

**SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION**

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**HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 2008**

**COURSE II**

**Paper B2 Middle English Dialectology**

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**TRINITY TERM 2008**

**Monday, 12 May, 9.30 a.m.- 12.30 p.m.**

**Time allowed – Three hours**

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**Answer Question 1 and *two* others. You should pay attention in your answers to the precise terms of the questions.**

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

Answer Question 1 and *two* others. You should pay attention in your answers to the precise terms of the questions.

1. Discuss in detail the language of ONE of the following passages:

(a)

þa riden agon Arður þe riche mon, Beh over wælde and Baðe wolde isechen. þa tidende com to Childriche þan strongen and þan riche þat Arður mid ferde com, al ȝaru to fihte, Childric and his ohte men leopen heom to horsen, Igripen heore wepnen; heo wusten heom ifæied.	5
þis isæh Arður, aðelest kinge, Isæh he ænne hæðene eorl hælden him toȝeines Mid seoven hundred cnihten al ȝærewe to fihten. þe orl himseolf ferde bi foren al his genge, And Arður himseolf arnde bivoren al his ferde.	10
Arður þe ræie Ron nom an honde, He stræhte scraft stærone, stiðimoden king, His hors he lette irnen þat þa eorðe dunede, Sceld he braid on breosten – þe king wes abolȝen. He smat Borel þene eorl þurhut þa breosten þat þæ heorte tochan, and þe king cleopede anan: 'þe formeste is fæie! Nu fulsten us Drihte And þa hefenliche quene þa Drihten akende.'	15
þa cleopede Arður, aðelest kinge: 'Nu heom to! Nu heom to! þat formest is wel idon! Bruttes hom leiden on, swa me scal a luðere don: Heo bittere swipen ȝefven mid axes and mid sweordes. þer feolle Cheldriches men fulle twa þusend, Swa nevere Arður ne les nævere ænne of his. þer weoren Sæxisce men folken alre ærmest, And þa Alemainisce men ȝeomerest alre leoden. Arður mid his sweorde fæiescipe wurhte; Al þat he smat to, hit wes sone fordo.	20 25

(b)

Hardi bileaue bringeð þe deouel o fluht ananrihtes. Þet  
witneð Sein Iame: *Resistite diabolo et fugiet a uobis*—edstont  
ane þe feond ant he deð him o fluhte. Edstond þurh hwet  
strengðe? Seinte Peter teacheð: *Cui resistite fortes in fide*.  
Stondeð aȝein him wið stronge bileaue, beoð hardi of Godes 5  
help, ant witeð hu he is wac þe na strengðe naueð on us bute  
of us seoluen. Ne mei he bute schawin forð sumhwet of his eape-  
ware, ant olhnin oðer preatin þet me bugge þrof. Hweðer se  
he deð, scarnið him: labheð þe alde eape lude to bismere þurh  
treowe bileaue, ant he halt him ischent ant deð him o fluht 10  
swiðe. *Sancti per fidem uicerunt regna*—þet is, þe hali halhen  
alle ouercomen þurh bileaue þe deofles rixlunge, þet nis bute  
sunne; for ne rixleð he i nan bute þurh sunne ane. Neomeð nu  
gode ȝeme hu alle þe seouene deadliche sunnen muhen beon  
afleiet þurh treowe bileaue. On earst nu of prude. 15  
Hwa halt him muchel, as þe prude deð, hwen he bihalt hu  
lutel þe muchele Lauerd makeð him inwið a poure meidenes  
breoste? Hwa is ontful þe bihalt wið ehnen of bileaue hu Iesu  
Godd, nawt for his god, ah for oþres god, dude ant seide ant  
polede al þet he polede? Þe ontfule ne kepte nawt þet eani 20  
dealde of his god; ant Godd Almihti ȝet, efter al þet oþer,  
lihte dun to helle forte sechen feolahes ant to deale wið ham  
þe god þet he hefde. Lo nu, hu frommard beoð ontfule ure  
Lauerd! Þe ancre þe wearnde anoþer a cwaer to lanc, for ha  
hefde heoneward hire bileaue ehe. 25

TURN OVER

(c)

