

93404A



SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY



TOP SCHOLAR



Scholarship 2013 Classical Studies

2.00 pm Monday 2 December 2013

Time allowed: Three hours

Total marks: 24

ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Choose THREE questions from Question Booklet 93404Q: TWO questions from Section A, and ONE question from Section B. Each question is worth 8 marks.

Write ALL your answers in this booklet. Start each question on a new page. Number each question carefully.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–27 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Question: Seven

Athenian playwright Aristophanes famously held that the dual purposes of the comic playwright were to "amuse you citizens and advise." As such, no Aristophanic comedy is free from his trademark didacticism. In particular, "Wags" stands apart as a play in which the creator is at pains to teach his lesson, while skillfully seeing to it that the gravity of his messages does not come at the cost of the entertainment value of the play as a whole, - in fact integrating the two concepts on occasion - thereby affording a classical scholar a wealth of evidence as to the importance of the playwright as a teacher.

Naturally, any analysis of the lessons taught by Aristophanes and their importance warrants a look at the context in which he wrote and his plays were performed. For it is essential to remember that Athens in the fifth century BCE enjoyed what stands out as possibly the clearest paradigm of democracy, serving as the precedent for democratic societies to this day. That's to say, any major decision of the state was decided in the assembly, where each Athenian citizen's vote counted as much as the next. Therefore, popularity of opinion was essential, seeing demagogues such as Cleon and Pericles having to convince the people in order to win their favour for their own motions. As such, there were few more valuable political arenas than that of comic theatre, wherein Aristophanes consequently took on the role of socio-political advisor to the people.

As such, it was necessary that Aristophanes ~~always~~ maintained the attention of the common people. For example, the playwright is careful to ~~the~~ include a comic caricature of his political //

Question:

7

opponent Cleon as "the greatest master in the land... jag-toothed .. with canes crooked and stinking unwashed balls." However, under the triviality lay the lesson that the playwright taught in "Wasps". For Aristophanes had a definite didactic intent, firstly to ~~illustrate~~ bring to public attention the corruption Cleon enjoyed in the judicial system. It is undeniable that the playwright got his point across when he has the chorus of jurors claim that Cleon "keeps the flies off us" so as to enjoy their support for his own cases. In addition, the Trial of the Dog sees "the dog from Cyathorum" - an evident parody of the demagogue - cut out of the hand of Philocleon, whom Aristophanes has already established to be the epitome for the juror. Therefore, it is evident to see that the playwright came to teach an important lesson, decrying the politicians increase of odds for daily jury pay as a corruption move.

However, as alluded to above, the playwright cannot have the serious weight of his lesson slow the momentum of the comic mood required to hold the attention of his student - the people of Athens. Instead, "Wasps" is perforated with a plethora of simple jokes to keep up the pace. For example, Aeschines (another prominent politician) is ~~par~~ attacked for saying too little substance in too many words when Bdelycleon claims "what we really need is Aeschines to gas [the Wasps] into a coma". The enduring comic value of shooting down the tall poppies survives to this day; one need look only so far as political comics in the newspaper or the satirical comedy "South Park" to see the timelessness of making fun of politicians. As such, there are plentiful examples of this comedy as Aristophanes maintains banter with the audience, playing on the words "asp" and "aspis" to paint Cleonimus as a shameless "shield-dropper" and "horax" and "kobax".

Question: 7

to paint Theorus as a flatterer while poking fun at Alcibiades' ego. It is, however, important to note that while all these jokes seem to be at random, they all in fact attack satellites of Cleon, so that, while the lesson won't distract from the comedy, nor will the comedy distract from the lesson.

It would seem, furthermore, that, on top of the lesson specifically targeted at the politician, the teacher has a social comment to make. Naturally, the very format of old Attic comedy lends itself to a serious message to be delivered in the *parabasis*, which leads into the next significant factor in determining the importance of the playwright as teacher - structure itself. Indeed, the Athenian audience came knowing how the play would reveal itself ~~itself~~ - first the prologos, then the protheses, etc. This meant that ~~now~~ each audience member knew when to sit up and pay attention to the message of the playwright whose entertainment value had - by the ~~given~~ time the *parabasis* arrived - fully deserved their undivided attention. As such, this is where the playwright has his mouthpiece that is the chorus-leader reiterate his concerns with regard to Cleon. However, here too comes the clarificatory speech that will make sense of the conflict between old and young that has been prevalent in the play so far.

