

EN282 Exam

Medieval Studies A: Myth and Legend

Time: 10 mins perusal + 2 hours working

Answer BOTH QUESTIONS

Questions are of equal marks

The exam represents 40% of the semester total

No books are permitted in the examination room

Question 1.

For two of the following passages, write a commentary of 250-300 words including the following information:

- the text from which the extract is taken
- a brief statement explaining the place and significance of the extract in the text from which it comes
- its historical context (give an approximate date and refer to any event or issue with which it connects)
- a brief account of its genre ["Genre" here refers to the particular genre of the text; not to the categories "myth" / "legend."]

(i)

The court of the kyndom of God alyve living
Has a property in hytself beyng:
Alle that may therinne aryve
Of alle the reme is quen other kyng, realm; or
And never other yet schal de pryve;
Bot unchon fayn of otheses hafyng,
And wolde her corounes wern worthe tho fyve,
If possyble were her mendyng.
Bot my Lady of quom Jesu con spryng, was born
Ho haldes the empyre over uus ful hyghe; absolute sway
And that dyspleses non of oure gyng, company
For ho is Quene of cortaysye.

a) Pearl

b) From questioning of Pearl about being given with no work.

c) late C14 — Parallel of vineyard — linked to shortage of peasant after the plague + ↑ mobility of werts.
removed to a distant land — anyth wife.

d) Dream vision — 1st person / allegorical / naive person — companion who teaches.
same instruction.
may be comic / serious religious / secular.

(ii)

The brother of Sibrht, both he and many others split the hollow shields and warded off the seafarers. The corner of the shield broke and the corselet sang a terrible song. Then in the fight Offa struck a seafarer; he fell to the earth. But the kinsman of Gadd was killed there too, Offa was quickly brought down in the battle. Yet he had kept his promise to his prince just as he once boasted to his ring-giver, that they should both ride to the stronghold, return home uninjured, or both fall in battle, bleeding from wounds on the field of slaughter. He lay near his lord as befits a thane.

a) Malden

b) after Byrhtnoth's fall

A-S church.

c) 991 Dunstan

Shame

(written early 10th)

d) Epic - heroic virtue - Comitatus
- loyalty to lord/ring-giver
- boasting in hall
- no horses!
- woman role as peace weaver, cup bearer.

(iii)

Then the third one was lifted up in its holiness. The corpse was in waiting until the Prince's cross was reared above him, the tree of the heaven-King, the true emblem of victory. At once he rose up, furnished with his spirit, body and soul both together. There was seemly praise exalted among the people; they honoured the Father and extolled aloud the true Son of the Ruler:

'To him be glory and the thanks of all creatures for ever without end.'

Then within the heart of the people remained present to their consciousness, as they always must be, those miracles which the Lord of the multitudes, the Guide of life, accomplished for the salvation of mankind.

(20 marks)

Question 2.

Respond, in a commentary of about 500 words, to the following statement:

"The legends of the knights of the court of King Arthur often contain elements of myth."

In your response, you should refer in detail to the texts Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and Le Morte D'Arthur of Sir Thomas Malory.

(20 marks)

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EN282 2/97 Factual Test 8 September 1997

The test is worth 10% of the semester total. There are 10 questions, each worth 1 mark.

Write the answer to each question in the space provided beneath the question.

1. What date is usually regarded as marking the beginning of the incursions of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes into England?

449

2. Which was the first of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to experience a period of outstanding cultural development?

Northumbria

3. When did Alfred the Great manage to defeat the Vikings and establish peaceful co-existence between them and the Anglo-Saxon peoples?

878

4. When were the major codices of Anglo-Saxon poetry produced?

late 10th Century (under the monastic revival of King Edgar)

5. When was The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle begun and when were the last entries in it made?

In the reign of King Alfred - late 9th century / last entries 1154

6. When did Iceland convert to Christianity?

1000

7. When was the "Age of Settlement" in Iceland?

874 - 930

8. What was the name of the Icelandic "Assembly"?

Althing (Alþing)

9. What event marks the end of the "Old English" period and the beginning of the "Middle English" period and when did it take place?

Battle of Hastings / Norman conquest 1066

10. Of the two languages, Old and Middle English, which is best described as "inflected"?

~~Old English~~ dd