer Question 1. and *two* others. You may use the same text in more than one answer, but you should not repeat material. In the course of your three answers you must show knowledge of all three periods (Old English, Middle English to c.1500, early modern English c.1500-1750). You should pay careful attention in your answers to the precise terms of the question.

1. **Either (a)** Choose **two** of the passages (i) to (iv), and comment on the changes of language (inflection, syntax, vocabulary, word order, semantics, orthography, and phonology) between them;

Or (b) Choose any **two** of the passages (v) to (viii), and comment on the language (inflection, syntax, vocabulary, word order, semantics, orthography, and phonology) of each, making such comparisons between the two passages as seem useful:

(a) (i)

- Da hyra manega togædere comon he cwæp to him; Ðeos cneorys is manfull cneorys: heo secð tacen: and hyre ne bið nan geseald buton Ionan tacen; Swa swa iona wæs tacen niniuetum. swa bið mannes sunu tacen þisse cneorisse; Suððæles cwen arist on dome mid þisse cneorysse mannum and genyðerað hig
 5 forþam þe heo com of eorðan endum to gehyranne salomones wisdom; And efne þes is mara þonne salomon; Niniuetisce men arisað on dome mid þisse cneorysse and genyðeriað hig: forþam þe hig dædbote dydon. æt ionam bodunge. and þes is mara þonne iona; Ne onælp nan man his leohtfæt and sett on diglum: ne under bydene ac ofer candelstæf: þæt ða þe ingað leoht geseon;
 10 Ðin eage is þines lichaman leohtfæt; Gif þin eage bið hluttor þonne bið eall þin lichama beorht; Gif hit byð deorc: eall þin lichama byð þystre; Warn þæt þæt leoht þe ðe on is: ne syn þystru; Gyf þin lichama eall bið beorht: and næfþ nanne dæl þystra þonne byð he eall beorht: and þe onlyht swa þæt leohtfæt þæs ligræscas;

Late West Saxon Gospels

(ii)

- And whanne the puple runnen togidere, he bigan to seie, This generacioun is a weiward generacioun; it sekith a token, and a tokene schal not be ȝouun to it, but the tokene of Jonas, the profete. For as Jonas was a tokene to men of Nynyue, so mannus sone schal be to this generacioun. The queen of the south schal rise in
 5 doom with men of this generacioun, and schal condempne hem; for sche cam fro the endis of the erthe, for to here the wisdom of Salomon, and lo ! here is a gretter than Salomon. Men of Nynyue schulen rise in doom with this generacioun, and schulen condempne it; for thei diden penaunce in the prechyng of Jonas, and lo ! here is a gretter than Jonas. No man tendith a lanterne, and puttith in hidils, nether vndur a buyschel, but on a candelstike, that thei that goen
 10 in, se liȝt. The lanterne of thi bodi is thin iȝe; if thin iȝe be symple, al thi bodi schal be liȝti; but if it be weyward, al thi bodi schal be derkful. Therfor se thou, lest the liȝt that is in thee, be derknessis. Therfor if al thi bodi be briȝt, and haue no part of derknessis, it schal be al briȝt, and as a lanterne of briȝtnesse it schal
 15 ȝyue liȝt to thee.

Wycliffite Bible, Later Version

(iii)

When the people wer gadered thicke togeder: He began to saye: This is an evyll nacion. They seke a signe, and there shall noo signe be geven them, but the signe off Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a signe to the Ninivites, so shall the sonne off man be to this nacion. The quene off the southe shall ryse at the
5 iudgement, with the men of this generacion, and condempne them. For she cam from the ende of the worlde, to heare the wisdom of Solomon: and beholde a greater then Solomon is here. The men off Ninivite shall ryse at the iudgement, with this generacion, and shall condempne them: for they repented at the preachynge of Jonas: And beholde, a greater then Jonas is here.

10 Noo man lighteth a candell, and putteth it in a preve place, nether under a busshel: Butt on a candelsticke, that they that come in, maye se light. The light off thy body is thyne eye. Therfore, when thyn eye is single: then is all thy body full off light. Butt if thyne eye be evyll: then shall all thy body be full off darknes. Take hede therfore thatt the light which is in the, be nott darknes. For if all thy body shalbe light, havynge noo parte darke: then shall all be full off light, even as when a candell doeth light the with his brightnes.

