



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Classical Civilisation 4020

**Unit 3H: Greece and Rome: Conflict and
Carnage**

Report on the Examination

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Unit 3 Greece and Rome: Conflict and Carnage (40203H)

General Comments

Topic D (Pompeii and Herculaneum) remained the most popular topic while Topic A questions were attempted by only a relatively small number of students. There appeared to be few problems with students running out of time, but many still wrote more than was necessary for the short questions. While students still found questions addressing AO2 the most challenging, with factual information rather than explanation still evident in many cases, the personal response required for AO3 seemed to be provided more consistently. It was also pleasing to see more specific examples of archaeological evidence from the houses and businesses in Pompeii and Herculaneum, and sound evidence for the Panathenaic Games being deployed by students. Conversely, the focus of attention in Topic A seemed to drift away from the prescribed text towards secondary sources in some questions and there was a little confusion still caused perhaps by the film '300'.

Topic A Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*

Question 1(b)(i) was answered much better than 1(a) where a range of gods was offered, and while there were variable responses to 1(b)(ii), 1(c) and 1(d) there were some good answers with the majority of students scoring two or three marks in these questions. However in 1(c) few picked up on the reference to 'the death of mother's sons' in the passage. There was some very pleasing knowledge of the precise timing of the use of the surplus silver in 1(d).

Question 2 proved to be more challenging with a third of students not identifying Salamis in 2(a). Furthermore students often found it difficult to provide accurate information about Artemisia's participation in both the discussion before, and fighting at Salamis for 2(b) and 2(d). 2(c) tended to elicit responses which owed more to secondary sources than to the text. However personal response to 2(e) was very pleasing with most students scoring two or three marks and the best showing a balanced knowledge of primary and secondary sources.

Essay 3(a) was less popular and less well done than 3(b), particularly in part (iii) where unsurprisingly there were some very good discussions of Themistocles' character, but much less understanding of how Herodotus writes about Damaratus and uses his discussions with Xerxes to comment on the narrative: there was scarce recognition that Damaratus does little actually to help Xerxes. Students seemed reasonably clear about the roles of Leonidas and Themistocles in (a)(i) and (b)(i), but more precise knowledge of the text is required for students to score as well in this topic's essay as in the other topics. Similarly part (ii) often lacked specific knowledge. There was little reference to the Persian fire arrows and the rolling of stones by the defenders of the Acropolis, and the interpretation of the prophecy in (a)(ii); knowledge of the course of Artemisium was often unclear and was mixed with details from Salamis. There was a prevailing sense that Greek seamanship was better than the Persian, but this contradicts Themistocles' desire to fight here to build experience. In 3(a)(iii) a general lack of awareness of how Herodotus uses Damaratus to comment on the narrative rather than to act as a traitor to his own people, as well as some confusion about who exactly he was held back many from writing good answers. The best were aware of Damaratus' exile and that he gives Xerxes very little useful information to use against the Spartans. There were many more good answers to (b)(iii) than (a)(iii): students had more material on Themistocles to deploy and the best were even able to comment on Herodotus' motives for writing about the general as he

does. Some students included detail in 3(b)(iii) that might have been better deployed in parts (i) and (ii).

Topic B Virgil, *Aeneid*

Question 4(a) and (b) were answered very well. 4(c)(i) required the throwing of a spear to achieve the hollow ringing sound: there were frequent stabbings with swords. 4(c)(ii) was handled better although there was occasional confusion with the noise of Greek armour at the gate. The AO2 focus of 4(d) led to many answers offering unconnected points rather than the explanation that Laocoon was thought to have been killed by snakes as punishment for harming a gift for a goddess with his spear. 4(e) had a tendency in some to elicit descriptive answers but the best selected adjectives to describe Sinon and justify these with clear reference to the text. These showed very good technique in dealing with AO3.

Question 5(a) was well done on the whole but those who said 'Aeneas' father' did not name the speaker. The quality of answers to 5(b) was mixed: half of students suggested that he was merely sitting waiting for Aeneas to arrive. 5(c)(i) was better with two thirds of students scoring full marks. 5(d) was less well done than (c)(i), with some students writing very generalised responses with little or no reference to who was found in Elysium and what they were doing.

