



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Classical Civilisation

CIV3B

Unit3B The Persian Wars

**Exemplar Script 2
Grade A 56/75**

SECTION 1**Option A****04 Outline the circumstances in which Darius makes the speech from which this passage is taken. Make five points. (5 marks)**

Part of Darius' last speech [1] before he and Atossa [1] cede the stage to the returning Xerxes [1]. He and the Chorus [1] have been providing an extensive reaction [1] to the Messenger's account of Salamis [1] and predicting further disaster [1] for troops attempting to get home [1].

Response

Darius has just been told about Xerxes defeat in Greece. He has been told by Atossa about Xerxes bridging of the Hellespont, Darius has been raised from Hades by Atossa and the chorus he has made a speech about the former Kings of Persia.

Comment

This answer gains a mark for identifying the news to which Darius reacts here, and another for the circumstances of his presence onstage with the Chorus and Atossa.

2 marks**05 In the whole of Darius' speech from which the passage comes, how effectively does Aeschylus pass judgement on Xerxes' activities? (10 Marks)****Level 4** Demonstrates

- accurate and relevant knowledge covering central aspects of the question
- clear understanding of central aspects of the question
- ability to put forward an argument which for the most part has an analytical and/or evaluative focus appropriate to the question and uses knowledge to support opinion
- ability generally to use specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

8-10**Level 3** Demonstrates

- a range of accurate and relevant knowledge
- some understanding of some aspects of the question
- some evidence of analysis and/or evaluation appropriate to the question
- some ability to use specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

5-7

Level 2	Demonstrates either	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of accurate and relevant knowledge 	
	or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some relevant opinions with inadequate accurate knowledge to support them. 	3-4
Level 1	Demonstrates either	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some patchy, accurate and relevant knowledge 	
	or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an occasional attempt to make a relevant comment with no accurate knowledge to support it. 	1-2

Response

Darius speech is very effective in passing judgment on Xerxes. Indeed Broadhead argues when Darius speaks it is Aeschylus using him to voice his own opinions. He marks strong comments on “Xerxes youthful folly” or the cause of Xerxes issues as well as the hubristic arrogance of Xerxes “my proud son, exultant in his countless ships”. This accurately covers two major criticisms of Xerxes in the Persians. This judgment covers the impious nature of xerxes invasion that “Xerxes in his mortal folly sought to over power the immortal gods” and goes so far to call Xerxes attempt “madness”. The sacrilegious nature of Xerxes hubristic pride is a major criticism by Darius and part of Darius judgement is the punishment Xerxes will endure “ruin and untold pain... the just reward for godless insolence. In true tragic style this nemesis is as powerful as Xerxes earlier hubris “their sacrilege is equal to their suffering”. To Darius this punishment is divine plan due to prophecy and this again shows the religious nature of his criticism – that worst of all Xerxes was so proud and hubristic he sought to challenge the gods.

Comment

This answer comments in some detail on Darius’ expressed view of Xerxes as arrogant, hubristic, sacrilegious, and essentially self-destructive and deserving of divine punishment. It might have reflected a little on the presentation of Darius as a mature figure, qualified to express these views, for a higher mark.

Level 3**6marks**

06 How far did the circumstances of the original production of *The Persians* affect both its structure and its message? (20 Marks)

Level 5	Demonstrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well chosen, accurate and relevant knowledge covering most of the central aspects of the question • coherent understanding of the central aspects of the question • ability to sustain an argument which • has an almost wholly analytical and/or evaluative focus, • responds to the precise terms of the question, • effectively links comment to detail, • has a clear structure • reaches a reasoned conclusion 	19-20
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- is clear and coherent, using appropriate, accurate language and
- makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

Level 4	<p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally adequate, accurate and relevant knowledge covering many of the central aspects of the question • understanding of many of the central aspects of the question • ability to develop an argument which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has a generally analytical and/or evaluative focus, is broadly appropriate to the question, mainly supports comment with detail and has a discernible structure is generally clear and coherent, using appropriate, generally accurate language and generally makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate. 	14-18
Level 3	<p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of accurate and relevant knowledge • some understanding of some aspects of the question • some evidence of analysis and/or evaluation appropriate to the question • some ability to structure a response using appropriate language, although with some faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar • some ability to use specialist vocabulary when appropriate. 	9-13
Level 2	<p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either a range of accurate and relevant knowledge • or some relevant opinions with inadequate accurate knowledge to support them • and sufficient clarity, although there may be more widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	5-8
Level 1	<p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either some patchy, accurate and relevant knowledge • or an occasional attempt to make a relevant comment with no accurate knowledge to support it • and little clarity; there may be widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar. 	1-4

Response

Aeschylus wrote 'the Persae' just a few years after Salamis in Athens and this does effect the play. However 'the Persae' is still a tragedy with Xerxes as the tragic hero and as such the message is not altered, because the tragic hero needs to bring katharsis in the audience. The structure, however is altered.