Tyndale

(iv)

And when the people were gathered thicke together, hee began to say, This is an euill generation, they seeke a signe, and there shall no signe be giuen it, but the signe of Ionas the Prophet: For as Ionas was a signe vnto the Nineuites, so shall also the Sonne of man be to this generation. The Queene of the South shall rise
5 vp in the iudgement with the men of this generation, & condemne them: for shee came from the vtmost parts of the earth, to heare the wisdom of Solomon: and behold, a greater then Solomon is here. The men of Nineue shall rise vp in the iudgement with this generation, and shall condemne it: for they repented at the preaching of Ionas, and behold, a greater then Ionas is here. No man when he
10 hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither vnder a bushell, but on a candlesticke, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: but when thine eye is euill, thy body also is full of darknesse. Take heede therefore, that the light which is in thee, be not darknesse. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, hauing no part darke, the whole shalbe full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doeth giue thee light.

King James Version

(b) (v)

- Godes gelaðung wurþað þysne dæg þam mæran apostole paule to wurðmynte. for þan ðe he is gecweden eallra ðeoda lareow þurh soþfæsre lare: wæs beahhwæðere his martyrdom samod mid þam eadigan petre gefremmed; He wæs fram cildhade on þære ealdan æ getogen. 7 mid micelre gecnyrdnysse. on þære
- 5 begriwen wæs; Æfter cristes þrowunge þa ða se soþa geleafa asprang þurh ðæra ápostola bodunge: þa ehte he cristenra manna þurh his nytennessse. 7 sette on cwearterne. 7 eac wæs on gefafunge æt þæs forman cyðeres stephanes slege: nis beahhwæðere be him geræd þæt he handlinga ænigne man acwealde;
- 10 he nam þa gewrit æt þam ealdorbiscopum to þære byrig damascum þæt he moste gebindan þa cristenan þe he on þære byrig gemette. 7 gelædan to hierusalem; ða gelamp hit on þam siðe þæt him com færllice to micel leoht. 7 hine ástrehte to eorþan. 7 he gehyrde stemne ufan: þus cweþende. saule sawle: hwi ehtst þu min ? Yfel bið ðe sylfum þæt ðu spurne ongean þa gade; He þa mid micelre fyrhte andwyrde þære stemne; Hwæt eart ðu leof hlaford ? him
- 15 andwyrde seo clypung þære godcundan stemne; Ic eom se hælend þe þu ehtst: ac aris nu. 7 far forð to þære byrig. þær ðe bið gesæd hwæt þe gedafenige to donne;
- Ælfric

(vi)

- Millesimo cxxxvii.* Ðis gære for þe *king Stephne* ofer sæ to Normandi; 7 ther wes underfangen, forþi ðat hi uuenden ðat he sculde ben alsuic alse the com wes, 7 for he hadde get his tresor; ac he todeld it 7 scatered sotlice. Micel hadde *Henri king* gadered gold 7 syluer, 7 na god ne dide me for his saule tharof. Þa þe *king*
- 5 *Stephne* to *Englaland com*, þa macod he his gadering æt *Oxeneford*. 7 þar he nam þe *biscop* *Roger* of *Serebyri*, 7 *Alexander biscop* of *Lincol* 7 te canceler *Roger*, hise neues, 7 dide ælle in *prisun* til hi iafen up here castles. Þa the suikes undergæton ðat he milde man was 7 softe 7 god, 7 na iustise ne dide, þa diden hi alle wunder. Hi hadden him manred maked 7 athes suoren, ac hi nan treuthe ne
- 10 heolden. Alle he wæron forsworen 7 here treotnes forloren, for æuric rice man his castles makede 7 agænes him heolden; 7 fylðen þe land ful of castles. Hi suencten suyðe þe uurecce men of þe land mid castelweorces; þa þe castles uuaren maked, þa fylðen hi mid deoules 7 yuele men. Þa namen hi þa men þe hi wenden ðat ani god hefden, bathe be nihtes 7 be dæies, carlmen 7 wimmen, 7
- 15 diden heom in *prisun* 7 pined heom efter gold 7 syluer untellendlice pining; for ne uuæren næure nan martyrs swa pined alse hi wæron.

Peterborough Chronicle

(vii)

- “Ye, Goddes armes !” quod this riotour,
“Is it swich peril with hym for to meete ?
I shal hym seke by wey and eek by strete,
I make avow to Goddes digne bones !
5 Herkneth, felawes, we thre been al ones;
Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,
And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
And we wol sleen this false traytour Deeth.
He shal be slayn, he that so manye sleeth,
10 By Goddes dignitee, er it be nyght !”
Togidres han thise thre hir trouthes plight
To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oother,
As though he were his owene ybore brother.
And up they stirte, al dronken in this rage,
15 And forth they goon towards that village
Of which the taverner hadde spoke biforn.
And many a grisly ooth thanne han they sworn,
And Cristes blessed body they torente—
Deeth shal be deed, if that they may hym hente !
20 Whan they han goon nat fully half a mile,
Right as they wolde han troden over a stile,
An oold man and a povre with hem mette.
This olde man ful mekely hem grette,
And seyde thus, “Now, lordes, God yow see !”

