

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualification:-

B.A.

Old English Literature I

COURSE CODE : ENGLN20

DATE : 09-MAY-05

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

Answer Section A and Section B and one question from Section C.

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

SECTION A

1. Translate four of the following passages, including at least one from *Beowulf*.

(a)

755. Hēr Cynewulf benam Sigebryht his rīces ond Westseaxna wiotan for unryhtum dǣdum, būton Hamtūnscīre; ond hē hǣfde þā oþ hē ofslōg þone aldormon þe him lengest wunode. Ond hiene þā Cynewulf on Andred ādrǣfde, ond hē þær wunode oþ þæt hiene ān swān ofstang æt Pryfetes flōdan; ond hē wræc þone aldormon Cumbran. Ond se Cynewulf oft miclum gefeohtum feaht uuiþ Bretwālum. Ond ymb xxxi wintra þæs þe hē rīce hǣfde, hē wolde ādrǣfan āne æþeling se was Cyneheard hāten; ond se Cyneheard wæs þæs Sigebryhtes brōþur. Ond þā geāscode hē þone cyning lýtle werode on wīfcýþþe on Merantūne, ond hine þær berād ond þone būr ūtan beode ær hine þā men onfunden þe mid þām kyninge wǣrun.

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Ond þā ongeat se cyning þæt, ond hē on þā duru ēode ond þā unhēanlice hine werode oþ hē on þone æþeling lōcude, ond þā ūt rǣsde on hine ond hine miclum gewundode; ond hīe alle on þone cyning wǣrun feohtende oþ þæt hīe hine ofslāgenne hǣfdon. Ond þā on þæs wīfes gebǣrum onfundon þæs cyninges þegnas þā unstillnesse, ond þā þider urnon swā hwelc swā þonne gearo wearþ ond radost. Ond hiera se æþeling gehwelcum feoh ond feorh gebēad, ond hiera nǣnig hit geþicgean nolde; ac hīe simle feohtende wǣran oþ hīe alle lǣgon būtan ānum Bryttiscum gīsle, ond sē swiþe gewundad wæs.

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TURN OVER

(b)

þær ic ne gehýrde bûtan hlimman sǣ,
iscaldne wæg. Hwílum ylfete song
dyde ic mē tō gomene, ganetes hlēoþor
ond huilpan swæg fore hleahtre wera,
mǣw singende fore medodrince. 5
Stormas þær stānclifu bēotan, þær him stearn oncwæð
isigfeþera; ful oft þæt earn bigeal,
ūrigfeþra; ne ænig hlēomæga
fēasceafsig ferð frēfran meahte.
Forþon him gelyfeð lýt, se þe āh lifes wyn 10
gebiden in burgum, bealosīþa hwōn,
wlonc ond wīngāl, hū ic wērig oft
in brimlāde bīdan sceolde.
Nāp nihtscūa, norþan snīwde,
hrīm hrūsan bond, hægla fēol on eorþan, 15
corna caldast. Forþon cnyssað nū
heortan geþōhtas, þæt ic hēan strēamas,
sealtýþa gelāc sylf cunnige;
monað mōdes lust mæla gehwylce
ferð tō fēran, þæt ic feor heonan 20
elþeodigra eard gesēce.

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(c)

Ðā ongan sēo abbudisse clyppan ond lufigan þā Godes gife in þām men; ond hēo hine þā monade ond lārde þæt hē woruldhād ānforlēte ond munuchād onfēnge; ond hē þæt wel þafode. Ond hēo hine in þæt mynster onfēng mid his gōdum, ond hine geþeodde tō gesomnunge þāra Godes þēowa, ond hēht hine lāran þæt getæl þæs hālgan stāres ond spellas. Ond hē eal þā hē in gehyrnesse geleornian meahhte mid hine gemyndgade, ond swā swā clāne nēten eodorcende in þæt swēteste lēoð gehwerfde. Ond his song ond his lēoð wāron swā wynsumu tō gehýranne þætte þā seolfan his lārēowas æt his mūðe wreoton ond leornodon. Song hē ārest be middangeardes gesceape ond bī fruman moncynnes ond eal þæt stār Genesis (þæt is sēo āreste Moyses booc); ond eft bī ūtgonge Israhēla folces of Ægypta londe ond bī ingonge þæs gehātlandes ond bī oðrum monegum spellum þæs hālgan gewrites canōnes bōca, ond bī Crīstes menniscnesse ond bī his þrōwunge ond bī his ūpāstignesse in heofonas ond bī þæs Hālgan Gāstes cyme ond þāra apostola lāre; ond eft bī þām dæge þæs tōweardan dōmes ond bī fyrhtu þæs tintreglican wiites ond bī swētnesse þæs heofonlecan rīces hē monig lēoð geworhte. Ond swelce ēac oðer monig be þām godcundan fremsumnessum ond dōmum hē geworhte.

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TURN OVER

(d)

Cōm þā tō Heorote ðær Hring-Dene
geond þæt sæld swāfun. þā ðær sōna wearð
edhwyrft eorlum siþðan inne fealh
Grendles mōdor. Wæs se gryre lāssa
efne swā micle swā bið mægþa cræft 5
wiggryre wīfes be wāpnedmen
þonne heoru bunden hamere geþrūen
sweord swāte fāh swīn ofer helme
ecgum dyhtig andweard scireð.
Ðā wæs on healle heardecg togen 10
sweord ofer setlum, sīdrand manig
hafen handa fæst; helm ne gemunde
byrnan sīde þā hine se brōga angeat.
Hēo wæs on ofste, wolde út þanon,
fēore beorgan þā hēo onfunden wæs; 15
hraðe hēo æþelinga āne hæfde
fæste befangen, þā hēo tō fenne gang.
Se wæs Hrōþgāre hæleþa lēofost
on gesīðes hād be sām twēonum
rīce randwiga þone ðe hēo on ræste ābrēat 20
blādfæstne beorn.