For the teacher here concludes his other lesson, stating as he is wont to do that the attitudes of old, of the Marathon-veterans triumphed over those of the new. Indeed, the ~~obnoxious~~ jurors conclude that "yes we may be poor old crocks" But the whiteness of our locks ~~does~~ does the city better credit, I should say, than the ringlets and the fashions and the rectum-widening passions of the namby-pamby youngsters of today." This point in particular, one can understand, may have been somewhat less palatable to the

Question: 7

generation in the audience. However, the structure of Attic comedy helps to ensure that comedy, like a spoonful of sugar, as it were, helps the medicine that is the teacher's lesson, go down - immediately following this message up with comic scenes of Bdelycleon addressing Endeavouring to dress his father by means of slapstick hilarity in items such as "Spartan Sandals" or "Boe-leather". Indeed, the playwright integrates the lesson and comedy into one when he has Philocleon - representative of the old - fell Bdelycleon - the new - with a blow or defeat young dancing crabs in a dance competition. This synergy of comedy and lesson demonstrates perhaps best of all the importance of comedy as a teaching tool in the hands of the right teacher.

Overall, therefore, "Wasps" is an excellent example of the way in which the playwright - in particular, Aristophanes - of old Attic Comedy was able to teach an important lesson, often in dire need, while making sure that this didn't come at the sacrifice of the comedy his audience came to see. For, whether poking idle fun at a handful of politicians before launching into a didactic tirade against one in particular, or diluting the gravity of his social comment with comic scenes, ~~gross~~ Aristophanes' double-edged sword of comedy and lesson adequately illustrate the importance of the playwright as teacher. unacademy

Question: Sixteen. (Greece)

One simply cannot overvalue the role of conflict in defining identity and establishing values. Whether one takes the example of ancient Athens whose democratic system was only reinforced by the military oppositions it faced in the very first year of its existence, not to mention the impact of the Peloponnesian War on her changing ideologies within her own culture, or even that of the modern day politician who, upon having had to defend his or her viewpoint in the public sphere against attacks from their contemporaries, is stuck with that opinion regardless of whether or not it still resonates with them, it is clear that the classical world featured a wealth of evidence with regard to how conflict can result in how one uses or abuses power.

A key dialogue to be analysed in any discussion of the use and abuse of power - particularly as defined by conflict - is that of the Athenians with the citizens of Melos upon the superpower's request that Melos join her league. Conflict's role is clear as Athens, having been tested to her wits end by the annual Spartan raids of the Attic countryside in the war thus far, completely shrugs off her earlier attempts at justification of her empire in favour of the argument of pure expedience. Earlier, facing revolts from her league from states such as Naxos or Thasos, Athens famously kept to her argument that her defence of Greece against the Persians warranted the collection of states into a league under her, since the Persians may return wanting revenge of Marathon in 490 BCE, or even simply that, upon her merits in the Greco-Persian Wars, Athens simply deserved the Delian League. Any hint of this opinion is gone now. Thucydides recounts how the Athenian argument for conquest of Melos effectively boils down to "we can so we will", or, as the historian writes, "Of the gods we

Question: 16

believe, and of men we know, that by a necessary law of ^{their} nature they rule wherever they can." In fact, Thucydides even goes as far as to structure this dialogue as just that, having speech followed by speech as one would expect of a play, to reinforce the hardened attitude that Athens has developed irrespective of Melian appeals to humanity or justice. It is clear, therefore, that Athenian identity has become that of the juggernaut conqueror, her cultural values insignificant as she utterly abuses her power, simply because she can, saying "you and everybody else, having the same power as we have, would do the same as we do," eventually putting "to death all the grown men whom they took, and [selling] the women and children for slaves."

