

Set by
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EN2322/EN3322

TWO HOURS

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Wednesday 28 May 2003
09:45 – 11:45

ANGLO-SAXON WOMAN

Answer TWO questions.

Avoid duplication of material (including material used in assessed coursework and in answering other parts of this examination). The use of dictionaries is prohibited. Do not base any answer entirely on *Beowulf*.

PTO

1. In 1793 James Douglas observed that 'the [Anglo-Saxon pagan] dead were ... entombed with their customary apparel when alive'. How has our perception of women's dress accessories as grave-goods changed?
2. Show how evidence of pre-Christian women as healers/ housekeepers/ craftworkers can be teased out of archaeological finds.
3. How is Christian faith demonstrated on Anglo-Saxon women's jewellery?
4. Discuss the view that women played a major role in the establishment of the Christian Church in England and its missionary outposts.
5. 'The story of Æthelthryth [Etheldreda] ... is all about sex, desire and the absent woman' (Catherine Karkov). Discuss.
6. Consider the significance for Anglo-Saxon women of Aldhelm's categorisation of virginity into three different 'levels'.
7. 'Because of their insistence on a common vocabulary, descriptive imagery, religious themes, narrative patterns, and character paradigms, saints' lives are emphatically intertextual. They rely on each other and on a larger Christian cultural history to construct meaning' (Donovan). Comment on this assessment.
8. 'Eve, the original sinner, is a more convincing character than the virtuous woman of Anglo-Saxon narrative'. Discuss with reference to *Genesis B* and at least ONE other text.
9. Does the *Judith*-poet present his biblical heroine as an exemplum of Christian faith?
10. Why, do you think, did Anglo-Saxon poets refer to women as 'peaceweavers'? Use evidence from material culture to support your answer.
11. Discuss embroidery as an art form, referring to AT LEAST ONE major example of Anglo-Saxon needlework.
12. 'Female characters speak their minds'. Do you agree with this judgement? What is the effect of the emphasis on speeches in Old English or Latin Anglo-Saxon texts about women?

13. 'The female characters of Anglo-Saxon literature are generally isolated in a masculine world'. Discuss with reference to AT LEAST TWO examples.
14. Discuss the Anglo-Saxon fascination with wicked or monstrous females, mentioning AT LEAST TWO examples. You may use textual material and/or material from art; you may, if you wish, take evidence from the pictures on the accompanying sheet. (It is up to you to decide which of them are 'bad'.)
15. Select any TWO representations of virtuous women or female saints in Anglo-Saxon art from the accompanying sheet and show how they functioned theologically and symbolically.