SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

COURSE II

PAPER A3 (b) LANGLAND AND GOWER

TRINITY TERM 2014

Friday, 23 May, 9.30 am - 11.30 am

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.

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

- 1. 'It is hard to find in the more straightforward *Vox* [*Clamantis*] and *Mirour* [*de l'Omme*] any hint of the complex English poem to come' (WINTHROP WETHERBEE).
- 2. 'De causis vero, ex quibus inter homines talia contingent enormia, tractat [...] secundum distincciones libelli istius, qui in septem diuiditur partes, prout inferius locis suis euidencius apparebit' (*Vox Clamantis*).

[In accordance with the separate divisions of this poem, which is divided into seven parts (as will appear more clearly below in its headings), he treats of the causes for such outrages taking place among men.]

3. R. F. Yeager encourages us 'to see Gower as we seldom imagine him – as an experimental poet, working out principles of his own devising'.

In what ways do you find EITHER Gower OR Langland to be an experimental poet? (You may, but you need not, confine yourself to ONE of the following areas: prosody and verse-form; imitation; wordplay; multilingualism; textual apparatus.)

4. '[Gower] built his poetic around a medieval moralist's imperative to hone his lessons and drive them home' (ROBERT F YEAGER).

(Discuss with reference to EITHER Gower OR Langland OR both.)

- 5. 'In this work the properties of things, figments of the poets and enigmas of the Scriptures constitute the material, while the application to *mores* [normative social conventions] constitutes the form; God then constitutes the efficient cause, while the cure of souls constitutes the final cause' (PIERRE BERSUIRE).
- 6. 'Nowe for that whiche is written in the l. leafe, concernyng the suppresson of abbayes, the Scripture there alledged, declareth it to be gathered of the iuste iudgment of God, who wyll not suffer abomination to raigne vnpunished' (ROBERT CROWLEY, prefatory epistle to the reader in his 1550 edition of *Piers Plowman*).
- 7. For by be lawe of *Levytici* bat oure lord ordeynede Clerkes yerouned, of kynde understondynge, Sholde nother swynke ne swete ne swerien at enquestes.

 (*Piers Plowman*, C-text)

- 8. [...] do welle and bettre, and fleth synne,
 And seketh pees, and holde therynne.
 And so biddeth Johan Trewman and alle his felawes.
 (JOHN BALL, letter to the poor men of Essex)
- 9. A lusti Maide, a sobre, a meke, [merry, temperate]
 Fulfild of alle curteisie.
 (Confessio Amantis)

How significant is the role played by women in the *Confessio Amantis* and/or *Piers Plowman*?

- 10. It is *licitum* for lewed men to legge the sothe [permitted]
 If hem liketh and lest ech a lawe it graunteth;
 Except persons and preestes and prelates of Holy Chirche.

 (Piers Plowman, B-text)
- 11. 'Siththe he gradde after Grace, til I gan awake' (Piers Plowman, B-text).
- 12. 'Vernacular translation makes difference so visible that it cannot sustain the illusion of exegetical supplementation: it foregrounds the real nature of exegetical practice, which is to appropriate the text and sometimes to eclipse it' (RITA COPELAND).
- 13. 'Autobiography is the perfect medium for a meditation upon the meaning of all history. The battle of souls is fought again within the compass of one soul, and one soul's progress can become the type and mirror of all souls' progress' (MARY CARRUTHERS).
- 14. 'In part the process of revision is repair work; in part it is a reworking which remakes the poem' (GEORGE H. RUSSELL).
- 15. 'The crafte of a werkman is shewed in the werke' (THOMAS USK).

2406 LAST PAGE