2 Sold.	3aa, assoundir are bothe synnous and veynis On ilke a side, so have we soughte.	
3 Sold.	Nowe all his gaudis nothyng hym gaynes; His sauntering schall with bale be bought.	
4 Sold.	I wille goo saie to oure soveraynes Of all þis werkis howe we have wrought.	5
1 Sold.	Nay sirs, anothir thyng Fallis firste to youe and me; þei badde we schulde hym hyng On heghte þat men myght see.	10
2 Sold.	We woote wele so ther wordes wore, But sir, þat dede will do us dere.	
1 Sold.	It may not mende for to moote more; þis harlotte muste be hanged here.	
2 Sold.	The mortaise is made fitte þerfore.	15
3 Sold.	Feste on youre fyngeres þan in feere.	
4 Sold.	I wene it wolle nevere come þore; We foure rayse it nozt right to-yere.	
1 Sold.	Say, man, whi carpis þou soo? Thy lifyng was but light.	20
2 Sold.	He menes þer muste be moo To heve hym uppe on hight.	
3 Sold.	Now certis I hope it schall noght nede To calle to us more companye. Me thynke we foure schulde do þis dede And bere hym to 3one hille on high.	25
1 Sold.	It muste be done, withouten drede. No more, but loke 3e be redy, And þis parte schalle I lifte and leede; On lenghe he schalle no lenger lie.	30
4 Sold.	Therfore nowe makis you boune, Late bere hym to 3one hill. Thanne will I bere here doune And tente his tase untill.	
2 Sold.	We twoo schall see tille aythir side, For ellis þis werke wille wrie all wrang.	35

(d)

And blusched to his wodbynde þat broþely watz marred,  
Al welwed and wasted þo worþelych leues;  
þe schyre sunne hade hem schent er ever þe schalk wist.  
And þen hef up þe hete and heterly brenned,  
þe warm wynde of þe weste wertes he swyþez. 5  
þe man marred on þe molde þat mozt hym not hyde;  
His wodbynde watz away, he weped for sorþe.  
With hatel anger and hot heterly he callez:  
'A, þou maker of man, what maystery þe þynkez  
þus þy freke to forfare forbi alle oþer? 10  
With alle meschef þat þou may, never þou me sparez.  
I kevered me a cumfort þat now is cazt fro me,  
My wodbynde so wlonk þat wered my heved,  
Bot now I se þou art sette my solace to reve.  
Why ne dyzttez þou me to diþe? I dure to longe.' 15  
    Ȝet oure Lorde to þe lede laused a speche:  
'Is þis ryztwys, þou renk, alle þy ronk noyse,  
So wroth for a wodbynde to wax so sone?  
Why art þou so waymot, wyȝe, for so lyttel?'  
'Hit is not lyttel,' quop þe lede, 'bot lykker to ryzt. 20  
I wolde I were of þis worlde wrapped in moldeȝ.'  
'þenne byþenk þe, mon, if þe forþynk sore,  
If I wolde help my hondewerk, haf þou no wonder.  
þou art waxen so wroth for þy wodbynde,  
And travayledez never to tent hit þe tyme of an howre, 25  
Bot at a wap hit here wax and away at anoþer,  
And ȝet lykez þe so luper, þi lyf woldez þou tyne.  
þenne wyte not me for þe werk, þat I hit wolde help,  
And rwe on þo redles þat remen for synne.  
Fyrst I made hem myself of materes myn one, 30  
And syþen I loked hem ful longe and hem on lode hade.  
And if I my travayl schulde tyne of termes so longe,  
And type down ȝonder toun when hit turned were,  
þe sor of such a swete place burde synk to my hert,

TURN OVER

(e)

The engynour than deliuerly  
Gert bend the gyne in full gret hy,  
And the stane smertly swappit out,  
It flaw <out> quhedirand with a rout,  
And fell richt evin befor the sow. 5  
Thair hertis than begouth till grow,  
Bot 3eit than with thair mychtis all  
Thai pressit the sow toward the wall,  
And has hir set thar*to* iuntly.

The gynour than gert bend in hy 10  
The gyne, and swappit out the stane,  
That evin toward the lift is gane,  
And with gret wecht syne duschit doune  
Richt by the wall, in a randoune,  
That hyt the sow in sic maner 15  
That it that wes the mast summer,  
And starkast for till stynt a strak,  
In swndir with that dusche he brak.  
The men ran out in full gret hy,  
And on the wallis thai can cry 20  
That 'thair sow ferryit wes thair!'

