

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualification:–

M.A.

M.A. Scandinavian Studies (Medieval & West Norse Studies): 3g. Sources for the Viking Age

COURSE CODE : SCAN003G

DATE : 16-SEP-04

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

Answer THREE questions, including at least ONE from each Section. All questions carry equal marks. A candidate may not in any answer cover the same ground as in an assessed or extended essay. Avoid any duplication of material within this paper.

SECTION A

1. EITHER: (a) Discuss the god Odin and his place in the Norse pantheon.
OR: (b) Consider the figure of Loki in Norse mythology.
2. What value do *Grœnlendinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða* have as sources of information for Norse landings on the North American continent?
3. 'Despite the obviously apocryphal matter they contain, we cannot dismiss them as sources for the history of Norway in the late ninth and early tenth centuries.' Consider this view of Snorri Sturluson's *Haralds saga hárfagra* and *Hákonar saga góða*.
4. 'Nobody would give any credence to *Yngvars saga víðfórla* as a historical source if what it says were not to some extent borne out by some two dozen runic inscriptions from central Sweden.' Discuss.
5. What are the advantages and what the disadvantages of skaldic poetry as a source for the history of the Viking Age?

SECTION B

6. Give a critical account of the fourth book of Adam of Bremen's *Gesta* as a source of information about Viking-Age conditions.
7. What interest does Ibn Fadlan's account of the Rus ship-funeral on the Volga have for the student of the Viking Age?
8. What have you learnt of the material culture of ninth-century Norway from Ohthere's 'narrative' contained in King Alfred's *Orosius*?
9. Give an account based on *The Anglo-Saxon chronicle* of Scandinavian activity in England over the period 950-1050.
10. 'The evidence of *The Russian primary chronicle* is crucial to our assessment of the Normanist controversy.' Discuss.
11. Consider the value of Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii* as a source for the study of the Viking Age.