

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Pre-U Certificate

**MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2011 question paper
for the guidance of teachers**

9786 CLASSICAL HERITAGE

9786/03

Paper 3 (Classical Literature – Sources and Evidence),
maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

- Cambridge will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

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General

Any critical exploration as an answer to a Paper 3 question will necessarily encompass differing views, knowledge and argument. Thus the mark scheme for these questions cannot and should not be prescriptive.

Candidates are being encouraged to explore, in the exam room, a theme that they will have studied. Engagement with the question as set (in the exam room) may make for limitations in answers but this is preferable to an approach that endeavours to mould pre-worked materials of a not too dissimilar nature from the demands of the actual question.

Examiners are encouraged to constantly refresh their awareness of the question so as not to be carried away by the flow of an argument which may not be absolutely to the point. *Candidates must address the question set and reach an overall judgement, but no set answer is expected. The question can be approached in various ways and what matters is not the conclusions reached but the quality and breadth of the interpretation and evaluation of the texts offered by an answer.*

Successful answers will need to make use of all three passages, draw conclusions and arrive at summative decisions.

Specific

1 The changing world of Athens: its friends and enemies

To what extent was the democratic system responsible for Athen's success during the fifth-century BC? [50]

The quotation from JW Roberts' book points both to the powerful impact of the radical democracy on Athenians and to the significance of the employment of this political system in dealings with allies, particularly those in revolt. Candidates may wish to contest either element: they may want to point to the small but vocal group of dissident pro-oligarchs in Athens, arguably over-represented in the surviving sources and to the (briefly) successful oligarchic regimes in 411 BC and 404 BC; or they may discuss Athens' flexibility in supporting government who would toe the line in allied states.

In answering the question, candidates will need to draw on a variety of sources to present their argument. Discussion should focus on the 'democratic system': candidates may trace the significant steps recorded in the sources and show how they contributed to significant 'success'. They can also assess the extent to which democratic government proved a sufficiently strong inducement to loyalty in allies over the course of the fifth-century, particularly when local conditions deteriorated (e.g. Brasidas in Thrace, or the later stages of the Peloponnesian War).

The passages help focus on two areas. Thucydides' version of Pericles' speech expresses a view of what made Athens stand out and how the 'system' empowered individuals to participate in the decisions of the state: candidates may accept this view of Athenian democracy or challenge it. The Herodotus passage focuses on the impact of freedom from tyranny on Athenian fighting spirit: again, candidates may accept this view and show how Athenian military success continued through the fifth century, or may challenge it by considering the strengths and weaknesses of the Athenian military (for example, their reliance on the navy and their relative weakness on land against the Spartan army); in addition, the democratic system was in its infancy at the time of the Persian Wars, so there could be further discussion of the impact of the radical democracy on Athenian military success.

Candidates may draw any sensible conclusions provided that these are supported with critical reference to the texts.

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2 Roman Empire: civilisation or submission?

In your opinion should Roman civilisation have been admired by the peoples they conquered? [50]

The principal focus of this question is on the civilisation which the Romans, as they saw it, brought. As outlined by Robin Lane Fox, candidates could discuss the benefits of roads, aqueducts and law. The subject's title Classical Heritage may be discussed along with the legacy left behind in a range of countries. There is an opportunity for some reference to be made to the roots of the EU. The implication from Tacitus is that the Britons needed civilising – their culture before the Romans arrived may be mentioned, but should not be the main focus of the argument. Does Tacitus imply that the lasting peace which the Romans bring weakens the spirit of the Britons?

The focus of the question here is "admired". Candidates may argue that the Jews had a very enlightened attitude towards poverty and possessions. The Romans, on bringing civilisation would have encouraged a system based on money and possessions of the individual which some may not have admired. This is an opportunity also for candidates to assess Roman values as well as the practicalities of their rule. Their method of conquest particularly in the siege of Jerusalem may have made the Romans seem uncivilised themselves or did the end justify the means?

3 Drama: the idea of tragedy

Explore critically the link between the release of 'natural passion' in the plays and the penalties inflicted on characters. [50]

The quotation from Kitto encourages the candidate to consider a causal link between a release of passion previously held in check, and consequent penalties inflicted, including on what may be regarded as innocent bystanders. The key implications of the opening statement are that the 'natural passion' has been previously constrained but released, and that penalties may be indiscriminate. Superficially it may suggest that passion leads to committing an act for which there is a penalty, but in fact the two plays for which extracts are given suggest the opposite, that an act worth punishing releases passion in a victim, who then inflicts a penalty disproportionate to that act. In the Oedipus plays, as noted below, both of these ideas may be seen to operate.

The passage from the *Agamemnon* points to the penalty inflicted on the 'sinner' Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, and her passionate speech of victory. The passage from the *Medea* shows her plan to murder her own children; here the penalty is explicitly inflicted on those around the sinner, namely Jason, and the play concentrates to a large extent on the passionate nature of Medea.

