

A10111W1

FIRST PUBLIC EXAMINATION

Preliminary Examination in English Language and Literature: Paper 2
Preliminary Examination in English and Modern Languages, Part 2: Paper 2 (a)
Preliminary Examination in History and English: Paper 4 (a)

EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE c. 650 – 1350

TRINITY TERM 2016

Wednesday, 15 June, 14.30pm – 17.30pm,

Time allowed – 3 hours

Answer QUESTION 1 and any TWO others. Candidates are reminded that they must show substantial knowledge of at least THREE texts across the two essays.

Candidates are reminded that at the start of each essay they should identify clearly which question they are attempting, and, where appropriate, which option within that question, identifying it through a letter, where these are given (e.g. Q5(a)), and / or a key word or phrase.

Please do NOT turn over until told that you may do so.

1. Write a critical commentary on ONE of the following passages, placing it in context and analysing significant points of content and style.

(a)

Nah ic ricra feala

freonda on foldan, ac hie forð heonon
gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres Cyning;
lifaþ nu on heofenum mid Heahfædere,
wuniaþ on wuldre; and ic wene me 5
daga gehwylce hwænne me Dryhtnes rod,
þe ic her on eorðan ær sceawode,
on þyssan lænan life gefetige,
and me þonne bringe þær is blis mycel,
dream on heofenum, þær is Dryhtnes folc 10
geseted to symle þær is singal blis;
and me þonne asette þær ic syþþan mot
wunian on wuldre, well mid þam halgum
dreames brucan. Si me Dryhten freond,
se ðe her on eorðan ær þrowode 15
on þam gealgtreowe for guman synnum;
he us onlifsde, and us lif forgeaf,
heofonlicne ham. Hiht wæs geniwad
mid bledum and mid blisse, þam þe þær byrne þolodan.
Se Sunu wæs sigorfæast on þam siðfate,
mihtig and spedig, þa he mid manigeo com, 20
gasta weorode, on Godes rice,
Anwealda ælmihtig, englum to blisse
and eallum ðam halgum þam þe in heofenum ær
wunedon on wuldre, þa heora Wealdend cwom, 25
ælmihtig God, þær his eðel wæs.

(b)

Heold hine fæst

se þe manna wæs mægene strengest
on þam dæge þysses lifes.
Nolde eorla hleo ænige þinga
þonne cwealmcuman cwicne forlætan, 5
ne his lifdagas leoda ænigum
nytte tealde. Þær genehost brægd
eorl Beowulfes ealde lafe,
wolde freatrihtnes feorh ealgian,
mæres þeodnes, ðær hie meahton swa. 10
Hie þæt ne wiston, þa hie gewin drugon,
heardhicgende hildemecgas,
ond on healfa gehwone heawan þohton,
sawle secan: þone synscaðan
ænig ofer eorþan irenna cyst, 15
guðbilla nan gretan nolde;
ac he sigewæpnum forsworen hæfde,
ecga gehwylcre. Scolde his aldorgedal

on ðæm dæge þysses lifes
 earmlic wurðan, ond se ellorgast 20
 on feonda geweald feor siðian.

(c) 3et þu me seist of oþer þinge,
 And telst þat ich ne can noȝt singe,
 Ac al mi rorde is woning
 And to ihire grislich þing.
 Þat nis noȝt soþ; ich singe efne 5
 Mid fulle dreme and lude stefne.
 Þu wenist þat ech song bo grislich
 Þat þine pipinge nis ilich.
 Mi stefne is bold and noȝt unorne;
 Ho is ilich one grete horne, 10
 And þin is ilich one pipe
 Of one smale wode unripe.
 Ich singe bet þan þu dest:
 Þu chaterest so doþ on Irish prost.
 Ich singe an eve a riȝte time, 15
 And soþþe won hit is bedtime,
 Þe þridde siþe a middelnizte,
 And so ich mine song adiȝte.
 Wone ich iso arise vorre
 Oþer dairim oþer daisterre, 20
 Ich do god mid mine þrote
 And warni men to hore note.
 Ac þu singest alle longe niȝt
 From eve fort hit is dailiȝt,
 And evre leist þin o song 25
 So longe so þe niȝt is long,
 And evre croweþ þi wrecche crei
 Þat he ne swikeþ niȝt ne dai.
 Mid þine pipinge þu adunest
 Þas monnes earen þar þu wunest 30
 And makest þine song so unwurþ
 Þat me ne telþ of þar noȝt wurþ.