CONTINUED

(e)

þā wæs wunden gold on wæn hladen
æghwæs unrīm, æþeling boren,
hār hilderinc tō Hronesnæsse.

XLIII

Him ðā gegiredan Gēata lēode
ād on eorðan unwāclīcne 5
helmum behongen hildebordum
beorhtum byrnum swā hē bēna wæs;
ālegdon ðā tōmiddles mārne þēoden
hæleð hīofende hlāford lēofne.
Ongunnon þā on beorge bālfyra mæst 10
wīgend weccan; wudurēc āstāh
sweart ofer swioðole, swōgende lēg
wōpe bewunden – windblond gelæg –
oð þæt hē ðā bānhūs gebrocen hæfde
hāt on hreðre. Hīgum unrōte 15
mōdceare mændon mondryhtnes cwealm;
swylce giōmorgyd Gēatisc mēowle
æfter Bīowulfe bundenheorde
song sorgcearig, sāde geneahhe
þæt hīo hyre hēofungdagas hearde ondrēde 20
wālfylla worn werudes egesan
hȳnðo ond hæftnȳd. Heofon rēce swealg.

TURN OVER

(f)

Ærest mīn hlāford gewāt heonan of lēodum
ofer yþa gelāc; hæfde ic ūhtceare
hwær mīn lēodfruma londes wære.
Ðā ic mē fēran gewāt folgað sēcan,
winelēas wræcca, for mīnre wēapearfe, 5
ongunnon þæt þæs monnes māgas hycgan
þurh dyrne geþōht, þæt h̄ tōdælden unc;
þæt wit gewīdost in woruldrīce
lifdon lāðlicost, ond mec longade.
Hēt mec hlāford mīn herheard niman, 10
āhte ic lēofra lýt on þissum londstede,
holdra frēonda, for þon is mīn hyge geōmor.
Ðā ic mē ful gemæcne monnan funde,
heardsæligne, hygegeōmorne,
mōd mīþendne, morþor hycgendne 15
bliþe gebæro. Ful oft wit beotedan
þæt unc ne gedælde nemne dēað āna
ōwiht elles; eft is þæt onhworfen,
is nū swā hit nāfre wære,
frēondscipe uncer. Sceal ic feor ge nēah 20
mīnes felalēofan fāhðu drēogan.

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SECTION B

2. Choose two of the passages which you have translated in Question 1, including at least one from *Beowulf*, and comment on any points of literary and stylistic interest.

SECTION C

3. Discuss the importance of dynastic instability as a theme in *Beowulf*.
4. The poet of *Beowulf*, according to J.D. Niles, presents his heroes 'as noble souls who by their own intuition seem capable of discerning the one true God'. Discuss what you consider to be the religious status of the characters in this poem.
5. Roberta Frank has called *Beowulf* 'the Good Samaritan Geat'. To what extent do you think *Beowulf*'s heroic deeds are selflessly, rather than selfishly, motivated?
6. Is the 'lack of steady advance', which Friedrich Klaeber identified in *Beowulf*, a structural flaw?
7. Making sense of the stories told or hinted at in the 'elegies' has proved obdurately difficult, so difficult as to make one think that perhaps no story was ever intended.

(T.A. Shippey)

How important is the story to any one or more of the Old English elegies?

8. Make a case for considering either *The Wife's Lament*, or *Wulf and Eadwacer*, or both poems, as belonging to the riddle genre.
9. 'Secret longing and tears seem to belong to a woman's world, not to a man's' (A.J. Frantzen). Is this a satisfactory representation of the woman's world in *Wulf and Eadwacer* and *The Wife's Lament*?

TURN OVER

10. Anne L. Klinck suggests that the ideas of the second, non-seafaring, part of *The Seafarer* 'are presented in a somewhat disjointed fashion'. How do you interpret this part of *The Seafarer* in relation to the overall integrity of the poem?
11. Lewis Carroll's Mad Hatter, having posed the riddle 'Why is a raven like a writing-desk?', confesses to Alice that he does not himself know the answer. To what extent does it matter whether or not the solutions of the Old English Riddles are known?
12. 'Cynewulf may have been caught with his pants down but he sure died with his boots on' (K. Ferro). Examine the nature of heroism as presented in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for 755.
13. Compare representations of innocence in the stories about Edwin and Cædmon in the Old English version of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*.
14. Hugh Magennis states that in Old English literature 'descriptions of halls and hall life are emotively evocative rather than specific'. In the light of this statement, discuss the presentation of any halls you have found in the works on this course.
15. To what extent is it possible to argue for individual authorial style in one or more of the poems you have read on this course?
16. 'The immediate manuscript context of *Beowulf* may perhaps provide valuable clues for how the poem was read and understood' (Andy Orchard). Consider the implications of manuscript context for either *Beowulf*, or any other Old English work you have read on this course.
17. Readers should always remember that the title *Beowulf* has no authority whatever, and we could equally well call the poem *Deeds of Germanic Heroes* or *Men and Monsters in the Ancient North*.

(Bruce Mitchell)

Consider the appropriateness of either the title *Beowulf* or the title given to any other Old English work you have read on this course.

END OF PAPER