However, Plutarch reveals that indeed even in the Greco-Persian Wars, Athenian cultural values had a tendency as conflict dictated. Lous, that's to say, that worked excellently in theory in peacetime were repeated in light of a foreign threat in whose context their pursuance made little practical sense. For example, while it was the custom in Athenian culture for exile to last ten years, Plutarch provides the case of Anisides, for whom "lest he attach himself to the enemy's cause" "they repealed their law of ostracism" simply because "Xerxes was marching through Thessaly and Boeotia". This example makes it evident that even to this height of justice and rightness in Athens which Thucydides recalls her harking back to in justification for her actions in the Peloponnesian War, cultural values could easily be dismissed for the time being by those in power.

Indeed, Plutarch's account of an Athenian of prominence exiled but allowed to return on pragmatic grounds recalls his account of another, whose life he fittingly parallels with that of Roman Marcus Curius - //

Question: 16

the outstanding Athenian general Alcibiades. Both Plutarch and Thucydides recall how, in the dawn of Athens' Sicilian Expedition, Alcibiades was exiled from the state. However, conflict again - this time the Peloponnesian War again once more - bent the rules as Aristophanes shows in his "Frogs" that there was a considerable tide of public opinion to forgive this general too since his alliance with their enemy Sparta had seen the construction of a permanent Spartan military residence in Attica's countryside. In summary, then, once again established cultural values could be overlooked should a context of conflict warrant such a necessity.

The Relief vases from Mykonos of the 7th Century BCE brings to the forefront of any classicist's mind a new example of the way in which conflict impacts on identity and cultural values - actions in the Trojan War. Such recollection stems from the vase's depiction of the Trojan Horse and how its deceitfulness facilitated the slaughter of Trojan people, not only soldiers but women and children as well. It needs little exploration that such treachery was not exactly what society valued in their military exploits since it represented unchained deceit where simple military prowess couldn't succeed. However, considering the war drawn out for ten years and the slight done to Menelaus, brother of the Greek Forces' commander Agamemnon by the Trojan prince Paris who stole his wife Helen, the trick of Odysseus, as seen in the pottery, went down in the history books as a great deed rather than a dirty trick.

The very war itself, furthermore, recalls for any classicist the discussions in Homer's *Iliad* - detailing this war - between the heroes Sarpedon and Glaukos. These heroes in fact put in words the role of conflict in defining identity and indeed how this role justifies the use of //

Question: 16

power - in this case of a person rather than a state, that's to say, of the generic Homeric hero. For, upon wondering what reasons justify the wealth of the hero, his power, his precedence at the feast, the heroes touch on the idea of noblesse oblige - that this power is theirs by right since they are foremost in battle, and that they must be foremost in battle since they enjoy the power. While more circular, this argument in some ways can be recognised in the Athenian argument with Melos - that Athens will take what she wants because she has the military might to do so. Homer, therefore, in some respects sets the tone, for the precedent case for how use or abuse of power can be explained by conflicts role in establishing identity and cultural values.

Question: Nine.

In his epic poem the Aeneid, while recollecting the works of Ennius here and preoccupying himself with Augustan concerns there, Virgil creates his own character, undoubtedly another victim like Turnus of the second half, definitely manipulated and slighted. But does the Phoenician princess have her own role in the tragedy that befalls her? To what extent does the Carthaginian queen's sister play a part? Is Aeneas himself at fault? Or is Dido a powerless victim of divine manipulation?

To establish the varying degrees to which each party must ultimately take responsibility for the tragic victim Dido, it is first necessary to examine what exactly befalls her. Virgil has Dido, poised to establish her city, fall in love with Aeneas, thereby breaking her oath to Sychaeus her former husband, and kill herself on a funeral pyre when the hero must leave. Her love and her death, therefore, are the two crimes on trial. The suspects are divine: Juno and Venus, the divine will of Jupiter, the intervention of Mercury and the semi-divine tool of the gods Aeneas himself, while the others are mortal: Dido principally Dido and Anna.

Firstly then, it is important to note that it was the conspiracy of two goddesses, Juno and Venus, that saw Dido fall in love in the first place, replacing Iulus with Cupid to see that the queen "dank in draughts of love" and standing by in the cave "as the maid of honour" when Dido and Aeneas consummate their divinely-inadvisable yet divinely-instigated love. Particularly considering the will of Jupiter that Aeneas travel to Italy and wed Lavinia, it does therefore seem that the two conspiring goddesses and their tool Cupid strike the first blow for the divine, sandwiching the tragic heroine between the contrary wills of Juno and Jupiter - respectively, that Aeneas stay and leave //

Question: Nine

ASSESSOR'S
USE ONLY

her and that he continue and love Lavinia.

