

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For the following qualifications :-

B.A.

Middle English Literature I

COURSE CODE : ENGLN45

DATE : 03-MAY-02

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 hours

02-N0113-3-30

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TURN OVER

Answer three questions: Question 1 and two other questions.

Candidates must not present substantially the same material in any two answers, whether on this paper or in other parts of the examination.

1. Write about two of the following passages. You should include such explanations of the language, style and subject matter as seem important for a full appreciation of each passage.

(a)

With buik in hand than come Mercurius,
Richt eloquent and full of rethorie,
With polite termis and delicious,
With pen and ink to report all reddie,
Setting sangis and singand merilie; 5
His hude was reid, heklit atovir his croun,
Lyke to ane poeit of the auld fassoun.

Boxis he bair with fyne electuairis,
And sugerit syropis for digestioun,
Spycis belangand to the pothecairis, 10
With mony hailsum sweat confection;
Doctour in phisick, cled in ane skarlot gown,
And furrit weill – as sic ane aucht to be –
Honest and gude, and not ane word culd lie.

Nixt efter him come lady Cynthia, 15
The last of all and swiftest in hir spheir;
Of colour blak, buskit with hornis twa,
And in the nicht scho listis best appeir;
Haw as the leid, of colour nathing cleir,
For all hir licht scho borrowis at hir brother 20
Titan, for of hirsself scho hes nane uther.

Hir gyte was gray and full of spottis blak,
And on hir breist ane churle paintit full evin
Beirand ane bunche of thornis on his bak,
Quhilk for his thift micht clim na nar the hevin. 25
Thus quhen thay gadderit war, thir goddes sevin,
Mercurius thay cheisit with ane assent
To be foirspeikar in the parliament.

TURN OVER

(b)

Sipen þe sege and þe assaut watz sesed at Troye,
þe borȝ brittined and brent to brondez and askez,
þe tulk þat þe trammes of tresoun þer wroȝt
Watz tried for his tricherie, þe trewest on erthe. 5
Hit watz Ennias þe athel and his highe kynde,
þat sipen depreced prouinces, and patrounes bicome
Welneȝe of al þe wele in þe west iles.
Fro riche Romulus to Rome ricchis hym swyþe,
With gret bobbaunce þat burȝe he biges vpon fyrst 10
And neuenes hit his aune nome, as hit now hat;
Ticius to Tuskan and teldes bigynnes,
Langaberde in Lumbardie lyftes vp homes,
And fer ouer þe French flod, Felix Brutus
On mony bonkkes ful brode Bretayn he settez 15
 Wyth wynne,
 Where werre and wrake and wonder
 Bi syþez hatz wont þerinne
 And oft boþe blysse and blunder
 Ful skete hatz skyfted synne.

(c)

 'Be stille, Ich hote, a Godes nome!'
 Quaþ þe vox, 'Sire Chauntecler,
 þou fle adoun, and com me ner.
 I nabbe don her nout bote goed:
 I have leten þine hennen blod; 5
 Hy weren seke ounder þe ribe,
 þat hy ne miȝtte non lengour libe,
 Bote here heddre were itake,
 þat I do for almes sake.
 Ich have hem letten eddre-blod, 10
 And þe, Chauntecler, hit wolde don goed.
 þou havest þat ilke ounder þe splen,
 You nestes nevere daies ten:
 For þine lifdayes beþ al ago,
 Bote þou bi mine rede do. 15
 I do þe lete blod ounder þe brest,
 Oþer sone axe after þe prest.'
 'Go wei,' quod þe kok, 'wo þe bigo!
 þou havest don oure kunne wo.
 Go mid þan þat þou havest nouþe; 20
 Acoursed be þou of Godes mouþe!
 For were I adoun, bi Godes nome,
 Ich miȝte ben siker of oþre shome.
 Ac weste hit houre cellerer
 þat þou were icomen her, 25
 He wolde sone after þe zonge,
 Mid pikes and stones and staves stronge.
 Alle þine bones he wolde tobreke;
 Pene we weren wel awreke.'

CONTINUED

(d)

'Benedicite be herinne! (F)
Her havest þou, sone, mikel senne.
Loverd, for his suete nome,
Lete þe þerfore haven no shome!
Pou servest affter Godes grome, 5
Wen þou seist on me silk blame.
For Ich am old, and sek, and lame,
Seknesse haveþ made me ful tame.
Blesse þe, blesse þe, leve knave!
Leste þou mesaventer have 10
For þis lesing þat is founden
Opþon me, þat am harde ibonden.
Ich am on holi wimon;
On wicchecraftt nout I ne con,
Bote wiþ gode men almesdede 15
Ilke dai mi lif I fede,
And bidde mi paternoster and mi crede,
Þat Goed hem helpe at hore nede
Þat helpen me mi lif to lede, 20
And leve þat hem mote wel spede.
His lif and his soule worþe ishend
Þat þe to me þis hernde haveþ send.
And leve me to ben iwreken
On him þis shome me haveþ speken.'

