

**ADVANCED GCE**  
**CLASSICAL CIVILISATION (JACT)**  
Greek Tragedy 3  
**MONDAY 9 JUNE 2008**

**2751**

Afternoon  
Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

**Additional materials (enclosed):** None

**Additional materials (required):**  
Answer Booklet (8 page)



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Write your name in capital letters, your Centre Number and Candidate Number in the spaces provided on the Answer Booklet.
- Read each question carefully and make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- You must answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
- Start your answer to each question on a new page.
- Use an 8 page answer booklet followed by a 4 page booklet if extra paper is required.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

- The number of marks for each question is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.
- The total number of marks for this paper is **100**.
- All questions are worth 50 marks in total including 5 marks for quality of written communication.

This document consists of **9** printed pages and **3** blank pages.

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## Section A

Answer **one** question from this section.

- A1** Choose one of the following translations from *Oedipus the King* and one from *Hippolytus* and answer the questions at the end.

**PASSAGE 1**

OEDIPUS: When my enemy moves against me quickly,

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CREON: My city too, not yours alone!

20

SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus the King* 618–630 (R. Fagles; Penguin)

- OEDIPUS: When he that plots against me secretly  
moves quickly, I must quickly counterplot.  
If I wait taking no decisive measure  
his business will be done, and mine be spoiled.
- CREON: What do you want to do then? Banish me? 5
- OEDIPUS: No, certainly; kill you, not banish you.
- CREON: I do not think that you've your wits about you.
- OEDIPUS: For my own interests, yes.
- CREON: But for mine, too,  
you should think equally. 10
- OEDIPUS: You are a rogue.
- CREON: Suppose you do not understand?
- OEDIPUS: But yet  
I must be ruler.
- CREON: Not if you rule badly. 15
- OEDIPUS: O, city, city!
- CREON: I too have some share  
in the city; it is not yours alone.

SOPHOCLES, *Oedipus the King* 618–630 (D. Grene; University of Chicago)

## PASSAGE 2

- HIPPOLYTUS: That easy temper is what I find incredible in you, Father; if you  
were my son and I your father, I would not have let your  
punishment rest with banishment; I'd have seen you dead if you  
presumed to touch my wife.
- THESEUS: How predictable a remark! But you will not die this way, satisfying 5  
the principle you have fixed for yourself. No, for a man in misfortune  
a speedy death is all too easy. You shall wander in exile from your  
native land and endure a life of pain on foreign soil.
- HIPPOLYTUS: Oh, no! What will you do? Drive me into exile without letting Time  
testify in my trial? 10
- THESEUS: Yes, beyond the Great Sea and Atlas' boundaries, if I had the  
power, so loathsome are you in my eyes.
- HIPPOLYTUS: You mean to banish me from Trozen without trial, not testing my  
oath, my assurance of good faith, or what the prophets say?
- THESEUS: This letter needs no prophet's insight to condemn you on certain 15  
grounds. As for the birds that fly overhead, I couldn't care less  
about them.
- HIPPOLYTUS: O you gods, why do I not unseal my lips, when it is you whom  
I revere who are destroying me? No, I will not. I would fail utterly  
to convince those I should and violate for nothing the oaths 20  
I swore.

EURIPIDES, *Hippolytus* 1040–1067 (J. Davie; Penguin)

- HIPPOLYTUS: Father, I must wonder at this in you.  
If I were father now, and you were son,  
I would not have banished you to exile! I  
would have killed you if I thought you touched my wife.
- THESEUS: This speech is worthy of you: but you'll not die so. 5  
A quick death is the easiest of ends  
for miserable men. No, you'll go wandering  
far from your fatherland and beg your way.  
This is the payment of the impious man.
- HIPPOLYTUS: What will you do? You will not wait until 10  
time's pointing finger proves me innocent.  
Must I go at once to banishment?
- THESEUS: Yes, and had I the power,  
your place of banishment would be beyond  
the limits of the world, the encircling sea 15  
and the Atlantic Pillars.  
That is the measure of my hate, my son.
- HIPPOLYTUS: Pledges, oaths, and oracles – you will not test them?  
You will banish me from the kingdom without trial?
- THESEUS: This letter here is proof without lot-casting. 20  
The ominous birds may fly above my head:  
they do not trouble me.
- HIPPOLYTUS: Eternal Gods!  
Dare I speak out, since I am ruined now  
through loyalty to the oath I took by you? 25  
No, he would not believe who should believe  
and I should be false to my oath for nothing.