However, it is also necessary to bear in mind that Virgil makes a conscious effort to show that Dido has the capability to make her own rational decision-making process. In book 4, Virgil has Dido remember her oath to Sychaeus while conversing with her sister Anna, saying "that man first stole my love, may he keep it with him in his grave." In fact, Dido even goes a step further, a step which casts some aspersions as to whether the part the queen herself plays in her tragedy, saying "may the earth open to its depth" to swallow her or may "Jupiter himself strike me down" before she ever break the self-imposed laws of love she has established in light of her late husband. Considering, then, that the queen does indeed "submit to this one temptation" and fall in love with Aeneas, giving rise to the obsession that will see her kill herself upon his departure. However, one can of course see this episode as evidence to the contrary; i.e. Dido has such resolution and has made such vows that the decision to submit to her amorous impulses cannot have been her own but rather the result of that artificially-injected love as a result of her divine manipulation in book 2, a conclusion Virgil will eventually seem to side with.

The other significant mortal pipes up at around this point, as Dido's sister Anna speaks her part and "with these words, she soothed her troubled mind". Clearly, then, Virgil presents the possibility that mortals Dido and Anna in their back-and-forth simply reached a logical decision to pursue the course that will see the Carthaginian queen fall from grace and then the living world. However, Virgil subsequently - immediately after this conversation - takes great pains to illustrate that Dido consults the gods, looking for divine ~~support~~ ratification, ~~after~~ sacrificing sheep of 10 years, partly //

Question: 9

ASSESSOR'S
USE ONLY

libations between the horns of cows. It is another hint as to whom Virgil will assign eventual blame to when he includes that, of all the gods Dido seeks approval from before embarking on her doomed affair, she prays "above all to Juna, to whom marriage-bonds are sacred."

The last potential culprit to be investigated is the semi-divine, but more importantly, divine fool that is Aeneas. For, whether through his divine heritage (with Venus as his mother) or because the hero only exists insofar as he is the realization of Jupiter's mission to found Rome, it is clear that any responsibility on the part of the proto-Roman can be considered divine manipulation. Therefore, it is important to remember that Aeneas did know that any love he enjoyed along the way to Rome would have to be fleeting and doomed to failure since Creusa informs him in book 2 that a bride awaits him in Latium, and therefore the hero did go into this love knowing full well that it couldn't last. However, it cannot be forgotten that book 2 is by its very nature a recount to Dido, and therefore, any knowledge that Aeneas had likewise the reader knows from this book is also known to Dido. However, Virgil's occasional tendency to slip into the third-person-omniscient perspective in book 2's telling, for example the detail with regard to the Greek ships and their exact locations at different times, could make one wonder whether all of this book is told by Aeneas or if it is told instead by Virgil.

Regardless, Virgil closes the case as much as is possible in the realm of subtle poetry when detailing Dido's death. When describing how Juno takes pity on the dying queen, instead of her usual epithets "queen of the gods" or "wife of Jupiter", Virgil instead writes "Juno, omnipotens" - "almighty" or "all-powerful" Juno. This use of Jupiter's own epithet being attributed to anyone but the king of the

Question: 9

god himself makes abundantly clear the opinion of the poet himself. Just as Aristophanes in *Acharnians* labels Pericles "all-powerful Pericles" to make clear that sole responsibility for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War centuries before him, Virgil gives the same epithet to Juno, in fact eliding the two words in the original Latin, making the concepts of Juno and sole responsibility completely inseparable, leaving no doubt as to whom Virgil blames.

Overall, therefore, while Virgil's *Aeneid* couldn't be so simple as to give no alternative possibilities in terms of responsibility for the victimage of his tragic heroine Dido, rather providing the other suspects such as Dido herself, Anna or Aeneas, all the hints are in the text to show the attentive reader that Virgil blames the destruction of his creation on Juno. Therefore, it is now incontestable that Dido is a powerless victim of divine manipulation. //