



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2011**

**Classical Civilisation 4020**

**Unit 2H: Greece and Rome: Drama and  
Life**

***Report on the Examination***

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## Unit 2H Greece and Rome: Drama and Life (40202H)

### General Comments

Greek Tragedy and Drama Festivals was by far the most popular topic with 655 candidates; Roman Social Life was next with 329, while Roman Comedy and Mycenaean Civilisation had much smaller entries of 65 and 49 respectively.

Most candidates adapted quite successfully to the new format of combined question paper/answer books. However, candidates do need to be aware of the assessment objectives and to avoid the danger of writing too much narrative in response to questions which require explanation or evaluation. This is particularly important in the structured essay questions, where there are 26 marks available in total. Candidates must remember the three assessment objectives for each part: AO1, factual detail, for the first part; AO2, explanation and understanding, for the second part; and AO3, personal response or evaluation, for the third. Some candidates limited their responses to factual detail throughout and failed to gain marks in parts (b) and (c) because of this.

Although, the examination is only one hour, few candidates seemed to have any difficulties with time management.

On the short questions, candidates should try to remember that the space given on the exam paper indicates the amount that they are expected to write. If they need to write more, they should request extra paper rather than write in the margin.

### Topic A Greek Tragedy and Drama Festivals

#### Question 1

Parts (a) and (b) caused few problems. However, on part (c) comparatively few candidates were able to score full marks, even though there were several points on the mark scheme they could have mentioned. In part (d), while it was possible for candidates to obtain full marks by explaining why they thought Medea was a fool, nearly all those candidates who went on to explain how she showed that she was not foolish clearly presented a developed argument and thereby gained three marks. Those who stated that Medea was foolish to have killed both Pelias and her own brother were given no credit as the question clearly stated 'in this play'.

#### Question 2

Part (a) was straightforward, but surprisingly only 80% of candidates obtained the mark. In answer to part (b) a disappointing number of candidates failed to mention the mask as part of the actor's costume. Pleasingly, however, many others were aware of the Greek names of *himation* and *chiton*. Those candidates who mentioned items worn by comic actors were not given any credit as the question referred to the artist in the picture. Part (c) was generally answered well, although no credit was given for the mask displaying emotion. Part (d), on qualities candidates thought an actor needed, was also answered well, although no credit was given to those who stated that he needed to be able to act.

### **Question 3:**

Candidates were divided fairly equally between the two essays, A and B.

In part (a)(i) a disappointingly high number claimed that seats were reserved for the emperor / king and his family. Credit was given, however, for reference to foreign dignitaries, including foreign kings. Few candidates referred to the orphans of those who had died recently for the city or the *ephebes*. Some candidates misread the question and talked about the seating arrangements for the whole audience.

In part (a)(ii) the majority of candidates had some idea of the number of judges and the fact that each represented the ten tribes or that only five of their votes were taken into account, but often the two facts were not connected. The most able candidates also included mention of the sealed urns and their opening before the audience.

In part (a)(iii), although the question specifically referred to being a member of the audience at the Great Dionysia, credit was also given to those candidates who mentioned aspects of the festival beyond the theatre. The question gave candidates the opportunity to draw upon a wide range of experiences. However, responses had to have some classical content. For example answers that merely referred to the fact the candidate did not like drama were given no credit, whereas those who said they would not have liked Greek drama because the plays were too long and went on all day etc. did gain credit.

In part (b)(i) most candidates restricted their answers to the first part of the play, referring to the Nurse describing how the children needed protecting from Medea and to how upset the Tutor was to overhear about the family's exile. Little mention was made of the tutor taking the children into the palace or of how overjoyed he was that they were excluded from banishment. There was even less reference to the messenger's description of how the children were received inside the palace by the servants. Generic references to what the Nurse and Tutor might do to make the children's lives easier, such as doing their washing and teaching them, were given no credit.