Both situations presented in the passages allow for a range of levels of response. On a simple level, passion and penalties are evident, and a candidate should be able to discuss where passion is evident in the plays, and the impact of the penalties. Both killings – that of Agamemnon and the children – are part of a broader 'revenge' present in the plays. In the *Agamemnon*, Cassandra's words at the end of the play suggest that the penalty inflicted upon Agamemnon is part of a greater penalty for the sins of others before him. In the *Medea* the killing of Creon and Glauce are additional elements of the penalty inflicted upon Jason. One passage therefore presents a killing of a sinner, which is supported by the suffering of others around him, but is also part of a broader context; the other presents the suffering of those around a sinner, which is also the penalty inflicted upon him. Candidates are likely to be able to offer quite full descriptions of Medea's passion, but should show the refinement of her plan over the course of the play, and the way in which she overcomes passion, in her love for her children, in order to accomplish her revenge. Good candidates may well explore the way passion is presented as a female trait, and Medea's rejection of female characteristics as weak in order to become strong

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enough to punish Jason. Exploration of Clytemnestra's passion may be more difficult, but the strength of her outburst in the passage should provide a route into discussing the way her passionate anger towards Agamemnon reveals itself, after being restrained and disguised previously in the play. The Watchman's opening, as well as various utterances of the Chorus, indicate the tension within the house caused by her waiting to unleash that passion's destructive force.

Candidates may develop quite complex responses. In the *Agamemnon*, is Agamemnon to be regarded as the only sinner in the play? To what extent should he be regarded as a sinner at all (or how far is he constrained by fate)? Is Clytemnestra's passion righteous anger, or more sinister, and does her adultery with Aegisthus form part of it? Is passion unique to Clytemnestra, or does Agamemnon's passion for war, or even Cassandra, contribute? In the *Medea*, we know that Medea's passion has caused suffering before, for Absyrtus and Pelias. Candidates may also like to consider to what extent Medea suffers as a victim of her own passion. The reference in the question to wider reading in tragedy means that a candidate should refer more broadly not only to these plays, but also to the other plays they have read. The *Oedipus Tyrannus* offers a different perspective. In *Medea* and *Agamemnon*, the unleashed passion is that of the punisher. In the *OT*, the passion present in the play is Oedipus' anger, which drives him not only to punish but also to commit the act, the murder of Laius, that demands punishment; the violence with which Oedipus carries out his punishment upon himself is also comparable with that of Medea and Clytemnestra. One or two candidates, if exploring passion in this play, may also decide to explore the passion present between Oedipus and Jocasta in their obviously close relationship, and the way in which this makes the crime, and therefore the required penalty, greater. These points may also be applicable to Seneca's *Oedipus*, but candidates may there wish to consider how comparably effective the depictions of passion and penalty in these plays are.

4 Gods and heroes: the importance of epic.

Explore critically Jenkyns' statement on the nature of the Homeric gods' relationship with mortals. [50]

A successful exploration will require the candidate to define their argument to answer this question by picking up on the key point of Jenkyns' statement, namely that the Homeric gods do not have any feelings for mortals. Both supporting passages may lead candidates to concur with Jenkyns' view.

In the first passage Achilles is telling Priam of the random nature of the way Zeus hands out good and evil with no feeling for the consequences to a mortal and (following this extract) how Zeus gave his own father a mixture of good and evil gifts. The passage with Odysseus and Circe highlights the differing response to a situation by mortal and immortal. Odysseus has been warned by Hermes of what to expect. He cannot not respond to Circe's demands for sex until she has sworn an oath not to take advantage of his situation and has agreed to release his men from enchantment. In this we see very different responses. Odysseus' own self interests and, more altruistically, feelings for his men, on the one hand, and Circe's instant and apparently thoughtless swearing of the oath, suggesting this is little more than a business transaction, on the other.

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Candidates may go on to examine examples of the behaviour of the gods towards mortals. There are plenty of examples of gods being manipulative, being petty, self-serving and wanting respect. Candidates may go on to show that the gods look after their own interests and support mortals unfeelingly to achieve those ends. It may be suggested that when gods do seem to show some kind of feeling for mortals, it is usually to further their own grander strategy. It is to be hoped that candidates may discuss Odysseus' relationship with Athene in this context. When Zeus considers saving his son, Sarpedon, he is told that the other gods would not approve and, even though Sarpedon is given 'special' treatment after death (tears of blood etc.), his father is not greatly affected.

Candidates may contrast this self-interest with Thetis' motherly feelings for her son and his unhappiness at Troy. While she does do what Achilles wants, her petition to Zeus succeeds not because Zeus has any feelings for Achilles but because he is under an obligation to Thetis.

Candidates may look at Calypso's relationship with Odysseus and demonstrate that she has feelings for him as she helps him with his means of escape and has also, previously, offered him immortality and eternal youth. Does her outburst at Hermes betray more than a peeved 'what's alright for the gods is not alright for goddesses' in some kind of proto-feminist way? Her release of Odysseus is carried out in an apparently caring way yet the reality is that she is forced to do so or lose her independence – something Odysseus comprehends immediately.

Candidates may also note that Odysseus chooses mortal Penelope over immortality. There is a wide range of material that may be called upon to substantiate Jenkyns' assertion. Candidates are also expected to discuss further examples drawn from the range of the prescribed texts. It is to be hoped that some candidates may offer examples and consider ideas from their wider reading beyond the prescription. Candidates may draw any sensible conclusions provided that they are supported with critical reference to the texts.