Chaucer

(viii)

- As for *Narrative Poesy*, or if you please *Heroicall* (so you understand it of the *Matter*, not of the *Verse*) it seems to be raised altogether from a noble foundation; which makes much for the Dignity of mans Nature. For seeing this sensible world, is in dignity inferior to the soule of Man; *Poesy* seems to endow
5 Humane Nature with that which *History* denies; and to give satisfaction to the Mind, with, at least, the shadow of things, where the substance cannot be had. For if the matter be thoroughly considered; a strong Argument may be drawn from *Poesy*, that a more stately greatnesse of things, a more Perfect Order; and a more beautifull variety delights the soule of Man, than any way can be found in
10 Nature, since the Fall. Wherefore seeing the Acts and events, which are the subject of true *History*, are not of that amplitude, as to content the mind of Man; *Poesy* is ready at hand to faine *Acts* more *Heroicall*. Because *true History* reports the successes of businesse, not proportionable to the merit of Virtues and Vices; *Poesy* corrects it, and presents events and Fortunes according to desert, and
15 according to the Law of Providence: because *true History*, through the frequent satiety and similitude of Things, workes a distast and misprision in the mind of Man; *Poesy* cheereth and refreshes the soule; chanting things rare, and various, and full of vicissitudes.

Bacon

2. **Either (a)** “We need substantially different conceptions of a “standard language” depending on whether we are talking about the Old English period, the Middle English period, or the Modern English period.” Examine the concept “standard language” with particular reference to **one or two** of the periods mentioned.

Or (b) Characterize standard English in any **one** period in respect of any **one** of the following: orthography; morphology; lexis.

3. “It is hardly too much to say that the range of devices subsequently used in English spelling was largely determined by Caxton’s practice (i.e., his selection from existing conventions).” (B STRANG) Discuss.
4. “The apparent rapidity of the changes undergone by English—especially changes in the morphological system—between the later 11th century and c1200 is almost entirely an illusion created by the peculiarities of the surviving evidence. There is no need for us to ‘explain’ it by reference to, say, contact with other languages.” Discuss any part(s) of this statement.
5. Give an account of **one** of the following in **any one** period, including in your answer an outline of the kinds of evidence available and a discussion of any problems in its interpretation: (a) vowel lengthening; (b) vowel shortening; (c) diphthongization; (d) voicing and unvoicing of consonants.
6. Discuss changes in the morphology of the verb over any part of the period covered by this paper.
7. “In syntax it is more difficult than in phonology, morphology and lexis to identify items to be compared. One needs a much larger corpus, and one needs to establish how far two surface structures actually represent the same construction.” (O FISCHER) Write on problems in studying syntactic developments in English in any period(s) up to c1750.
8. Assess the part played by “learned” (or “bookish”) borrowings in the evolution of the lexis of English.
9. “Present-Day English is one of the stylistically richest languages in the world...Old and Middle English have contributed relatively little to this *embarras de richesses*, and...it was functional expansion and competition with Latin in the Early Modern English period that led to this high degree of diversification.” (M GÖRLACH) Discuss, with reference to claims made here about **any one or more** of Old English, Middle English, or Early Modern English.

10. "No individual writer has changed the English language to any measurable extent. At most, a Chaucer or a Shakespeare will have been able, by their prestige, to reinforce or accelerate developments that were taking place independently of them." Do you agree?

11. "The [17th-century] phoneticians' weakness, as a class, is that in their concentration on general theory they neglect detailed description of English pronunciation." (E J DOBSON) Consider the contribution made by **any one or two** phoneticians of the 17th century to our knowledge of the spoken English of their time.

12. "The year 1747, when Dr Johnson published his *Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language*, may be taken as the starting point for the science of lexicography, in England at least." (N OSSELTON)
Either (a) What made Johnson's work as a lexicographer as original as this statement suggests?
Or (b) Give an account of an 500- or 1000-word English dictionary which earlier dictionaries had substantially anticipated any of Johnson's lexicographical innovations.

13. Discuss the interrelationship between standard language and non-standard dialects in **any one or more** periods up to c1750.

14. Write on what we can know about colloquial language in any part(s) of the period covered by this paper.

15. **Either (a)** Examine metaphor in the linguistic practice of **any one or two** authors before c1750.
Or (b) Examine metaphor in the linguistic system of English before c1750. (You may, but need not, write on metaphor as a factor in language change in the period.)