Iohne Crab, that had his geir all 3ar,  
In his faggatis has set the fyre,  
And our the wall syne can thame wyre,  
And brynt the sow till brandis bair. 25

With all this fast assalgeand war  
The folk without, with felloune ficht;  
And thai within with mekill mycht  
Defendit manfully thar stede  
Intill gret auentur of dede. 30  
The schipmen with gret apparale  
Com with thair schippes till assale,  
With top-castellis warnist weill,

2. 'Variation in written Middle English is so extensive that it is reasonable to ask in what sense we are dealing with a single state or stage of language' (MILROY). Discuss.
3. 'As written remains, extant Middle English works clearly do not offer transcriptions of natural speech' (MACHAN). Discuss this claim with reference to **ONE** or **MORE** Middle English texts.
4. 'The first principle of historical dialectology is that written language must be assessed in its own right' (LAING). What is the significance of this claim for the Middle English dialectologist?
5. *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* distinguishes between localised and localisable Middle English texts. Explain this distinction and its significance for Middle English dialectology.
6. Explain the reasons for the decision of the editors of *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* to focus on the period 1350-1450.
7. What are the methodological difficulties involved in studying the dialects of Early Middle English and what techniques can be used to overcome these?
8. How important is onomastic evidence to the study of Middle English dialectology?
9. **EITHER (a)** 'The number of Scandinavian loanwords in Middle English must have been very much greater than what appears in Middle English literature' (WRIGHT). Discuss the distribution of Scandinavian loanwords in Middle English in light of this claim.

TURN OVER

**OR (b)** Word Geography is often considered to be a neglected aspect of Middle English dialectology. Why is this the case, and how would you remedy the situation?

10. 'Ormi's phonetically written spelling system, though eccentric to present-day eyes, is completely logical for the purposes for which it was devised' (SMITH). Discuss.
11. What does the dialect of the *Owl and the Nightingale* tell us about scribal copying habits in the Early Middle English period?
12. Discuss the proposition that the 'AB language' should properly be termed the 'AB dialect'.
13. 'Gower's language has a mixed basis, it is a true *Mischsprache*' (SMITH). Discuss the evidence for the reconstruction of Gower's dialect.
14. The dialect of the *Gawain*-poet 'can only fit with reasonable propriety in a very small area either in SE Cheshire or just over the border in NE Staffordshire' (MCINTOSH). Discuss the evidence for this localisation.
15. 'The London dialect of Middle English was, as one would expect in an urban environment, pluralistic and polyvalent in nature'. Describe the evidence for the London dialect in the light of this claim.
16. Write a detailed linguistic analysis of any Middle English text that you have not discussed elsewhere on this paper.



17. What features of the language of the following passage give indications of the date and place of its dialect?

In his saul he sagh him þare  
þat Caim slogh forwit ful o care.  
He went agayn þan forto scau  
To Cherubin al þat he sau.  
Cherubin, wit chere sa milde, 5  
Bigan to tel him o þat child.  
'Þis barn,' he said, 'þat þou has sene  
Is Goddes sun, witouten wene.  
Þi fader sin now wepes he  
þat he sal ciens sum time sal be, 10  
Quen þe plenteȝ sal cum o time:  
Þis is þe oile þat was hight him—  
Til him and til his progeni—  
Wit pite sal sceu his merci.'  
Quen Seth had vnderstanden wele 15  
þat angel said him ilk dele,  
His leue wald tak at Cherubin.  
Pepins þen he gaue him thrin,  
þe quilk a þe appel-tre he nam  
þat his fader ete of, Adam. 20  
'Þi fader' he said 'þan sal þou say  
þat he sal dei þe thrid day  
Efter þat þou be commun ham,  
And als he was turn into lam.  
Bot þou sal tak þis pepins thre 25  
þat I toke o þat appel-tre,  
And do þam vnder his tong rote.  
Þai sal til mani man be bote:  
Þai sal be cedre, ciprese, and pine—  
O þam sal man haue medicen. 30  
þe fader in cedre þou sal take—  
A tre of heght þat has na make.