

A14368W1

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

COURSE II

Paper 1 Literature in English from 650 to 1100

HONOUR SCHOOL OF HISTORY AND ENGLISH
Literature in English from 650 to 1100

TRINITY TERM 2018

Tuesday, 15 May, 9.30am – 12.30pm

Time allowed – Three hours

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. ‘Seo eorðe is to wundrienne, hwæt heo ærest oþþe godra þinga cenne, oððe eft þara yfelra, þe heo þæm sceawigendum is æteowed’ (*Alexander’s Letter to Aristotle*).

[‘This world is to be wondered at, what it first produces both of good things and of bad things, through which it is revealed to observers.’]

2. ‘Þeos haliga fæmne hæfde on hire breoste swa micele lufe to þam ecan life þæt heo dæges and nihtes embe Drihtnes godspel and embe Godes lare mid geleafan smeade and on singalum gebedum hi sylfe gebysgode’ (ÆLFRIC, *Passion of Saint Cecilia the Virgin*).

[‘This holy virgin had in her breast so great a love for the everlasting life that day and night she pondered with faith the Lord’s gospel and God’s doctrine and occupied herself in constant prayers.’]

3. ‘*Things* could talk in Anglo-Saxon literature and material culture. Many of these Anglo-Saxon things are still with us today and are still talkative’ (JAMES PAZ).

4.

“ [...] Blæd is aræred
geond widwegas, wine min Beowulf,
þin ofer þeoda gehwylce. Eal þu hit geþyldum healdest,
mægen mid modes snyttrum [...]”
(*Beowulf*)

[“Your glory is proclaimed far and wide, Beowulf my friend, over every people. May you wield it well, strength with wisdom of the mind.”]

5. ‘It is not that the Anglo-Saxons glossed, translated and composed in English because they were too lazy and too incompetent to apply themselves to a wide-ranging study of Latin texts. What made them do it was rather an astonishing confidence in the potential of the vernacular to be developed as a medium for scholarly and religious discourse on a par with Latin’ (MECHTHILD GRETSCH).
6. ‘We have no native informants from the Anglo-Saxon period, but manuscripts offer us the next best thing’ (DONALD SCRAGG).

7. ‘AN. cccclvii. Her Hengest ond Æsc fuhton wiþ Brettas in þære stowe þe is gecueden Crecgnaford ond þær ofslogon iiii^m wera, ond þa Brettas þa forleton Centlond ond mid micle ege flugon to Lundenbyrg.’
(*The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS A*).

[‘457. Here Hengest and Æsc fought against the Britons in that place which is called Crayford, and there killed 4000 men; and the Britons then abandoned the land of Kent and in great terror fled to the stronghold of London.’]

Write on engagement with the past in any Old English literature.

8. Nu lære ic þe swa man leofne sceal.
(*The Rewards of Piety*)

[Now I will teach you, just as one ought to teach another who is dear to him.]

9. Næs ða long to ðon,
þæt ða aglæcan hy eft gemetton.
Hyrte hyne hordweard, hreðer æðme weoll,
niwan stefne; nearo ðrowode
fyre befangen se ðe ær folce weold.
(*Beowulf*)

[It was not long before those two great adversaries again faced each other. The hoard-guardian took heart, his breast surged within continuously; he suffered hardship, surrounded by flame, he who had previously ruled the people.]

10. ‘Old English poetry is notoriously resistant to generic categories, and questions of date and provenance often beguile a historicized treatment of the poetry’
(ANDREW SCHEIL). Write on any aspect of this quotation.
11. ‘For the Anglo-Saxons the bible provided the essential foundation of religious belief and teaching and it provided the grounding of the church’s liturgical observance in worship’ (HUGH MAGENNIS). Discuss in relation to any Old English prose or verse.

- Hwylc þæs hordgates
 cægan cræfte þa clamme onleac
 þe þa rædellan wið rynemenn
 hygefæste heold heortan bewrigene
 orþoncbendum?

(*Riddle 42*)

[Who has unlocked through a key's power the bars of the treasury door, which held the riddle mind-fast against men of lore, its heart cloaked with cunning bonds?]

- Wæs se Apollinus æðeles cynnes,
Iobes eafora, se wæs gio cyning.
Se licette litlum and miclum
gumena gehwylcum, þæt he god wære
hehst and halgost; swa se hlaford þa
þæt dysige folce on gedwolan lædde
(*Old English Boethius*, Metre 26)

[That Apollo was of a noble kindred, descendent of Jove, who was king of old. He pretended, in small things and big things, to each man, that he was the highest and holiest god; in this way, the lord then led that foolish people into error.]

Write on the representation of paganism AND/OR error in Old English literature.

- Word spearcum fleah
 attre gelicost, þonne he ut þorhdraf:
 “Eala drihtenes þrym! Eala duguða helm!
 Eala meotodes miht! Eala middaneard!”
 (*Christ and Satan*)

[That word flew in sparks, most like to poison, when he drove it out: “Alas the lord’s glory! Alas the guardian of hosts! Alas the might of the measurer! Alas middle-earth!”]

Write on the language of lament AND/OR the anti-hero in any Old English literature.

15. ‘Se stranga Samson getacnode Crist. Seo burh Gaza getacnode helle. Ond þa Philistei hæfdon Iudeiscas folces getacnunge’ (ÆLFRIC, *Easter Day Homily*).

['The strong Samson prefigured Christ. The city of Gaza prefigured hell. And the Philistines were the prefiguration of the Jewish people.']

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16. '[The *Beowulf*-poet's] style has a noble dignity such as one can hardly associate with a *jongleur* who composed for the masses. On the other hand, one wonders at the strange, weak structure' (JAN DE VRIES). What difficulties does the modern critic face in evaluating the style AND/OR structure of Old English poetry?

17. 'Her ys seo bot, hu ðu meaht þine æceras betan gif hi nellap wel wexan oppe þær hwilc ungedefe þing on gedon bið on dry oððe on lyb-lace.' (*Metrical Charm 1: For Unfruitful Land*).

['Here is the remedy, how you can improve your fields if they will not grow well, or if some troublesome thing is done there through sorcery or witchcraft.']

Write on scientific knowledge in Old English literature.

18. We geascodan Eormanrices
wylfenne geþoht; ahte wide folc
Gotena rices; þæt wæs grim cyning.
Pæs ofereode; þisses swa mæg.
(*Deor*)

[We have learned about Eormanric's wolfish thought; he widely ruled the people of the kingdom of the Goths; that was a fierce king. That passed away; so can this.]

19. Hafað us alyfed *lucis auctor*
þæt we motun her *merueri*,
goddædum begietan *gaudia in celo*,
þær we motum *maxima regna*
secan ond gesittan *sedibus altis* [...].
(*The Phoenix*)

[He has redeemed us, *author of light*, so that we might here *earn* and acquire through good deeds *joys in heaven*, where we will be permitted to seek *the greatest dominions* and take *our seats on lofty thrones*.]

20. 'Forðam Cristen cyning is Cristes gespelia on Cristenre þeode, and he sceal Cristes abilgðe wrecan swiðe georne' (*VIII Æthelred*).

['For a Christian king is Christ's deputy among Christian people, and he must avenge offences against Christ with the utmost diligence.']