EURIPIDES, *Hippolytus* 1040–1067 (D. Grene; University of Chicago)

- (a) Explain the circumstances in the play which have led to the confrontation between Oedipus and Creon in Passage 1 from *Oedipus the King*. [10]
- (b) How does Euripides make Passage 2 from *Hippolytus* dramatically effective? [15]
- (c) Using these passages as a starting point, explain who you think is more justified in his opinion, Oedipus or Theseus. [20]

[Quality of Written Communication: 5 marks]

[Total: 50 marks]

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**A2** Choose one of the following translations from *Medea* and one from *Agamemnon* and answer the questions at the end.

**PASSAGE 1**

MESSENGER: Then she stood up,  
 And to and fro stepped daintily about the room  
 On white bare feet, and many times she would twist back  
 To see how the dress fell in clear folds to the heel.

Then suddenly we saw a frightening thing. She changed 5  
 Colour; she staggered sideways, shook in every limb.  
 She was just able to collapse on to a chair,  
 Or she would have fallen flat. Then one of her attendants,  
 An old woman, thinking that perhaps the anger of Pan  
 Or some other god had struck her, chanted the cry of worship. 10  
 But then she saw, oozing from the girl's lips, white froth;  
 The pupils of her eyes were twisted out of sight;  
 The blood was drained from all her skin. The old woman knew  
 Her mistake, and changed her chant to a despairing howl.  
 One maid ran off quickly to fetch the King, another 15  
 To look for Jason and tell him what was happening  
 To his young bride; the whole palace was filled with a clatter  
 Of people running here and there.

All this took place  
 In a few moments, perhaps while a fast runner might run 20  
 A hundred yards; and she lay speechless, with eyes closed.  
 Then she came to, poor girl, and gave a frightful scream,  
 As two torments made war on her together:

EURIPIDES, *Medea* 1162–1182 (P. Vellacott; Penguin)

MESSENGER: Then she rose from her chair and walked about the room,  
 With her gleaming feet stepping most soft and delicate,  
 All overjoyed with the present. Often and often  
 She would stretch her foot out straight and look along it.  
 But after that it was a fearful thing to see. 5  
 The color of her face changed, and she staggered back,  
 She ran, and her legs trembled, and she only just  
 Managed to reach a chair without falling flat down.  
 An aged woman servant who, I take it, thought  
 This was some seizure of Pan or another god, 10  
 Cried out "God bless us," but that was before she saw  
 The white foam breaking through her lips and her rolling  
 The pupils of her eyes and her face all bloodless.  
 Then she raised a different cry from that "God bless us,"  
 A huge shriek, and the women ran, one to the king, 15  
 One to the newly wedded husband to tell him  
 What had happened to his bride; and with frequent sound  
 The whole of the palace rang as they went running.  
 One walking quickly round the course of a race-track  
 Would now have turned the bend and be close to the goal, 20  
 When she, poor girl, opened her shut and speechless eye,  
 And with a terrible groan she came to herself.  
 For a twofold pain was moving up against her.

EURIPIDES, *Medea* 1162–1182 (R. Warner; University of Chicago)

MESSENGER: And then, rising from her seat, she walked through the rooms, stepping delicately with feet so white as she revelled in her gifts, and time and again stopping to stare back down at her ankles.

But then we were exposed to a horrific sight. The colour left her face and, with limbs trembling, she lurched backwards towards the throne and collapsed on to it, barely stopping herself from falling on the ground. At this an old servant woman, thinking, I suppose, that Pan or some other deity was attacking her wits, raised the cry honouring the god, until she saw white foam trickling over her lips, her eyes rolling and protruding, and a bloodless pallor invading her flesh. Then, to counter her earlier cry, she uttered a loud scream of lamentation. At once one servant rushed into Creon's palace, another to the girl's new husband to tell what had happened to his bride.