The circumstances of Aeschylus play ensure that the subject matter would be a tender matter for all Greeks. Indeed much a Aeschylus audience would have fought; some have argued Aeschylus did too as his brother died at marathos. This could lead into a nationalistic or even jingoistic account of the war and Salamis, where the Athenians gave most of the ships. Indeed some parts of Aeschylus' *Persae* do have a nationalistic element such as the battle cry "forward you sons of Hellas! Set your country free!", which is hugely nationalistic. This also occurs with a slight bias towards Athens such as by the councillors telling Atossa that "once Athens conquered he is master of Hellos". Thus the nationalism of Aeschylus due to his context does alter the narrative of the play.

However this occurs only a small amount of the time. In fact at points Aeschylus portrayal of the brutality of war can seem positively anti-Greek. The killing of the Persian nobles on Psyttelia is described very harshly "they cut and carved like butchers" and even Salamis at points seems distasteful "like funnies or some melted haul the sea as over din of shrieks and groans of death". Therefore the message of the play is not elevate Athens and Greece in a nationalistic sense.

The reason for this is the tragic message of Aeschylus. For the play to be a successful tragedy the audience must feel katharsis (purging) due to the tragedy and pathos of the hero - in this case Xerxes. Thus should Aeschylus let the play be a jingoistic account of the war with Xerxes as a stereotyped villain no pathos could be produced. As such Xerxes must follow the tragic formulae of hubris and nemesis - a proud rise and shattering fall, which he does in equal amounts "their sacrelige is equal to his suffering.

The hubris of Xerxes is huge. He is shown as an all powerful king whose words are commands. "The kings dread word spoke a million sabres hear . The best example of this pride is "himself the freer of gods" showing how mighty Xerxes thinks he is and this hubris leads him to invade Greece, challenging the gods "he is his mortal folly sought to overpower the immortal gods was not this some madness". What this shows is both the totally hubristic nature of Xerxes but also that is due to "folly" and "madness" and as such he can be pitied when he falls.

This fall (nemesis) or huge, as great as the hubris before. Aeschylus takes this god-king and has his army destroyed totally "never before in one day died so vast a company of men". This brutal destruction of his army adds to the pathos for Xerxes and is the true reason both for the nationalistic portrayal of the Greeks and the brutal portrayal of war as both emphasise his defeat. This nemesis is not only for Xerxes army but also destroy Persia too "in every house mourns a man and parents, now children lament". What this meant is the destruction of Xerxes power due to his hamartia (fatal flaw) extends to his whole world. The miracle of the nemesis and therefore kathartic pathos is Xerxes return "in the tattered rags of royal finery" showing physically his fall from grace. The Xerxes presented is now totally humbled and calls himself "a piteous outcast born to destroy my race" and proceeds to have a last song of the players a tragic lament. This is a hugely effective nemesis and brings pathos for Xerxes. Had Aeschylus let the context of this production alter the message of the play it would reduce the pathos for Xerxes and therefore would not work.

However this does not mean the structure of the play is unchanged. Aeschylus is dealing with an audience who were very knowledgeable about the invasion and especially Salamis having lived through or taken an active part in it.

This alters some narrative details, such as the jingoistic nationalism sometimes found but not the message. But the main structural offshoot of this is Aeschylus puts little detail in about the invasion itself – no Greek leaders are mentioned, bar Themistocles and the details of the battle are restricted to “in the narrow space our ships were jammed”. Therefore the knowledge of the Persian invasion due to Aeschylus circumstance allow Aeschylus to omit large amount of explanation from his structure making the tragic message of the play more clear.

