

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

H408

For first teaching in 2017

H408/24 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 24 series overview

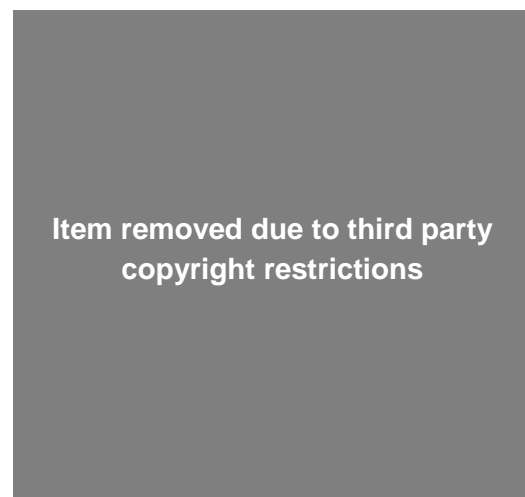
Greek Art was a popular topic on the legacy specification, but when in competition with such a strong favourite topic as Greek Theatre the numbers were never going to reach the same level. Despite this there was much evidence that candidates had enjoyed studying the pots, statues and architectural sculpture prescribed in the specification. Many had even gone beyond the prescribed material to appreciate other pots by artists such as Exekias or a range of *korai* from the Athenian Acropolis. It was clear to examiners that teachers had communicated their great enthusiasm for Greek Art through visits to museums both in this country and in Italy and Greece.

Section A overview

The low tariff questions in Section A were not always answered as successfully as one might expect. Generally good knowledge and understanding of the sources provided were displayed in the higher tariff questions, especially where candidates were able to write at some length.

Question 1

Source A: Two pieces of architectural sculpture



- 1 What is the technical name given to the type of architectural sculpture shown in **Sculpture 1** and **Sculpture 2**? [1]

Most candidates were able to identify the pieces of sculpture as *metopes*. Incorrect answers tended to be because of a misreading of what was being asked. In this case the subject matter of the *metopes* was usually given as the answer.

| | | |
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| | AfL | candidates should read the questions carefully so that they understand the requirements of the question before they start to write. |
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Question 2

- 2 Identify the building from which **Sculpture 1** comes. [1]

Candidates were not always able to identify Temple C at Selinus. The most common alternative answers offered were the Siphnian Treasury and Temple of Artemis at Corcyra.

Question 3

- 3 By comparing the content and composition of the scenes on **Sculpture 1** and **Sculpture 2**, explain which scene you find more aesthetically pleasing. [10]

The best responses to this question provided detailed comment about, and analysis of, both metopes before coming to a reasoned conclusion. Such responses made comparison between the sculptures under points such as composition, emotion, pose, facial features, dress and musculature. The approach of many candidates, however, was to write about what they liked about the first metope and then second metope before providing a basic conclusion. This approach, coupled with the amount of description provided, restricted the level of direct comparison.

While comment on the subject matter of the *metopes* was welcomed, some candidates engaged too much in telling the story of the myth rather than analysing the sculptures. Weaker responses tended to focus more on one image than the other, or to compare only one or two aspects of the sculptures, e.g. pose or facial features.

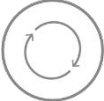
In this 10-mark question candidates often wasted time by indulging in a general introduction about metopes or the status of Herakles as a hero/demi-god. Below are examples showing where candidates either got straight into the body of the answer or took up valuable time writing out the question and producing an introduction.

Exemplar 1

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 3 | | The garden metope depicting the garden of Hesperides on the Temple of Zeus has 3 strong verticals creating a neat and ordered look to the piece whilst the Temple C metope of Herakles and the Kerkopes has more of a triangular composition indicated with Herakles legs |
|---|--|--|

Exemplar 2

| | | |
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| 3 | A | By comparing the content + composition of the scenes on section 1 + Sculpture 1 + Sculpture 2, explain which scene you find more aesthetically pleasing. (10) |
| | | Sculpture one shows the scene of Herakles and the Kerkops' who have been tied up and thrown over Herakles' shoulder. The Archaic metope ^(575-570 BC) shows the figures in a frontal position: upper body facing |

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|  | AfL | Candidates should be encouraged to engage with 10-mark questions and answer them directly and not waste time writing introductions. |
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Question 4 (a)

Source B: A Greek pot



- 4 (a) What is the technical name given to the shape of the pot shown in **Source B**? [1]

Very few candidates were able to identify the pot as a calyx krater. The most common response was kylix.