(d) Pæ he to þere hauene com, Moddred him wes auornon;
 ase þe dæi gon lihte heo bigunnen to fihten;
 alle þene longe dæi moni mon þer ded læi.
 Summe hi fuhten a londe, summe bi þan stronde;
 summe heo letten ut of scipen scerpe garen scriþen. 5
 Walwain biforen wende and þene wæi rumde,
 and sloh þer aneuste þeines elleouene;
 he sloh Childriches sune þe was þer mid his fader icume.
 To reste eode þe sunne. Wæ wes þa monnen;
 þer wes Walwain aslæȝe and idon of life-dæȝe 10
 þurh an eorl Sexisne —særi wurðe his saule!

Ƣa wes Arður særi and sorhful an heorte forþi,
and þas word bodede ricchest alre Brutte:
“Nu ich ileosed habbe mine sweines leofe.
Ich wuste bi mine sweuene whæt sorzen me weoren ƒeueðe: 15
islaƒen is Angel þe king, þe wes min aƒen deorling,
and Walwaine, mi suster sune —wa is me þat ich was mon iboren!
Up nu, of scipen biliue, mine beornes ohte!”
Æfne þan worde wenden to fihte
sixti þusend anon selere kempen 20
and breken Modredes trume; and wel neh himseolue wes inome.
Modred bigon to fleon and his folc after teon,
fluƒen ueondliche —feldes beoueden eke,
ƒurren þa stanes mid þan blodstremes.
Ƣer weore al þat fiht idon, ah þat niht to raðe com; 25
ƒif þa niht neore islaƒen hi weoren alle.

2. '[...] the monstrous 'other' is not absolute, stable, or firmly outside the boundaries of the normative: on the contrary, [...] [it] remains recognizable, strange, yet familiar, a possible version of oneself' (ASA MITTMAN and SUSAN M. KIM).

3. 'Destiny is all!' (BERNARD CORNWELL, *THE LAST KINGDOM*)

Write on the presentation of fate AND/OR destiny in ANY English literature of the period.

4. 'Frivolous literature or the literature of everyday people is unlikely to survive from an environment where putting quill to parchment required that exceptional resources be deployed by the tiny monastic elite trained in the technology of writing' (JONATHAN WILCOX).

Write on any aspect of this quotation.

5. Byrhtnoð mapelode bord hafenode (*MALDON*)

[Byrhtnoth made a speech, raised a shield]

Discuss.

6. 'Authorship in the Middle Ages was [...] understood as participation in an intellectually and morally authoritative tradition, within which [...] a writer might fill one of several roles, copying, modifying, or translating, as well as composing' (JOCELYN WOGAN-BROWNE).

Discuss.

7. 'The evidence points, I think, to a one-sex, one-gender model with a vengeance—one that plays out in the rawest and most extreme terms a scheme of sexual difference that at the level of the body knows only male and at the level of social behavior, only the effeminate, or emasculate, or impotent' [CAROL CLOVER].

To what degree does this statement accurately describe representations of women in Old English AND/OR Early Middle English writing?

8. 'I will not reach above the time of King Edward the Third and Richard the Second [1327-77-99] for any that wrote in English metre, because before their times [...] there is little or nothing worth commendation to be found written in this art' (GEORGE PUTTENHAM, *ARTE OF ENGLISH POESIE*, 1589).

Do you agree?

9. '[M]edieval books often constituted composite artifacts in which each component text depended on its environment for part of its meaning' (FRED C. ROBINSON).

Write on any aspect of this quotation with reference to ONE or TWO Old AND/OR Middle English texts.

10. 'Fowr heaved luven me ifind i þis world: bitweone gode iferen; bitweone mon ant wummon; bitweone wif ant hire child; bitweone licome ant sawle. Ðe luve þet Jesu Crist haveð to his deore leofmon overgeað þeos fowre, passed ham alle.' (*ANCRENE WISSE*).

