

A14393W1

SECOND PUBLIC EXAMINATION

HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

COURSE II

Paper 2 Medieval English and Related Literatures 1066-1550

TRINITY TERM 2016

Friday, 20 May, 9.30am – 12.30pm

Time Allowed – Three hours

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

Candidates should not repeat material across different parts of the examination.

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

1. 'Narrative is a doubly temporal sequence [...] There is the time of the thing told and the time of the narrative. This duality not only renders possible all the temporal distortions that are commonplace in narratives [but also] invites us to consider that one of the functions of narrative is to invent one time scheme in terms of another time scheme' (CHRISTIAN METZ).

2. Long was the sobbyng and the bitter peyne,
 Er that hir woful hertes myghte cesse;
 Greet was the pitee for to heere hem pleyne,
 Thurgh which pleintes gan hir wo encresse.
 I pray yow alle my labour to relese;
 I may nat telle hir wo until to-morwe,
 I am so wery for to speke of sorwe.
 (GEOFFREY CHAUCER, *The Man of Law's Tale*)

3. '“How can I grant you mercy,” said the king, “after all the losses and wrongs you have inflicted on me?”
 “All the losses that I have ever inflicted on you,” he said, “I will restore [...] and I will never do this again, but will be your faithful vassal from now on.” And the king accepted that from him' (*Lludd and Llefelys*).
 Discuss repayment AND/OR the resolution of conflict in medieval romance.

4. GALAHAD: Look, I can tackle this lot single-handed!
 GIRLS: Yes, yes, let him tackle us single-handed!
 LANCELOT: Come Sir Galahad, quickly!
 GALAHAD: No, really, I can cope. I can handle this lot easily.
 GIRLS: Yes, let him handle us easily.
 LANCELOT: No sir. Quick!
 (*Monty Python and the Holy Grail*)
 Write on parody AND/OR frustrated desire in medieval romance.

5. 'The surviving manuscripts provide us with pieces of this complex and dazzling mosaic. They remind us that each handwritten copy of romance was the locus for a sequence of unique medieval events involving scribes, compilers, owners, readers and listeners' (ALISON WIGGINS).
 Discuss any one or more part(s) of this quotation. You may also write about printed texts of romance.

6. 'Romances may be the product of chivalric society, but they do not promote the violent “ethics” of chivalry in any simple-minded way' (JAMES SIMPSON).

7. 'A virgin is like a rose: while she remains on the thorn whence she sprang, alone and safe in a lovely garden, no flock, no shepherd approaches [...] But no sooner is she plucked from her mother-stalk, severed from her green stem, than she loses all, all the favour, grace, and beauty wherewith heaven and men endowed her' (Sacripant speaks in ARIOSTO, *Orlando furioso*).

8. '“I cannot tell you my name,” said Gawain, “for I have lost it and I do not know who took it from me. Now I must go in search of it, but I do not know where or in what country; you must come with me and do whatever I wish.”
 “I consent to that,” said the knight, “I will follow you willingly, for I belong entirely to you and you have rightfully conquered me”' (*The Perilous Graveyard*).

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9. 'On account of the joy he had experienced from the sight of his beloved and because of what he had written, Tristram, a skilful harpist, in order to record his words [...] used them to create a new lai. I shall briefly name it: the English call it *Gotelef* and the French *Chevrefoil*. I have told you the truth of the lai I have related here' (MARIE DE FRANCE, *Chevrefoil*).

'Many tales are told and many legends have been invented about King Arthur and his mysterious ending. In their stupidity the British people maintain that he is still alive. Now [...] the fairy tales have been snuffed out, and the true and indubitable facts are made known, so that what really happened must be made crystal clear to all' (GERALD OF WALES).

EITHER

a) What kinds of truths do romances claim to possess and transmit?

OR

b) Discuss memorialisation in the romance tradition.

10. 'And sir Galahad wente anone to the speare which lay upon the table and towched the bloode with hys fyngirs, and cam aftir to the maimed knyght and anointed his legges and hys body. And therewith he clothed hym anone, and sterte upon hys feete oute of hys bedde as an hole man, and thanked God that He had heled hym' (THOMAS MALORY, *Le Morte Darthur*).

11. '[I]n different places there are different modes in which an inheritance of mythic ideas may be appreciated and used. It may become a treasury for self-possessed and sure-handed artists, as in Greece [...] It may, by the fascination of its wealth, detain the minds of poets in its enchanted ground, and prevent them from ever working their way through from myth to dramatic imagination, as in Ireland' (W.P. KER).

Discuss any part(s) of this quotation that interest you.

12. 'Places are fragmentary and inward-looking histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state' (MICHEL DE CERTEAU).

13. Thy drasty rymyng is nat worth a toord!
Thou doost noght elles but despendest tyme.
Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger ryme.
Lat se wher thou kanst tellen aught in geeste [alliterative verse]
Or telle in prose somewhat, at the leeste,
In which ther be som murthe or som doctryne.

(GEOFFREY CHAUCER, *Thopas–Melibee* link)

Write on ONE of the following in relation to romance: verse form; prose style; popular culture; doctrine.