Question 6(a) seemed less popular than (b). (a)(i) provided students with good knowledge to write in detail about Jupiter's words to Venus. While most wrote about Lavinium, Alba Longa and Romulus, only the best were clear about the significant numbers 3, 30 and 300, that Rome will conquer Greece and that Augustus will conquer the East and become a god. (a)(ii) was more challenging and offered less scope: answers were more inclined to be descriptive, but a few produced interesting comparisons between Homer and Virgil and the need for Aeneas to be allowed to leave Troy rather than die fighting. In contrast (b)(i) offered less scope but was considered more accessible, while students were clearly better prepared for (b)(ii) although Ganymede was not well known. The AO3 part (iii)s offered plenty of scope for discussion and a variety of valid approaches were taken in each. Answers to (a)(iii) sometimes had a clear focus on pietas but could also lack range in knowledge of heroic and unheroic actions, hampering students' ability to develop points. In answering (b)(iii) it was possible to disagree with the question and write very little about Anna, but a good range of others to blame was expected (and seen in the form of various gods, Aeneas, Rumour, Iarbas and Dido herself), along with some explanation of why Anna was not to blame.

Topic C The Ancient Olympic Games and the Panathenaia

While most students were aware that athletes usually competed naked, and that the chariot drivers are often depicted clothed 7(a), there appeared to be confusion over the *apobates* race 7(b). Several students had the dismounted individual throwing a spear at a target which seems to borrow elements of the mounted javelin throwing. Most students scored one or two marks in 7(c) with some showing good knowledge of the Zanes or *mastigophoroi*. Question 7(d) was well done with many students showing clear understanding and a range of supporting evidence. Similarly 7(e) also saw many good answers with clear understanding of the dangers of chariot-racing along with the relative lack of recognition for the drivers.

While most students identified one of Homer's epic poems for 8(a)(i), a large number did not understand the idea of authoritative versions being written down for the first time to facilitate judging of the contest in 8(a)(ii). The appearance of the distinctive Athenian events in 8(b)(i) and (ii) caused problems for some, especially in explaining that the Athenians would want to display their prowess to visitors from other Greek states. There does seem to be some confusion about the events contested in the Panathenaic Games: while the focus in short questions has tended to be on the differences between events held in the two locations, the events routinely contested at Olympia were also to be seen in Athens and so could be used in 8(b)(ii) and 8(c). Despite this, there were enough specific references to events for students to score well in 8(c) in both agreeing and disagreeing with the question.

Question 9(a)(i) provided variable answers: the best described the correct five events, and how they were contested, along with an attempt to explain the method of deciding the overall winner. Other answers did some of the above. Some were unaware that the *stade* race and wrestling also took place separately. Students answering 9(a)(ii) tended to discuss boxing and wrestling (although there was little awareness of Greco-Roman wrestling as a modern Olympic event). *Pankration* was often omitted presumably due to a lack of modern equivalent. Answers to 9(a)(iii) approached the question by focussing on the events, or on the experience of the spectator in the stadium, or by providing a balanced answer. All were valid approaches and allowed students to cover a wide range of points. However there was some confusion about where the wrestling competition took place, and that this and the *stade* race were also individual events in their own right. Again, the best answers provided personal comments on specific historical detail. Answers to 9(b)(i) sometimes wasted time trying to explain in detail why temples showed that the Olympic Games were religious rather than covering a wider range of points. Answers also tended to cover the site, events and oaths, with mention of the truce, processions and timing in the calendar being less frequent. (b)(ii) saw good attempts to address the question but also saw some students going beyond competitors' preparations and revisiting the *Hellanodikai* for example. There was little mention of medical support or an awareness that ancient athletes might be almost professional as they did the rounds of the various games. Unsurprisingly there continued to be some confusion over the specific differences in the prizes awarded at each of the games, with some students offering Olympic victors *amphorae* of oil and cash prizes. However there were some very good balanced responses to the relative merits of each type of prize and the status of each set of games.