[Now there are four chief loves that one finds in this world: between good companions; between a man and a woman; between a woman and her child; between the body and the soul. The love that Jesus Christ has for his beloved is greater than these four, surpasses them all].

Discuss how love—in any form—is represented in ANY English literature of the period.

11. " [...] Deað bið sella
eorla gehwylcum þonne edwitlif!" (*BEOWULF*)

[Death is better for every warrior than a life of disgrace!]

Discuss in relation to ANY literature of the period.

12. 'By comparison with their modern colleagues, medievalists generally know rather little about the contexts of the works they study. [...] Many of the surviving works [...] are anonymous; and we often do not know exactly when they were written, or with what purpose, or for what audience' (J. A. BURROW).

Write on any aspect of this quotation.

13. Wynter wakeneth al my care;
Nou this leves waxeth bare
(ANON. MIDDLE ENGLISH LYRIC)

Write on the representation of the natural world in ANY early medieval English literature.

14. Ðe firste knith þat he þer mette
With þe swerd so he him grette,
Forþ his heved of he plette (*HAVELOCK*)

[The first knight that he met there, he met him with the sword so that he cut off his head]

Write on the depiction of violence in ANY early medieval English literature.

15. Ne hyrde ic cymlicor ceol gegyrwan
hildewæpnum ond heaðowædum,
billum and byrnum; him on bearme læg
madma mænigo, þa him mid scoldon
on flodes æht feor gewitan. (*BEOWULF*)

[I have never heard of a comelier ship prepared with battle-weapons and war-clothing, swords and mail-coats; in its bosom lay many treasures, those which must journey far with him into the embrace of the sea].

Discuss in relation to ANY literature of the period.

16. '[T]he term "wisdom poetry" suggests something weighty, revelatory, consequential, definitive. On occasion it can be some, if not all, of these things. Equally often, however, it is likely to be light, and far from being revelatory may be disarmingly obvious or wilfully obscure' (DAVID ASHURST).

17. 'Because of its conventionality and its ceaseless celebration of miracles the saints' lives genre was long despised in post-medieval critical circles but is recognized today not only as reflecting illuminatingly medieval perceptions, beliefs and anxieties but also as having produced writings of remarkable power and imagination' (HUGH MAGENNIS).

18. Lazamon gon liðen wide 3ond þas leode,
 and biwon þa æðla boc þa he to bisne nom.
 He nom þa Englisca boc þa made Seinte Beda.
 Anoþer he nom on Latin þe made Seinte Albin,
 and þe feire Austin þe fulluht broute hider in.
 Boc he nom þe þridde, leide þer amiddden,
 þe made a Frenchis clerc,
 Wace wes ihoten, þe wel couþe writen (LAȜAMON)

[Lazamon travelled far and wide throughout this land, and obtained the excellent books which he took as a model. He chose the English book which St Bede composed. He chose another in Latin composed by St Albin and the blessed Austin who introduced baptism here. He chose a third book and placed it with the others, a book which a French cleric called Wace, who could write well, had composed.]

Write on language AND/OR national identity in ANY early medieval English literature.

19. Sum sceal mid hearpan æt his hlaforðes
 fotum sittan, feoh þicgan,
 ond a snellice snere wræstan,
 lætan scralletan sceacol, se þe hleapeð,
 nægl neomegende; biþ him neod micel.
 (*THE FORTUNES OF MORTALS*)

[One will sit with his harp at his lord's feet, receive payment, and always quickly twang the harp string, let the plectrum sound loudly, the one that leaps, the sweet sounding pick; it will be a great delight for him.]

20. *Ubi Sount Qui Ante Nos Fueront?*
 (ANON. 13th CENTURY LYRIC)

[Where are those who went before us?]

Write on transience in ANY early medieval English literature.

21. "Tonihȝ a mine slepe, þer ich læi on bure,
 me imætte a sweuen; þeruore ich ful sari æm" (LAȜAMON)

[Tonight in my sleep, where I lay in bed, I dreamed a dream; therefore I am very sad].

Write on dreams AND/OR dreaming in ANY early medieval English literature.