In part (b)(ii) the most able candidates referred to the events of the whole play, Medea gaining more time, winning the chorus over talking about childbirth, gaining Aegeus's sympathy, using the children to trick Jason, using the pretext of their escape from exile to deliver the gifts, exacting revenge on Jason, denying him burial rites. Less able candidates focussed on only one or two of the possibilities.

Part (b)(iii) gave candidates the opportunity to state how they felt about Jason's attitude towards his children. The best candidates were able to present a balanced point of view.

### **Topic B Plautus, *The Pot of Gold* and *The Brothers Menaechmus***

#### **Question 4**

Parts (a) and (b) posed few difficulties for those who knew the play, although much leeway had to be given with the spelling of Phaedria in (a)(i). Part (c) was perhaps the least well done part of this question. Most candidates easily scored one mark but had to work harder for the second to give some insight into Eunomia's character or display greater understanding of events earlier in the play. For part (d) most candidates were able to say something about Lyconides' character and to assess whether they liked him or not. Less able candidates gave less detail and did not fully evaluate their responses.

**Question 5**

The short questions in part (a) posed very few problems for candidates. Even the 4-mark question in part (b) was handled well. Candidates gained one mark for identifying Peniculus and a further three for explaining his role in this part of the play. Those who lost marks usually either failed to mention what he was telling Menaechmus's wife or to give the reason why he had turned against Menaechmus. Most candidates were able to present an opinion on Menaechmus, few in fact sympathising with him; however, it is vital to remind candidates here that if they are to score top marks they do need to give their reasons.

**Question 6**

Essay A was slightly more popular than Essay B.

Part (a)(i) on mistaken identity was handled reasonably well. The more able candidates referred to the whole play, while less able ones tended to limit their references to the early parts. Part (a)(ii) gave candidates free rein to write about whatever types of alternative comedy they could find in the play. Some candidates merely wrote a list without giving more extensive explanation; this limited the number of marks that could be awarded under AO2. Part (a)(iii) gave candidates good opportunity to make judgements on the characters of the twins. A significant proportion thought that Sosicles did deserve to be re-united with his brother, while Menaechmus did not. Mixed answers were acceptable and gained good marks provided candidates gave their reasons.

Examiners expected candidates to write about Euclio's miserliness in part (b)(i). However, a significant proportion of candidates interpreted 'meanness' in a different way, in the sense of his being an unpleasant character. Either interpretation of the word was accepted, and candidates were given credit for both. Part (b)(ii) focused on the importance of Megadorus's generosity to both the humour and the plot of the play. More able candidates were able to focus on both aspects, while the less able either merely described what acts of generosity he displayed or focused on plot without mentioning humour. In part (b)(iii) Euclio actually proved in the minds of many of the candidates to be less of a mean character than perhaps the examiners expected. This did not matter, as long as candidates gave their reasons. Less able candidates merely stated what mean things he had done during the play, and in some cases merely repeated what they had already said elsewhere.

**Topic C Mycenaean Civilisation****Question 7**

The shorter questions were dealt with comfortably. Parts (a), (b), and (c) saw a high number of completely correct answers. Most candidates were able to respond in part to part (d), but not as many obtained full marks. This question required understanding and candidates on the whole did not provide sufficient detail and explanation. Answers to AO2 questions need good development to access the highest marks. Part (e) was handled less successfully than had been anticipated. This question focused on the graves at Mycenae; however, several candidates went beyond Mycenae, while others provided restricted answers.

**Question 8**

Although a high proportion of candidates were able to give the details and explanations required for parts (b) and (c) about Linear B tablets, surprisingly fewer knew about Michael Ventris in answer to part (a).

Although a high proportion of candidates were able to identify many elements from the society that Linear B described as was required for part (d), fewer were able to evaluate these elements in order to score good marks here.

### **Question 9**

There was an equal balance of candidates choosing to answer Essays A and B.

Part (a)(i) was generally answered quite well, as shown by the fact that a high proportion of candidates obtained Level 3. However, fewer made the top level. More specific answers were required, such as the hidden water supply and access to it through tunnels.