'Leve nelde, bilef al þis! (C) 25
Me þinkeþ þat þou art onwis.
Þe mon þat me to þe taute
He weste þat þou hous couþest saute.
Help, Dame Sirip, if þou maut,
To make me wiþ þe sueting saut; 30
And Ich wille geve þe gift ful stark,
Moni a pound and moni a mark,
Warme pilche and warme shon,
Wiþ þat min hernde be wel don.
Of muchel godlec miȝt þou zelpe, 35
If hit be so þat þou me helpe.'

TURN OVER

2. Write on the significance of magic in medieval romance.
3. Do women not play the greatest role within medieval romance, controlling the narrative, obtaining their ends, satisfying their needs, and finally claiming happiness?

(Jean E. Jost)

What do you think?

4. What kind of commentary on knowledge, whether carnal or intellectual, is provided by the fabliaux that you have read?
5. It has been claimed that Layamon's standards are essentially heroic. Are they?
6. Discuss the role of Merlin in at least two examples of Arthurian narrative.
7. How different are the *Stanzaic Morte Arthur* and the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*?
8. J.A.W. Bennett says of *The Peterborough Chronicle* that

the fact that it does not share the aristocratic prejudices of some other chronicles enables it to present the sufferings of ordinary people with considerable sympathy.

Discuss, in relation to *The Peterborough Chronicle*, or any other chronicle writing you have read.

9. Either: (a) It has been argued that Malory's characters are not consistent; that there are several Lancelots, several Gawains, and several Arthurs. Does consistent characterisation matter in Malory's writing?

Or: (b) 'It is not Malory but Malory's French predecessors who first question and undermine the Arthurian myth' (William Calin). Comment on the presentation of 'the Arthurian myth' in Malory. You may, if you wish, refer to his French sources.
10. How effectively does the writer of *Sawles Warde* use allegory as a vehicle for teaching?
11. As Marina Warner puts it, 'through virginity and self-inflicted hardship the faults of female nature could be corrected'. Discuss this view of medieval female spirituality by means of any work or works you have studied for this course.

CONTINUED

12. How far does the poet of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* seek to reconcile precept and experience?
13. Either: (a) Do you discern sympathy for the sinner in any two or more of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Patience* and *Cleanness*?
- Or: (b) Do *Patience* and *Cleanness* improve on the Bible?
14. Either: (a) In the course of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, is any change to be observed in either the narrator, or Genius, or both?
- Or: (b) According to C.S Lewis, *Confessio Amantis* 'tells the story of the death of love'. Discuss.
- Or: (c) Gower's success with classical stories is due in part to his ruthlessness. He has no respect for antiquity nor for the rich resonance of its allusiveness, and no hesitation at all in re-embodiment of its narratives in the social and moral contexts he understands

(Derek Pearsall)

Discuss.

15. Either: (a) "The *Book* does not set out to chronicle a life but to communicate "the forme of her levyng" (Barry Windeatt). Comment on the relation between form and content in *The Book of Margery Kempe*.
- Or: (b) Sche teld hym how sumtyme the Fadyr of hevyn dalyd to hir sowle as pleyedly and as veryly as o frend spekyth to another be bodyly spech.

Discuss the representation of God in *The Book of Margery Kempe*.

16. The importance of the next world is never forgotten but Henryson is still concerned with those who suffer in this one.

(J.A. Tasioulas).

Discuss.

TURN OVER

17. The introduction to one medieval fable collection, the *Fables of Avianus*, declares that the 'usefulness' of fables lies in 'the pleasure given by the verse and the correction of behaviour'. Is there a tension between 'pleasure' and 'correction' in the fables you have read?
18. 'Every narrative is an implied theory of time, a theory of time in action' (Paul Strohm). Discuss with reference to two or more works you have read for this course.
19. Ruth Morse writes of the past as 'the central subject' of much Middle English writing. What evidence would you find for the centrality of the past in any two or more works you have read for this course?
20. Middle English writers were concerned with a range of theoretical issues - authority, reading and audience, instruction, pleasure and truth in history and fiction, and theories of meaning.

(Jocelyn Wogan-Browne).

Isolate one of these areas for consideration in relation to the Middle English literature you have read for this course.

END OF PAPER