Question 4 (b)

- (b) Who painted this pot? [1]

Many candidates were able to identify Euphronios as the painter of the pot. Other popular answers included Euthymides, Exekias and even Euripides and Sophocles.

Question 4 (c)

- (c) To which group of painters did he belong? [1]

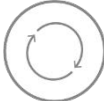
This was the best answered of the three low tariff questions on the pot. Some answered too generally and gave the Red-Figure Painters rather than the Pioneers.

Question 5

- 5 Explain how and why the painter has contrasted the **two** main figures in the scene on the pot in **Source B**. [10]

Although there was only one source for candidates to focus their attention on, the answers to this question were more varied than those for Question 3. Weaker answers tended to describe what they could see in the image and some seemed unaware of who was depicted on the pot, despite Herakles being mentioned in Question 6. Many answers focused on the 'how' (descriptive) aspect of the question; it was the 'why' (analysis) aspect that really brought out the higher order thinking skills with some candidates who were able to contextualise the source and discuss the theme of civilisation versus barbarism.

As with Question 3, there were some answers which had unnecessary introductions. The answer in the exemplar focuses on the question immediately and refers to key elements of the narrative scene on the pot.

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|  | AFL | candidates should be encouraged to engage with 10-mark questions and answer them directly and not waste time writing introductions. |
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Exemplar 3

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| 5 | <p>Euphronios has contrasted Herakles and Antaios to emphasise the <u>Beas</u> Civilisation versus Barbarism theme of the vase. For example, Herakles, the civilising force, has stylised coils in his hair that is paired with a neat beard. This contrasts Antaios' long, unkept unkempt beard and hair therefore emphasising his barbaric nature.</p> <p>Euphronios furthermore, wants to contrast the two figures in terms of size to show off the impressive nature of Herakles fighting the giant Antaios, the therefore Antaios is proportionally far larger than Herakles. Euphronios has managed to make Antaios appear larger by having the figures in a low position that's seemingly near to the ground and then has enlarging Antaios.</p> |
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Question 6

- 6* Evaluate whether Herakles is depicted more vividly in vase-painting or sculpture. You may use **Source A** and/or **Source B** as a starting point in your answer. [20]

Successful responses analysed a range of sources from both media, offering a good balance of both sculpture and vase painting. Some candidates chose to use the provided sources, others chose not to include them in their argument – there is no requirement to do so. Some broadened their discussion to include non-prescribed sources, such as the pediment of the Siphnian Treasury and the Nessos Painter amphora.

Many answers to this question were rather general, going through different examples of the depictions of Herakles and not really considering what was meant by vivid in the context of pottery and sculpture. The strongest answers set parameters for the discussion by considering what 'vivid' meant, e.g. Herakles is easily identifiable, is portrayed as a hero, is depicted with different characteristics. There were some good answers that considered the audience of the media and the impact this may have had on vividness.

The exemplar shows the concluding paragraphs of answer which dealt with the idea of what makes a depiction vivid.

Exemplar 4

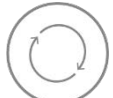
| | | |
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| | | Another Euphronios painting of Herakles and the Amazons depicts Herakles vividly with the battle stance of wide legs and the raised club. This is vivid as it reminds the people who look at it of the well-known Herakles, the strong warrior. By depicting him in non-violent scenes such as the metope of Herakles and the kerkopes, an image less known is created as a Greek audience would be more in touch with Herakles heroic side than what he does in everyday life. |
| | | To conclude Herakles is depicted more vividly in vase painting, especially red-figure vase painting, due to the clear distinction of the figure compared to all others. By putting putting him in well known |

Section B overview

Use classical sources, and secondary sources, scholars and/or academic works to support your argument. You should also consider possible interpretations of sources by different audiences.