Topic D Pompeii and Herculaneum

10(a) demonstrated that many students were aware of the names of the spaces along the central axis of Pompeian houses. However some were confused by trying to use Latin terms. It is not necessary to use them and they are best avoided if students are unsure. 10(b) and (c) had as their focus the layout of houses and those who wrote about decoration and furnishing did not score marks. Quite a large number failed to score in 10(b) and this may be due to a lack of awareness of the significant features of the designated houses on the specification. The House of the Faun's double *atria* and peristyle gardens, along with it occupying a whole insula stand out (along with its conservative First Style wall painting, but exquisite and presumably very expensive polychrome mosaics floors). On the other hand, the House of the Tragic Poet's owners presumably had to display their wealth in a relatively modest house by elaborate redecoration shortly before AD79: perhaps they were unable or unwilling to expand the house as the owners of the House of Menander had apparently done. Such awareness of the preference of owners or limiting factors was the hallmark of a very good answer to 10(c), while those scoring a single mark might have merely commented on the relative wealth of different owners. 10(d) tended to be answered well with excellent answers commenting on the relative merits of each type of house with specific reference to farms, country views, access to the specific activities of the forum, examples of lively street scenes etc..

Question 11(a)(i) produced a variety of answers: those showing solid knowledge of the shutters closing and locking method, and others with more general awareness of shutters, bars and locks. 11(a)(ii) shifted attention to houses and this was sometimes missed, or there was confusion between the similarities (locking bars) and differences (e.g. heavy double leaved doors rather than shutters) between houses and shops. The question also required archaeological evidence to be provided (casts or representations on mosaics of guard dogs rather than just the dogs themselves) as this marks the difference between this topic and Unit 2's Social Life in Rome in the First Century AD. Again specific archaeological evidence was required for 11(b)(i) so references to wall paintings needed to show awareness of the depiction of fulling processes. 11(b)(ii) saw most students scoring at least one mark, with over half explaining the process and what it was meant to achieve. 11(c) produced some of the best answers with some very clear personal responses to the drudgery and health hazards of working with some unpleasant chemicals and heavy, wet cloth.

It was difficult to see a clear preference between 12(a) and (b). Answers to 12(a)(i) were best in dealing with the aqueduct once it had arrived at the city wall. There were surprisingly few references to the use of cisterns under the *impluvium* (N.B. the excellent example in the House of the Wooden Partition). The use of the River Sarno and wells was least well known. As expected, there was some good knowledge of the evidence from the streets of Pompeii and Herculaneum in 12(a)(ii), but only limited awareness of the difference in presence of proper drains and use of stepping stones. 12(a)(iii) showed again some very nice personal response on the better answers but only the best referred to evidence of religious practice in the streets, while the majority kept their focus on shops, bars, graffiti and sometimes brothels. References to the cosmopolitan nature of Pompeian life were interesting but needed to be linked to specific archaeological evidence. Answers to 12(b)(i) tended to show an awareness of Fiorelli's casts, but by describing the process in detail did not always maintain focus on the question. The best students were aware of stratigraphy and what might have happened to victims in different layers. They also did well to speculate about the effects of specific recognisable medical conditions on people's actions. There remains some confusion about the different evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum, and also why casts cannot always be made on Pompeii. 12(b)(ii) and (iii) revealed that students knew more about Pliny's letter about his uncle than the

letter that recounts his own experience. The best answers to (b)(ii) were clear about the chronology and geography of the letter and made explicit judgements about heroic and unheroic behaviour. (b)(iii) proved more challenging to students, particularly if they didn't know the appropriate letter well enough. Occasional attempts at historiographical comment also tended not to be successful as they often drifted away from the question. Many students seemed to think that Pliny was well away from the effects of the volcano and so was not in a position to comment. They were unaware that Pliny himself nearly became a victim. The best answers showed knowledge of the specific content of the second letter and provided a variety of emotional responses to each detail.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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