Every room in the palace echoed to the sound of constant running. A fast runner, in his stride, would have turned the stadium bend and be closing on the finishing line by the time the poor girl broke her silence and woke from her trance with a terrible cry of pain. For she was being assailed by a double torment.

EURIPIDES, *Medea* 1162–1182 (J. Davie; Penguin)

## PASSAGE 2

CLYTAEMESTRA: Much have I said before to serve necessity, but I will take no shame now to unsay it all. How else could I, arming hate against hateful men disguised in seeming tenderness, fence high the nets of ruin beyond overleaping? Thus to me the conflict born of ancient bitterness is not a thing new thought upon, but pondered deep in time. I stand now where I struck him down. The thing is done. Thus have I wrought, and I will not deny it now. That he might not escape nor beat aside his death, as fishermen cast their huge circling nets, I spread deadly abundance of rich robes, and caught him fast. I struck him twice. In two great cries of agony he buckled at the knees and fell. When he was down I struck him the third blow, in thanks and reverence to Zeus the lord of dead men underneath the ground. Thus he went down, and the life struggled out of him; and as he died he spattered me with the dark red and violent driven rain of bitter savored blood to make me glad, as gardens stand among the showers of God in glory at the birthtime of the buds.

These being the facts, elders of Argos assembled here, be glad, if it be your pleasure; but for me, I glory.

AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon* 1373–1394 (R. Lattimore; University of Chicago)



CLYTAEMNESTRA: Words, endless words I've said to serve the moment –  
 now it makes me proud to tell the truth.  
 How else to prepare a death for deadly men  
 who seem to love you? How to rig the nets  
 of pain so high no man can overleap them? 5  
 I brooded on this trial, this ancient blood feud  
 year by year. At last my hour came.  
 Here I stand and here I struck  
 and here my work is done.  
 I did it all. I don't deny it, no. 10  
 He had no way to flee or fight his destiny –  
 our never-ending, all embracing net, I cast it  
 wide for the royal haul, I coil him round and round  
 in the wealth, the robes of doom, and then I strike him  
 once, twice, and at each stroke he cries in agony – 15  
 he buckles at the knees and crashes here!  
 And when he's down I add the third, last blow,  
 to the Zeus who saves the dead beneath the ground  
 I send that third blow home in homage like a prayer.

So he goes down, and the life is bursting out of him – 20  
 great sprays of blood, and the murderous shower  
 wounds me, dyes me black and I, I revel  
 like the Earth when the spring rains come down,  
 the blessed gifts of god, and the new green spear  
 splits the sheath and rips to birth in glory! 25

So it stands, elders of Argos gathered here.  
 Rejoice if you can rejoice – I glory.

AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon* 1373–1394 (R. Fagles; Penguin)

- (a) Explain the circumstances in the play which have led to the Messenger making his speech in Passage 1 from *Medea*. [10]
- (b) How is Clytaemnestra portrayed in Passage 2 from *Agamemnon*? How consistent is this with her portrayal elsewhere in the play? [15]
- (c) Using these passages as a starting point, explain which playwright you think describes death more vividly. In your answer you should limit yourself to discussion of *Medea* and *Agamemnon* only. [20]

[Quality of Written Communication: 5 marks]  
 [Total: 50 marks]

**Section B**

Answer **one** question from this section.

Start your answer on a new page.

- B3** 'Pride comes before a fall.' Is this statement better applied to Agamemnon in Aeschylus' play, or to Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae*? [50]
- B4** 'Hysterical and vindictive.' Explain whether you think that this is a better description of Electra in Sophocles' play, or of Phaedra in Euripides' *Hippolytus*. [50]
- B5** Which of the three playwrights you have studied deals most effectively with the theme of hatred? In your answer, you should include discussion of **at least one** play by each of the playwrights. [50]



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- A1  
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- A2  
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