



**General Certificate of Education**

**Classical Civilisation**

**CIV2F The Second Punic War**

**Report on the Examination**

*June examination - 2009 series*

**This Report on the Examination uses the [new numbering system](#)**

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

Copyright © 2009 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

#### COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

## **CIV2F The Second Punic War**

Most candidates demonstrated reasonable knowledge of the changing fortunes of the war, including Hannibal's successes and failures. There was a tendency to express these in somewhat simplistic generalisations rather than to analyse key points to develop an argument, and the overall level of performance was disappointing on this topic. The gap in time covered by Livy Books 23 to 28 (which are not included in the set reading) confused a number of candidates who regarded the aftermath of Cannae in Book 22 as being contemporary with Scipio's African campaign of Book 29. Candidates must be aware of both the lengthy passage of time here and, in outline at least, the course of events during these years. A number spoke of Fabius Maximus and the younger Scipio as if they shared a common strategic approach, or were even the same person. Plutarch's *Life of Fabius Maximus* is a set text, but knowledge of this was often minimal. Only a handful of candidates answered Option B. Those who did so tended to score poorly compared to the average performance on Option A. The 30-mark essay on religion and morality (Question 09) produced some good answers, with a higher mean mark than the much more popular comparison of Plutarch and Livy in Question 10. However, the majority of candidates on both questions failed to achieve above Level 3 because of generalisation.

### **Option A**

Part 01 was generally known, but answers to 02 tended to look at what Hannibal did in the longer term rather than the next day. More than half of the answers thus failed to score. Question 03, by contrast, produced a large number of very full and sensible responses, a sizeable majority reaching at least Level 3. Most answers provided a good balance of argument, although Hannibal's situation was generally better known than were the weaknesses in the Roman position. Many strengths were evident in the 20-mark essays on Hannibal's delay, Question 04. Despite some confusion over the time span, as alluded to in the introduction, the general thrust of the question was understood, and there were many graphic illustrations of the panic in Rome, closely following Livy's account. Most candidates revealed sound knowledge of the underlying facts and used them well; the consensus seemed to be that reasons other than the delay lost Hannibal the war. Often the rationale behind this was sound, but occasionally the years of Fabian policies after Cannae were totally overlooked. These are a fundamental issue in this argument.

### **Option B**

Very few candidates attempted this question so it was hard to pick out any significant trends. Question 05 was answered correctly by all who chose this question, but no candidates scored more than two for the follow-up 4-mark questions; the only point raised by most was that Scipio did not heed the advice. Some of the answers to Question 07 made a number of valid points, but others managed no more than the odd generalisation and could only be awarded to Level 1. The short essay on the fickleness or otherwise of the African characters was somewhat better attempted. With close attention to the set passages from Livy, this was an approachable question. Most responses achieved Level 3, but again many were of a very general nature, lacking any detail to support their assertions. Some candidates based their answers on a lengthy discussion of Livy's value or otherwise as a source. In principle this was laudable, but to gain credit it needed to be explicitly linked to arguments about Syphax and the other characters.

### **Option C**

Religious and moral issues are a key feature of Livy's account in Books 21 and 22. A pleasing number of the relatively few students who chose this essay started by introducing specific examples of apparent failings in these areas, then moved on to discuss the possible reasons for Livy's heavy emphasis on these. They often speculated over whether he can be regarded as a genuine historian, given his determination to link matters of morality to every setback met by the Romans up to and including Cannae. Those candidates who moved on to contrast Livy's earlier approach with his more positive reporting of the successes of Books 29 and 30 sometimes introduced a note of cynicism by citing possible bias resulting from his links with the Scipio family. The best essays revealed a degree of empathy with the changing political situation in Rome, understood the strengths and limitations of Livy's approach, and had good recall of the main incidents from both the earlier unsuccessful period and the later achievements of Scipio. Disappointingly, there were no Level 5 essays on this question.

### **Option D**

Although the majority of candidates chose this question, the standard was generally lower than for Question 3. Most answers started with an adequate introductory paragraph on the dates and literary intentions of the two authors; a significant minority were unsure of either of these factors, some seeing Livy as dependent on Plutarch for his material. Candidates then continued in one of two ways: a sizeable group moved on to discuss in outline the possible distortions which might have led from the different dates and genres. They then concluded by summarising these points without any reference, direct or indirect, to either of the works. Such responses tended to score marks in Level 2. Other candidates introduced examples from Plutarch such as the childhood of Fabius, leading to discussion of Plutarch's coverage of areas not found in Livy. Some pointed out how quickly Plutarch dealt with battles such as Cannae, then linked the reasons for this to his different aims as a writer. It was disappointing that few essays went beyond these points, but this approach tended to achieve marks within Levels 3 and 4. There were no Level 5 essays on this question either.