

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

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HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
COURSE II

PAPER A1 ENGLISH LITERATURE 600-1100

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TRINITY TERM 2014

Tuesday, 20 May, 9.30am – 12.30pm

Time allowed – Three hours

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

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

1. 'The Anglo-Saxons learned about the world by writing about it' (NICHOLAS HOWE).
2. 'The saints whose lives are celebrated in Anglo-Saxon texts are typically idealized figures of superhuman virtue' (HUGH MAGENNIS).
3. 'Oft sceall eorl monig anes willan  
wræc adreogan, swa us geworden is.'  
(*Beowulf*)

[Many a man must often suffer misery for the will of one, as has happened to us.]

4. 'It has become a truism of the criticism of Old English poetry that originality, individuality and poetic excellence must be seen in terms of how traditional elements, conventions, are handled, rather than in the rejection of convention' (ELIZABETH M. TYLER).
5. 'The image of the Germanic lord, seated at the head of the mead-hall and calling for the scop to sing the history of his ancestors, is an iconic, if anachronistic, cultural artifact, yet it continues to inform many readings of Anglo-Saxon poetic texts' (RENÉE R. TRILLING).
6. Uton to þam beteran, nu we bot cunnon,  
hycgan ond hyhtan, þæt we heofones leoht  
uppe mid englum agan moton  
gastum to geoce, þonne god wile  
eorðan lifes ende gewyrcean!  
(*Homiletic Fragment I*)

[Let us think and hope upon that better option, now that we know a remedy, so that we might have the radiance of heaven above amongst the angels, to the benefit of our souls, when God wishes to bring about the end of life of earth!]

7. 'Ðonne is sum ealond on þæm beoð men acende þara eagan scinaþ swa leohte swa man micel blacern onele on þeostre nihte' (*The Wonders of the East*).

[Then there is an island on which are born men whose eyes shine as bright as if one kindled a great lamp on a dark night.]

Discuss the Anglo-Saxon sense of place AND/OR the presentation of the wondrous in any texts from this period.

8. '[I]nterpreters of Old English literature would be prudent when they consider the various contexts of a poem not to neglect its position and appearance within the manuscript in which it is preserved' (FRED C. ROBINSON).

9. 'For þæs ærestan mannes synnum, Adames, we wurdon aworpene of neorxnawanges eðle 7 on þas wræcworuld sende, 7 we swa syndon on þyssum middangearde swa we her nænig eðel ne habbað' (Vercelli Homily XI, *Spel to Forman Gangdæge* [*Homily for the First Rogation Day*]).

[For the sins of Adam, the first man, we were cast from the homeland of paradise and sent into the world of misery, and hence we are in this world as we have no homeland here.]

10. '[O]ur experience of a text always is organized in advance – by expectations about what *kind* of text it is, if nothing else' (JOHN FROW).

11. Hæfde ða gefohten foremærne blæd  
 Iudith æt guðe, swa hyre god uðe,  
 swegles ealdor, þe hyre sigores onleah.  
 (*Judith*)

[Judith had then won outstanding glory at battle, as God, the Ruler of heaven, granted her, He who gave her victory.]

12. 'Texts were used in Anglo-Saxon England (as they are still used) with the aim of creating community according to a certain vision and, as part of that work, shaping sex and sexuality, among many other behaviors, identities, and ideas' (CAROL BRAUN PASTERNAK).

13. Wæs se leodhwata lindgeborga  
 eorlum arfæst. Æðelinges weox  
 rice under roderum. He wæs riht cyning.  
 (*Elene*)

[The courageous defender was gracious to men. The prince's kingdom waxed under the heaven. He was a rightful king.]

14. 'Homilies are of enormous importance for understanding the intellectual culture of the period, but they also allow us an insight into how the belief of the non-intellectuals was shaped' (MARY CLAYTON).

15. Ic eom wunderlicu wiht, wræsne mine stefne,  
 hwilum beorce swa hund, hwilum blæte swa gat,  
 hwilum græde swa gos, hwilum gielle swa hafoc.  
 (*Riddle 24*)

[I am a wonderful creature, I vary my voice, at times I bark like a dog, at times I bleat like a goat, at times I honk like a goose, at times I cry like a hawk.]

Discuss the importance of orality AND/OR aurality in Old English poetry.

16. 'Her on þyssum geare [...]' (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*).

[Here in this year.]

Discuss history writing in Old English literature.

17. 'Ne fo we no on ða bisna and on ða bispel for ðara leasena spella lufan, ac forðæm ðe we woldon mid gebecnan þa soðfæstnesse, and woldon ðæt hit wurde to nytte ðam geherendum' (*The Old English Boethius*).

[Not for love of lying stories do we seize on the examples and fables, but because we intended to signify the truth with them, and intended that it might be to the advantage of the listeners.]

EITHER

- a) Write about the engagement of Anglo-Saxon authors with the pre-Christian past.

OR

- b) Discuss the role of signs and signifiers in Old English literature.

18. 'Ic cweðe nu þæt ic ne dearr ne ic nelle nane boc æfter þissere of Lædene on Englisc awendan, and ic bidde þe, leof ealdorman, þæt þu me þæs na leng ne bidde þi læs þe ic beo þe ungehirsum oððe leas gif ic do' (*Ælfric, Preface to Genesis*).

[I say now that I dare not nor will not translate any book from Latin into English after this one, and I ask you, dear alderman, that you no longer ask me to do so lest I should be disobedient to you or false if I do it.]

- [illegible]

[Splendid is that masonry, the fates destroyed it.]

20. Ne magon þe nu heonan adon      hyrste þa readan,  
ne gold ne sylfor      ne þinra goda nan.  
*(Soul and Body II)*

[The red treasures may not now be carried hence with you, neither gold, nor silver, nor any of your possessions.]

Write about any aspect of Anglo-Saxon material culture in relation to the literature of the period.