To conclude the tragic nature of the Persae means that allowing the circumstances of his writing to change the message of his play would ruin its katharsis and thus no change in message occurs due to Aeschylus circumstance. However, this doesn't mean certain narrative, such as the portrayal of the Greeks and the structure, in the lack of explanation of Salamis, are unchanged. Indeed the circumstances of Aeschylus change these hugely.

Comment

This answer essentially pursues an interest in the play as a tragedy, while dealing briefly with the probable intentions Aeschylus had in writing about events in which he and his audience had been deeply involved. The consequences and effects of giving it a Persian setting are explored in considerable detail, not least the omission of much of the potential detail of Greek personalities and actions, which allows the answer to pursue a view of the play as a largely moral reflection on the pursuit of war and its consequences, rather than a piece of jingoistic propaganda for an Athenian audience. In adopting this strategy it plays down the identifiable pro-Athenian propaganda to foreground Xerxes' hubris. A more balanced view of the play would have improved the answer.

Level 4

14 marks

Option D

- 08 How far do you think that both Herodotus and Aeschylus are sympathetic to the Persians and their culture? Support your answer by reference to both texts. (40 Marks)**

Level 5 Demonstrates

- well chosen, accurate and relevant knowledge from different sources which thoroughly covers the central aspects of the question
- coherent and perceptive understanding of the links between the central aspects of the question and the values of the classical world
- ability to sustain an argument which is explicitly comparative, has an almost wholly analytical and/or evaluative focus, responds to the precise terms of the question, fluently links comment to detail,

37-40

has a clear and logical structure
 reaches a reasoned conclusion
 is clear and coherent, using appropriate, accurate
 language and
 makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

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| Level 4 | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally adequate, accurate and relevant knowledge from different sources which covers many of the central aspects of the question • sound understanding of many of the central aspects of the question, including the values implicit in the material under discussion • ability to develop an argument which makes connections and comparisons, has a generally analytical and/or evaluative focus, is broadly appropriate to the question, mainly supports comment with detail and has a discernible structure is generally clear and coherent, using appropriate, generally accurate language and generally makes use of specialist vocabulary when appropriate. | 27-36 |
| Level 3 | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a range of accurate and relevant knowledge from different sources • some understanding of some aspects of the question, including some awareness of classical values • some evidence of analysis and/or evaluation appropriate to the question • some ability to structure a response using appropriate language, although with some faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar • some ability to use specialist vocabulary when appropriate. | 17-26 |
| Level 2 | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either a range of accurate and relevant knowledge • or some relevant opinions with inadequate accurate knowledge to support them • and sufficient clarity, although there may be more widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar. | 8-16 |
| Level 1 | <p>Demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • either some patchy, accurate and relevant knowledge • or an occasional attempt to make a relevant comment with no accurate knowledge to support it • and little clarity; there may be widespread faults of spelling, punctuation and grammar. | 1-7 |

Response

In both Aeschylus "Persians" and Herodotus' "The Histories", the Persians and their culture do receive varying degrees of sympathy. In Aeschylus they are given total sympathy as it is a Persian based tragedy therefore the audience must feel sympathetic towards the Persians in order for the katharsis at the end of the play to work. However in Herodotus, the sympathy the Persian culture receives is tainted by the depiction of Xerxes who is shown to be mostly cruel, stupid and cowardly. However there is still sympathy engendered towards the lower ranking Persians.

"The flower of your youth is fallen," this line from the messenger aptly sums up the tragedy that has befallen the Persians, all their young are dead. The play primarily focuses on the mourning of the women, the worrying of Amata, the advice of Darius and the arrival of Xerxes himself. Aeschylus focuses the tragedy on the impact of war and therefore treats the Persians with great sympathy in particular the women "countless women, partners in one grief, bedew their bosoms with tears like rivers flowing". The sheer focus of tragedy is combined with the vastness of the losses "a thousand thousand are no more". As Aeschylus was aiming to write a Persian based tragedy this is the key and therefore shows how he treats the impacts of war upon Persian culture. While he also mentions the wealth of Persia, describing it as a "haven of ample wealth" he does not focus as significantly upon the loss of wealth as he does upon the loss of life.

