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ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BENGALURU-27

MA ENGLISH – I SEMESTER

SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2021

(Examination conducted in February-March 2022)

**EN 7118 - British Literature - I**

**Time 2.5 HOURS MAX. MARKS 70**

**This Question Paper Contains FIVE Printed Pages and FOUR Parts**

**Instructions:**

1. **You are allowed to use a dictionary.**
2. **Don’t exceed the word limit.**
3. **Answer ANY ONE of the questions given below in about 300 words. (1x15=15)**
4. What historical forces and cultural politics can you discern in the hegemony of the literature of England over that of the rest of Britain?
5. Comment on the way Anglo-Saxon literature evolved into Middle English literature.
6. **Answer ANY TWO of the following in about 200 words each: (2x10=20)**
7. How does the prologue of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* deploy the genre of ‘estate satire’ to capture a society in the throes of transition from the medieval era to the modern?
8. With relevant illustrations show how *Beowulf* blends Christian and Pagan (Pre-Christian) elements into a workable synthesis.
9. Comment on the way *Gawaine and the Green Knight* nuances the genre of the chivalric romance through complex and rather ambivalent symbolism.
10. **Annotate the following extracts in about 200 words each, identifying the source and explaining the immediate context**. **Comment also on the style and tone of the lines. (2x10=20)**
11. **EXTRACT A**

For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,

Which that, he seyde, was Oure Lady veyl;

He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl

That Seinte Peter hadde, whan that he wente

Upon the see, til Jesu Crist hym hente.

He hadde a croys of latoun, ful of stones,

And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.

But with thise relikes, whan that he fond

A povre person dwellynge upon lond,

Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye

Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;

And thus with feyned flaterye and japes

He made the person and the peple his apes.

But trewely to tellen atte laste,

He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste;

[For in his bag he had a pillowcase  
The which, he said, was Our True Lady's veil:  
He said he had a piece of the very sail  
That good Saint Peter had, what time he went  
Upon the sea, till Jesus changed his bent.  
He had a latten cross set full of stones,  
And in a bottle had he some pig's bones.  
But with these relics, when he came upon  
Some simple parson, then this paragon  
In that one day more money stood to gain  
Than the poor dupe in two months could attain.  
And thus, with flattery and suchlike japes,  
He made the parson and the rest his apes.  
But yet, to tell the whole truth at the last,  
He was, in church, a fine ecclesiast.]

**EXTRACT B**

And sleeping I saw the strangest of dreams:

That I wandered a wilderness, not knowing where,

And high in the east, looking up at the sun,

Saw a tower on a toft, built sturdy and true

To the west, further down, were a dale and a dungeon

With deep, dark ditches that I gazed on with dread.

Between them I found a fair field full of folk,

All manner of men, both moneyed and poor,

Either walking or working at what the world wants.

Some were pushing a plow with no time for play,

And were sweating as they scattered and sowed the seed

And gathered the grain that the greedy would squander;

Some were pouting like popinjays, strutting with pride,

Bedecked in dandified, elegant dress;

And many were practicing penitence and prayer,

Living soberly and strictly for the sake of our Lord

In the hope that they’d have their reward in heaven,

Such as anchorites, hermits who aren’t seen abroad

And don’t go roistering round the roads

Or lead lives of luxury, lechery and lust.

1. **Read this poem by Chaucer, said to be the last he wrote, (given here in the original and in modern English translation):**

**The Complaint of Chaucer to his Purse**

To yow, my purse, and to noon other wight

Complaine I, for ye be my lady dere.

I am so sory now that ye be light,

For certes but if ye make me hevy chere,

Me were as leef be leyd upon my bere,

For which unto your mercy thus I crye

Beth hevy ageyn or elles mot I dye.

Now voucheth-sauf this day er it be night

That I of yow the blisful soun may here,

Or see your colour lyke the sonne bright

That of yelownesse hadde never pere.

Ye be my lyf, ye be myn hertes stere,

Quene of comfort and of good companye,

Beth hevy ageyn or elles mot I dye.

Now purse that been to me my lyves lyght

And saveour as doun in this worlde here

Out of this toune help me thurgh your might

Sin that ye wole nat been my tresorere

For I am shave as nye as any frere;

But yet I prey unto your curtesye,

Beth hevy ageyn or elles mot I dye.

Lenvoy de Chaucer

O conquerour of Brutes Albyoun

Which that by line and free eleccioun

Been verray king, this song to yow I sende,

And ye that mowen alle oure harmes amende

Have minde upon my supplicacioun.

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[*To you, my purse, and to no other sight*

*Do I complain, to you my lady dear.*

*I am sorry, you are so light;*

*Unless you make me heavy cheer,*

*I may as well be laid upon my bier;*

*Therefore unto your mercy now I cry,*

*Be heavy again, or I must die.*

*Now promise on this day before tis night*

*That I of you the blissful sound may hear*

*Or see you glow like the sun bright*

*Whose yellow colour hath no peer.*

*You are my life, you who my heart steer.*

*Queen of comfort and of good company,*

*Be heavy again, or I must die.*

*Now purse that are to me my life’s light*

*And saviour down on earth here,*

*Out of this town help me with your might,*

*Since you refuse to be my treasurer;*

*Since I am shaved as close as a friar.*

*But yet I pray unto your courtesy,*

*Be heavy again or else I die.*

*\*\*\**

*Oh, conqueror of Brutus’ Albion,*

*Who by your lineage and through free election*

*You are my veritable king, this song to you I send,*

*And you, who can all our woes amend,*

*Be mindful of my supplication.]*

**IV.A. Answer the following questions in about five sentences each: (3x5=15)**

1. What can you infer about the narrator’s predicament?
2. What strikes you most about the imagery and tone of the poem?
3. What stylistic and metrical features in the original do you find appealing and why?