

A10111W1

FIRST PUBLIC EXAMINATION

Preliminary Examinations in English Language and Literature:

EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE c. 650 – 1350

LONG VACATION 2016

Monday, 12 September, 2.30pm – 5.30pm

Time allowed – Three 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 may write in an essay about the text they have chosen for commentary, but must be careful not to duplicate material.

Candidates must show knowledge of texts in English, in the original language, in BOTH Section A and Section B of the paper.

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)

Geseah he in recede rinca manige,
swefan sibbedriht samod ætgædere,
magorinca heap. Ða his mod ahlog;
mynte þæt he gedælde, ærþon dæg cwome,
atol aglæca, anra gehwylces 5
lif wið lice, þa him alumpen wæs
wistfille wen. Ne wæs þæt wyrd þa gen
þæt he ma moste manna cynnes
ðicgean ofer þa niht. Pryðs wyð beheold
mæg Higelaces, hu se manscaða 10
under færgripum gefaran wolde.
Ne þæt se aglæca yldan þohte,
ac he gefeng hraðe forman siðe
slæpendne rinc, slat unwearnum,
bat banlocan, blod edrum dranc, 15
synsnædum swealh; sona hæfde
unlyfigendes eal gefeormod,
fet ond folma. Forð near ætstop,
nam þa mid handa higeþihtigne
rinc on ræste, ræhte ongean 20
feond mid folme; he onfeng hraþe
inwitþancum ond wið earm gesæt.

(b)

Ne mihte hyra ænig oþrum derian,
buton hwa þurh flanes flyht fyl gename.
Se flod ut gewat; þa flotan stodon gearowe,
wicinga fela, wiges georne.
Het þa hæleða hleo healdan þa bricge 5
wigan wigheardne, se wæs haten Wulfstan,
cafnæ mid his cynne, þæt wæs Ceolan sunu,
þe ðone forman man mid his francan ofsceat
þe þær baldlicost on þa bricge stop.
þær stodon mid Wulfstane wigan unforhte, 10
Ælfere and Maccus, modige twegen,
þa noldon æt þam forða fleam gewyrcan,
ac hi fæstlice wið ða fynd weredon,
þa hwile þe hi wæpna wealdan moston.
þa hi þæt ongeaton and georne gesawon 15
þæt hi þær bricgweardas bitere fundon,
ongunnon lytegian þa laðe gystas,
bædon þæt hi upgang agan moston,
ofer þone ford faran, feþan lædan.
ða se eorl ongan for his ofermode 20
alyfan landes to fela laþere ðeode.

Ongan ceallian þa ofer cald wæter
 Byrhtelmes bearn (beornas gehlyston):
 “Nu eow is gerymed, gað ricene to us,
 guman to guþe; god ana wat 25
 hwa þære wælstowe wealdan mote.”

(c)

A leafdi wes mid hire fan biset al abuten, hire lond al destruet, ant heo al poure inwið an eorðene castel. A mihti kinges luue wes þah biturnd upon hire swa unimete swiðe þet he for wohlech sende hire his sonden, an efter oðer ofte somet monie, sende hire beawbelez baðe feole ant feire, sucurs of liueneð, help of his hehe hird to halden hire castel. Heo underfeng al as on unrecheles, ant swa wes heard iheortet þet hire luue ne mahte he neauer beo þe neorre. Hwet wult tu mare? He com himseolf on ende: schawde hire his feire neb, as þe þe wes of alle men feherest to bihalden, spec se swiðe swoteliche ant wordes se murie þet ha mahten deade arearen to liue, wrahte feole wundres ant dude muchele meistries biuoren hire ehsihðe, schawde hire his mihte, talde hire of his kinedom, bead to makien hire cwen of al þet he ahte.

(d)

þo quaþ þe hule, ‘Wo schal us seme,
 þat kunne and wille rizt us deme?’
 ‘Ich wot wel,’ quaþ þe niztingale,
 ‘Ne þaref þarof bo no tale:
 Maister Nichole of Guldeforde. 5
 He is wis and war of worde;
 He is of dome suþe glew,
 And him is loþ evrich unþew.
 He wot insizt in eche songe,
 Wo singet wel, wo singet wronge; 10
 And he can schede vrom þe rizte
 þat woze, þat þuster from þe lizte.’
 þo hule one wile hi biþozte,
 And after þan þis word upbrozte:
 ‘Ich granti wel þat he us deme, 15
 Vor þez he were wile breme,
 And lof him were niztingale
 And oþer wizte gente and smale,
 Ich wot he is nu suþe acoled.
 Nis he vor þe nozt afoled 20
 þat he for þine olde luve
 Me adun legge, and þe buve.

TURN OVER

2. 'Every poem and all poetic utterance is either praise or blame' (ARISTOTLE).

How useful is this statement for understanding early medieval English literature?

3. Ða se ellengæst earfoðlice
 þrage geþolode, se þe in þystrum bad

('Then the powerful demon suffered terribly for a long time, the one that dwelt in darkness', *Beowulf*, ll. 86-7.)

4. 'We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry' (W.B. YEATS).

Discuss in relation to early medieval English literature.

5. 'Some people, for instance, think that English poetry begins with the Anglo-Saxons. I don't [...]. It is somebody else's poetry' (JAMES FENTON).

6. 'Through the memory of migration, Anglo-Saxon England found its myth of the past and the future' (HOWE).

Discuss.

7. EITHER (a) 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me' (Galatians 2:20).

Write on any aspect of this quotation in relation to early medieval English literature.

OR (b) 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom' (Job 28:28).

Write on any aspect of this quotation in relation to early medieval English literature.

8. 'Women are, at best, peripheral figures in early medieval English literature'.

Discuss.

9. How important is knowledge of manuscript context to our understanding of early medieval English literature?

10. EITHER (a) 'Weal wundrum heah wrymlicum fah'
('The wall wondrously high, adorned with serpent-like features', *The Wanderer*, l. 98)

OR (b) How does our knowledge of material culture affect the way in which we read early medieval English literature?

11. 'Anglo-Saxon literature is as much indebted to the pagan culture of the north as it is to the learning of Rome'. Discuss.

12.

Moððe word fræt
(‘A moth devoured words’)
(EXETER RIDDLE 47).

Write on riddles AND/OR reading in early medieval English.

13. 'We must take care that we do not assume that the presence of the word *wyrd* in a text means that that text is pagan' (BRUCE MITCHELL).

14. 'Many of the old heroic tales were about the winning of a treasure. Treasure fascinated the hearers for its own sake, as sex fascinates the modern reader' (HENRY MAYR- HARTING).

Discuss the theme of treasure in ANY of the texts you have studied from this period.

15. 'The safe symbolic spaces of hearth, village or city were starkly contrasted with the dangerous territories outside, offorest, desert and marsh' (MICHAEL CAMILLE).

Discuss the juxtaposition of 'inner' and 'outer' in ANY literature from this period.

16. 'Every has heard of courtly love, and everyone knows that it appears quite suddenly at the end of the eleventh century in Languedoc.' (C. S. LEWIS).

17.

Ich was in one sumere dale,
In one suþe digele hale.

(‘I was in a summer valley, in a very secluded nook’)

(THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE).

Write on the importance of setting in ANY early medieval English literature.

18. 'Once you've read one saints' life, you've read them all.' Discuss.

19. 'Living through Conquest' (ELAINE TREHARNE).

How did English literature change with the Norman Conquest?

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