"Who led them forth but Xerxes? Who sealed their deaths but Xerxes? ... son of Darius the Invincible." Like Herodotus, Aeschylus blames the damage to Persian culture upon its monocratic (boarding on Theocratic as they defy Darius and other kings) structure. While the whole of Persians society suffers from the nemesis Xerxes actions, it is his own Hybrids that creates the problem "he in his mortal folly dared to overpower immortal gods... was this not some madness?" Furthermore the list of previous Persian monarchs as well as the direct comparisons to Darius increases the pathos created towards the Persians as it shows that it is specially Xerxes that caused their downfall. While Atossa's line "no state can hold him answerable. Winner or loser while he lives he is still Persian's king," is practically a boast of the superiority of the democracy over monocracy due to the element of accountability, it also suggests that Xerxes will be able to carry on ruling therefore generating more sympathy to Persian society. However when Xerxes arrives at the end to perform an extended thranios (lament) he declares he is a "loathed and piteous outcast born to destroy his own race" showing that he is ruined combined with the symbolism of his shreds of royal finery (as clothes were indicative of status in Persian society).

Lastly the praise of Darius heightens the pathos towards Persia as while he can advise he is their preferred ruler "Dearly we love Darius" but can only offer advice.

However in Herodotus Persian society is marred more by Xerxes actions. While earlier Persians are respectful of other religions such as Datis sparing Delos on Book 6 and "piling three hundred talents of frankincense upon the altar as an offering" Xerxes is depicted to be impious not only in his burning of temples such as in Eretria where he "stripped bare and burnt the temples in revenge for burnt temples at Sardis" but also in his treatment of the Hellespont. Rivers were considered deities in Greece and so when the Persians are ordered to whip it saying "you salt and bitter stream, your master lays this punishment upon you," he is being highly impious (in conjunction with the act of bridging it which was considered sacrilege).

While in Aeschylus we only see the Hybris and Nemesis elements of the tragic cycle in Herodotus, due to the greater levels of detail given, we see the ate (madness) stage as well.

The portrayal of average Persian troops is shown to be of a cruel and entrapped people while the fact they are “plied with whips” across the Helles point bridge and into the battle at Thermopylae generates some sympathy towards them, acts such as the burning to temple of Abae where they burn the town and the women were raped to death only create a negative image of the troops.

Higher level commanders such as Artemisia (whose prominence can only be accredited to Herodotus’ compalimismo) are shown to be manipulative such as when she rams the Cyodian King to survive Salamis or advises Xerxes to let Mardonius stay behind with 200 000 men to take Greece “He is your slave, if he wins you take the credit”. However this is all overshadowed by Xerxes and his cowardice “Abdera was the first place he felt safe enough to undo his girdle”. While he has some strength he is an aesthete who decorates a beautiful plane tree and regularly meets with his leaders, he is ultimately shown in a negative light.

However Herodotus does do one section which creates huge sympathy towards the Persians, the phantoms that tell Xerxes to go to war. While he is advised against it by Artabanus when Artabanus is told to let Xerxes go else as he cannot prevent that which must happen, showing Xerxes down fall was unavoidable.

In conclusion Aeschylus is hugely sympathetic to Persia and its culture he is writing a Persian based tragedy whereas Herodotus is mostly unsympathetic due to the dominance of his negative portrayal of Xerxes. However the visit by the Phantoms does create some sympathy.

Comment

This question asks for a potentially broad discussion of both authors’ presentation of the invasion and its motivating factors, with attention to the presentation of the major personalities involved on both sides, including the politics of Xerxes’ accession and those of his advisors. It should consider the perceived and contrasted national characteristics of both sides; it might also reflect on both authors’ sense of cause and effect, at both personal and national level, and the role of divine interest in both versions. The advantages and limitations of both authors’ chosen genres ought to receive attention. A good answer ought to be aware of the circumstances in which *The Persians* was first staged, and of the conventions of tragedy onto which it maps; a sense of Herodotus’ treatment of both Greeks and Persians in the light of moral as well as political imperatives should also inform the answer.

This answer argues (in line with the response to 06) for Aeschylus’ total commitment to the Persians in order to make it work as a tragedy, while focusing on Xerxes as the hubristic cause of the disaster, which is more a matter of loss of life than a political and economic crash. Herodotus’ account is seen as equally centred on Xerxes and his impieties and cruelty, with some dramatic supporting citations and quotations, and essentially anti-Persian. The level of detail and its management in a coherent structure gain this answer a level 4 mark; its rather narrow focus on Xerxes prevents a higher score.

Level 4

34 marks