Part (a)(ii) on the whole was not answered as well. Many candidates failed to address the AO2 element in the comparisons and contrasts between Tiryns and Pylos on the one hand and Mycenae on the other. Several candidates merely gave details of what there was at each site, while others gave either similarities or differences but not both.

Part (a)(iii) has been asked regularly in the past in one form or another. Less able candidates merely listed the weapons and armour the Mycenaeans used without discussing their effectiveness in battle. Again, the importance of evaluation in this type of question cannot be stressed enough.

Part (b)(i) required two elements: the types of minerals, metals and materials that the Mycenaeans had access to, and how they used them. Those candidates who merely made a list of the materials the Mycenaeans had at their disposal could not progress beyond Level 3.

Some candidates answered (b)(ii) very effectively, with clarity and good explanation. Less able candidates omitted basics such as colours, techniques and the variety of themes.

Part (b)(iii) gave candidates the opportunity to present a thorough insight into the lifestyle of the Mycenaeans through their art and culture. In many ways it was open-ended, but those candidates who provided the greater variety of content and evaluation gained the highest level marks.

## **Topic D Social Life in Rome in the First Century AD**

### **Question 10**

In part (a) most candidates knew what the Vestal Virgins' main duty was, but fewer knew how many Vestal Virgins there were. Although there were plenty of possible answers to part (b) comparatively few candidates were able to obtain full marks.

In part (c) many candidates attributed to Roman priests the sorts of duties that their modern day counterparts perform. Examiners expected this to be a straightforward question, but very few completely correct answers were seen. Part (d), on the other hand, met with a greater level of success and most candidates were able to gain some credit. The most able candidates included sound evaluation in their answers and gained full marks here.

### **Question 11**

Part (a)(i) asked for the name of the under-floor heating system and was expected to be a straightforward question. Surprisingly less than half of candidates knew the answer. Part (a)(ii) was answered much better, although candidates who answered 'slave' or 'money' were given no credit. Similarly, in part (b), no credit was given to music by itself nor to any suggestion that the guests actually danced themselves.

In part (c) Roman fitness was a much more successful topic, and a higher proportion of candidates were able to achieve top scores. In part (d) it was possible for candidate to make use of some of their answers to part (b); however, most candidates addressed the evaluative part of the question in part (d) and gained good marks.

### **Question 12:**

Essay A was marginally more popular than Essay B, although were both handled equally well.

Part (a)(i) was dealt with fairly competently, and most candidates were able to gain marks in Level 3. Only the most able candidates made reference to weapon inspection and comic novelty acts. There was a misconception from a sizeable minority that chariot races took place in the Colosseum. Some candidates also seemed to think that Nero put on shows in the Colosseum.

Part (a)(ii) was generally dealt with fairly successfully, especially by those candidates who limited their answers to gladiators and gladiatorial shows. No credit was given to those who thought that seeing the emperor at a show was a reason for its popularity.

Part (a)(iii) gave candidates the opportunity to compare and contrast Roman sporting events with those of the modern day. Many were able to liken chariot racing to Formula One and gladiatorial contests to boxing and wrestling. Fewer, however, were able to look at the differences. Given the perceived popularity of sport today it was perhaps disappointing that more candidates were not able to show greater insight into those differences.

Part (b)(i) produced many competent responses, although there was a range of different ages given for when a Roman girl might have finished her formal education. Less able candidates limited their answers to the sorts of tasks a girl would have learnt from her mother. Credit was given to candidates who made reference to preparation for marriage at an early age.

In part (b)(ii) many candidates were able to list the disadvantages a Roman woman's life without showing sufficient understanding to go beyond Level 3.

Part (b)(iii) gave candidates the opportunity to compare the Roman education system with their own, a very fair task that provided much scope for wide-ranging evaluation. More able candidates were able to draw widely from their own experiences; the less able merely listed differences.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

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