

A14394S1

FINAL HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
Course II Paper 5 (a): The Material Text
Hilary Term 2018

ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION.

**EACH PIECE OF WRITTEN WORK SHOULD BE 2000–2500 WORDS,
INCLUDING FOOTNOTES, BUT EXCLUDING BIBLIOGRAPHY.**

SECTION A (commentary) WRITE A CRITICAL COMMENTARY ON ONE OF THE FOLLOWING EXTRACTS, FOCUSING ON ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Layout;
- Scribal practice;
- Glossing and/or annotation;
- Copying, compilation and readership;
- Textual transmission;
- Editorial practice.

1. Nowell Codex, fol. 172(BL175)v

<http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=cotton_ms_vitellius_a_xv_f175v>;

compare Fr. Klaeber, ed., *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, 3rd ed. (Lexington, MA: Heath and co., 1950), pp. 72–73 (lines 1936b–1957b).

2. Auchinleck manuscript, fol. 101vab <auchinleck.nls.uk>; compare A. B. Taylor, ed.,

Floris and Blancheflour: a Middle-English Romance (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), pp. 49–52 (lines 671–765 of this edition).

SECTION B (essay)

1. What can we learn from scribal self-correction? Give specific examples.
2. How do glosses aid our understanding of medieval manuscripts and texts?
3. How do scribes collaborate? Give a range of examples from different texts and manuscripts.
4. ‘Visual cues for reading developed in part because of the need to read texts (particularly liturgical texts) aloud, and the development of punctuation was strongly influenced by oral recitation’ (R. M. LIUZZA). Discuss with reference to a range of examples.
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of electronic editions of medieval texts and manuscripts?
6. What principles might lie behind the selection of texts in medieval compilations?
7. ‘The interactions between non-verbal and verbal forms of communication, more in particular the relations between visual symbols other than writing and the recording of speech in writing, are important for the evaluation of both images and texts (M. MOSTERT). Discuss with reference to specific manuscripts or inscribed objects.