

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

Honour School of Literae Humaniores

III.11(b)

MEDIEVAL LATIN

TRINITY TERM 2006

Wednesday 31 May, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

Candidates should answer QUESTION 1 and TWO others.

Duplication of material should be avoided.

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

1. Translate THREE of the following passages, relating them to their context and commenting briefly on points of literary and linguistic interest.

(*Ysengrimus*, I, 491-504)

- (b) Parce, obsecro, domine, parce hujusmodi dictis, quibus miseras
miserrimas facias, et hoc ipsum quod utcumque vivimus ne nobis auferas ante
mortem. ‘Sufficit diei malicia sua’, et dies illa omnibus quos inveniet satis
secum sollicitudinis afferet omni amaritudine involuta. ‘Quid enim necesse est,
5 inquit Seneca, mala arcessere’, et ante mortem vitam perdere? Rogas, unice, ut
quocumque casu nobis absens hanc vitam finieris, ad cimiterium nostrum
corpus tuum afferri faciamus ut orationum scilicet nostrarum ex assidua tui
memoria ampliorem assequaris fructum. At vero quomodo memoriam tui a
nobis labi posse suspicaris? Aut quod orationi tempus tunc erit commodum
10 quando summa perturbatio nichil permittet quietum, cum nec anima rationis
sensem nec lingua sermonis retinebit usum, cum mens insana in ipsum ut ita
dicam Deum magis irata quam paccata non tam orationibus ipsum placabit
quam querimonii irritabit?

(HÉLOÏSE, *Letter II*, 26-42)

- (c) Quod si cui mirum videtur, quomodo ergo puer verecundus, simplex, timoratus, ausus fuerit contra voluntatem fratrum, magistri imperium, regulare decretum, suum deserere et votum et locum, miretur etiam quod et David sanctitati subreptum sit, quod sapientiae Salomonis illusum, quod Samson fortitudini obviatum. Qui Protoplasm dolo captum expulit de patria felicitatis, quid mirum si tenero subripuit adolescentulo in loco horroris et vastae solitudinis? Huc accedit quod nec, sicut illos Babylonicos senes, species decepit eum, nec, sicut Giezi, pecuniae amor, nec honoris ambitio, sicut Iulianum apostatam, sed fefellit illum sanctitas, seduxit religio, perdidit auctoritas seniorum.

(ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *Letter 1, 3, 26-38*)

(d)

Ergo ubi compressit gemitus a pectore, surgens
In medium mandata deae proponit et addit:
‘Nam quis erit modus, o socii, aut que meta flagelli
Huius’ ait ‘quo cuncta tremunt, prolixior illi
Si mora pro libitu frangendum indulserit orbem? 130
Ecce, sed id taceo, rupto parat obice terrae
Tartareum penetrare Chaos belloque subactis
Vmbrarum dominis captiuos ducere manes.
Est tamen in fatis, quod abhominor, affore tempus
Quo nouus in terris quadam partus nouitate 135
Nescio quis nascetur homo qui carceris huius
Ferrea subuersis confringet claustra columpnis,
Vasaque diripiens et fortia fortior arma,
Nostra triumphali populabitur atria ligno.
Proinde, duces mortis, nascenti occurrite morbo 140
Et regi Macedum. ne forte sit ille futurus
Infernī domitor, leto precludite uitam.’

(WALTER OF CHÂTILLON, *Alexandreis*, X, 126-142)

(e)

Vocatus itaque statim ad concilium adfui, et sine ullo discussionis
examine meipsum compulerunt propria manu librum memoratum meum in
ignem proicere; et sic combustus est. Ut tamen non nichil dicere viderentur,
quidam de adversariis meis id submurmuravit quod in libro scriptum
5 deprenderat solum patrem Deum omnipotentem esse. Quod cum legatus
subintellexisset, valde admirans ei respondit hoc nec de puerulo aliquo credi
debere quod adeo erraret, cum communis, inquit, fides et teneat et profiteatur
tres omnipotentes esse. Quo audito Terricus quidam, scolaris magister,
irridendo subintulit illud Athanasii ‘Et tamen non tres omnipotentes, sed unus
10 omnipotens’. Quem cum episcopus suus increpare cepisset et reprimere quasi
reum, qui in majestatem loqueretur, audacter ille restitit, et quasi Danielis verba
commemorans, ait: ‘Sic fatui, filii Israel non judicantes, neque quod verum est
cognoscentes, condemnatis filium Israel. Revertimini ad judicium, et de ipso
judice judicate, qui talem judicem quasi ad instructionem fidei et correctionem
15 erroris instituistis; qui cum judicare deberet, ore se proprio condemnavit, divina
hodie misericordia innocentem patenter, sicut olim Susannam a falsis
accusatoribus, liberante.’

(PETER ABELARD, *Historia calamitatum*, 868-90)

TURN OVER

2. ‘It would be a mistake to assume that Abelard’s “autobiography” or “confession” [was] really permeated with a spirit of repentance or humility, or that he accepted God’s punishment as deserved retribution for his sins’ (AARON GUREVICH). Discuss.
3. ‘Antischolastic, yes, but he [*sc. St. Bernard*] was one of the great masters of Christian rhetoric. His style derives from Cicero by way of St. Augustine; among those employing the theological *sermo humilis* of the Middle Ages, it is he who comes closest to the classical tradition’ (ERICH AUERBACH). Comment.
4. ‘Above all other vices, the poem [*sc. Ysengrimus*] castigates the monks for greed and gluttony. Monks rush like lightning bolts to gain riches:

Monachus oblatum cum uiderit affore lucrum,
Irruit ut pluuiio fulgetra mota polo.

 They are especially grasping when food is at stake’ (JAN ZIOLKOWSKI). Comment.
5. ‘Cuius [*sc. Abelardi*] sanctae, humili ac deuotae inter nos conuersationi, quod quantumue Cluniacus testimonium ferat, breuis sermo non explicat. Nisi enim fallor, non recolo uidisse me illi in humilitatis habitu et gestu similem, in tantum ut nec Germanus abiector, nec ipse Martinus bene discernenti pauperior appareret’ (PETER THE VENERABLE). Comment.
6. ‘A trickster . . . may appear in any one of three roles: the Beneficent Culture Hero, the clever deceiver, or the numskull. . . . we find that this mixture of concept is continually present, so that any series of adventures is likely to be a succession of clever tricks and foolish mishaps’ (STITH THOMPSON). Comment with respect to either *Ysengrimus* or *Alexandreis* or both.
7. ‘Then too the consciously literary character of medieval letters can be frustrating to the modern reader: “The amount of sentiment, and especially of religious generalities,” as Stubbs observed, “seems altogether out of proportion to the amount of news”’ (JANET MARTIN). Comment.
8. ‘The result [of Peter the Venerable’s learning] is a rich and allusive style, steeped in a mixture of biblical, patristic, and classical elements and characteristic of some of the best monastic writing of the Middle Ages. There is nothing academic about Peter’s letters, none of the clipped, scholastic style so hated by John of Salisbury. Peter represents an older school of monastic humanism’ (GILES CONSTABLE). Comment.
9. Discuss Héloïse’s attitude, as revealed in her Letter II to Abelard, in his *Historia calamitatum*, and in Peter the Venerable’s letter to her, toward either her profession as nun or her love for her husband or both.