Question 7 [86%] on free-standing sculpture was significantly more popular than Question 8 [14%], although knowledge of the material tended to be more secure on the latter question. The most successful responses really engaged with the quotations and used a range of material to support their arguments.

The majority of candidates managed to quote, paraphrase or 'name-drop' scholars with some success, although less frequently did they engage fully with the argument or opinion they were offering. Ideally candidates should avoid over-reliance on one scholar (some quoted Woodford almost exclusively) and the OCR endorsed book. A few impressive answers were written with the confidence to disagree with scholars and explain their own point of view. It was pleasing to read that level of critical engagement with modern scholarship.

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|  | AfL | Candidates should try to engage with scholarship and do more than quote a scholar. The most used example of scholarship was Nigel Spivey says that ' <i>korai</i> are sexy', but there was often no discussion of the quotation. |
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Question 7


7* 'Regular, repetitive and boring.' Explain how far you agree with this assessment of the *kouros* and *korai* you have studied. Justify your response. [30]

Candidates showed a good knowledge of the prescribed sculptures and its development. Responses generally followed an evolutionary narrative, linked to specific examples all the way through. This approach, however, led a significant number of candidates to write in great detail about pieces belonging to the 5th century and the 4th century and to make only passing reference to the required material.

Good answers considered not only the appearance of the sculptures but also their function and impact on the audience, both contemporary and modern. Some candidates made good use of sources beyond the prescription, such as the Sounion Kouros, Apollo of Tenea and the dedication of Nikandre. A number seemed to confuse the Anavyssos Kouros and Aristodikos Kouros, which diminished the impact of their discussion of the advancements made with Aristodikos.

The most successful answers not only provided detailed analysis of the relevant sculptures but also sought to differentiate between the terms of the question, 'regular', 'repetitive' and 'boring', acknowledging that the statues could be one or two of these things, but not necessarily all three.

The exemplar shows an answer which has some relevant material about the New York Kouros and an attempt at an argument to answer the question with the use of a scholar, but the answer strays into material from the 4th century BC.

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|  | Misconception | candidates should understand basic terminology related to the specification, for example <i>kouros</i> and <i>kore</i> . |
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Exemplar 5

The latter ~~is~~ uses bronze with a second material, glass, used to define the eyes. This figure is possibly Perseus holding the head of Medusa and therefore clearly communicates with the audience. The sculpture is in contrapposto, ie weight on one, the left leg and right arm extended towards the viewer. This example is much less restricted than the earlier New York Kouros or sculptures produced in the 6th century BC, that show arms down rigidly by each side. Woodford states of the Anikythean Youth, "the figure suggests suppressed vigour rather than grace", and she adds that this example is "classical Contrapposto". Therefore just examining these two examples of the Kouros studied I can not agree with the statement they are repetitive and boring.

Question 8

- 8* 'Old-fashioned and conventional' or 'different and daring'. Which description of the pediments of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia do you think is the more appropriate? You should justify your response using detailed reference to the pediments. [30]

This was the less popular of the essay questions, but it often produced better responses because candidates tended to have a good grasp of the content of both pediments. The very best examples engaged in detailed discussion of both pediments, providing analysis of several individual figures as well as the overarching themes and considering the wider context, such as the location and its links with the Olympic games.

Weaker responses tended to show imbalanced knowledge, concentrating in detail on one pediment over the other; this was most apparent where candidates described the figures of the east pediment successfully, but did not draw out individual, precise details from the figures on the west pediment.

Following Woodford's line of thought, most felt that the east pediment was 'different and daring' and that the west pediment was 'old-fashioned and conventional' because of other buildings which are decorated with the Centauromachy. Despite this, there were a few brave souls who considered the chronology of the other depictions and recognised the west pediment as innovative. The exemplar shows one such answer, and with the appropriate use of modern scholarship.

Exemplar 6

exceptionally different. The emotionless nature of the Lapiths' faces, as Woodford correctly argues, also enhances the narrative in a different and bold way. Instead of screaming, the Lapiths retain their civilised and superior regality that characterises them as civilised and better than the centaurs. Woodford, hence, rightly argues that this is not only bold but extremely intelligent and innovative. Hence, the pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia is more 'different and daring' than 'old-fashioned and conventional'.

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