



Cambridge International AS & A Level

CLASSICAL STUDIES

9274/43

Paper 4 Classical Literature: Sources and Evidence

October/November 2020

1 hour 30 minutes



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- Each question is worth 50 marks.

This document has **4** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

You are advised to spend 20 minutes reading and thinking about the three passages in the question you have chosen to answer, and then 10 minutes planning your answer. Answers need to make use of all three passages given for the question you are answering.

1 Drama: the idea of tragedy

Read the following passage and answer the question that follows:

The decisions and actions of Oedipus are the causal factor in the plot of the tragedy, and these decisions and actions are the expression of the character of Oedipus. Oedipus is no ordinary man, he is in fact a very extraordinary one: a man who, starting with nothing but his wits and energy, has become the beloved ruler of the city to which he came as a homeless exile.

B Knox, *Oedipus at Thebes* (1957) (with omissions)

Explore critically the notion that the central characters in tragedies are extraordinary people. In your answer you should consider the passage above and your wider reading of tragedy, as well as the two passages below: [50]

CLYTAEMNESTRA: Then learn this, too, the power of my oaths.
By the child's Rights I brought to birth,
by Ruin, by Fury – the three gods to whom
I sacrificed this man – I swear my hopes
will never walk the halls of fear so long
as Aegisthus lights the fire on my hearth.
Loyal to me as always, no small shield
to buttress my defiance.

Here he lies.

He brutalized me. The darling of all
the golden girls who spread the gates of Troy.
And here his spear-prize ... what wonders she beheld! –
the seer of Apollo shared my husband's bed,
his faithful mate who knelt at the rowing-benches,
worked by every hand.

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 1458–1471

OEDIPUS: Now is the night banished. Doubtful Titan
Returns. This foul mist glooms his rising light.
His grim beams and melancholy flame
Will view homes gutted by our lusty plague.
The day will show the slaughter of the night.
What joy lies in kingship? O treacherous prize,
What evils you hide with that smiling face.
As soaring ridges always catch the glades
And craggy rocks on which vast ocean splits
Are lashed by waves of the most tranquil sea,
Exalted power is Fortune's plaything.
I was right to flee the sceptre of Polybus,
My father. I roamed carefree, exiled, fearless,
Then – heaven witness! – stumbles on a kingdom.

Seneca, *Oedipus*, 1–14

2 Gods and Heroes: the importance of epic

Read the following passage and answer the question that follows:

In the *Iliad*, which is a poem about war, heroes die all the time, but they're willing to die if their heroism on the battlefield brings them glorious renown ... but the *Odyssey* is a poem set in the aftermath of war, and one of the things it explores is what a hero might be once there are no more wars to fight ... The *Aeneid* revisits the world of Homer's poems but radically shifts their point of view.

D Mendelsohn, *An Odyssey* (2017) (adapted)

'Each epic depicts the nature of the hero completely differently.' Explore critically the extent to which you agree with this view. In your answer you should consider the passage above and your wider reading of epic, as well as the two passages below: [50]

Achilleus is speaking:

'My mother, the silver-footed goddess Thetis, says that I have two fates that could carry me to the end of death. If I stay here and fight on round the Trojans' city, then gone is my homecoming, but my glory will never die: and if I come back to my dear native land, then gone is my great glory, but my life will stretch long and the end of death will not overtake me quickly...

But then finally Phoinix spoke out ... 'If return home, glorious Achilleus, is really what your mind is thinking, and you refuse absolutely to keep the destroying fire away from our fast ships, because anger has come over your heart, how then, dear child, could I be left here without you, alone? The old horseman Peleus sent me out with you on the day when he sent you from Phthia to join Agamemnon – you were a child, with no knowledge yet of levelling war or of debate, where men win distinction. So he sent me out to teach you all these things, to make you a speaker of words and a doer of deeds.'

Homer, *Iliad*, 9. 410–440 (with omissions)

'However, your heart has prompted you to ask about my troubles, and that intensified my grief. Well, where shall I begin, where end, my tale? For the list of woes which the gods in heaven have sent me is a long one. I shall start by giving you my name: I wish you all to know it so that in times to come, if I escape the evil day, I may always be your friend, though my home is far from here.

'I am Odysseus, Laertes' son. The whole world talks of my stratagems, and my fame has reached the heavens. My home is under the clear skies of Ithaca ... It is a rough land, but nurtures fine men. And I, for one, know of no sweeter sight for a man's eyes than his own country.'

Homer, *Odyssey*, 9. 12–29 (with omissions)

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