2009 Senior External Examination
Assessment report — Ancient History

Statistics

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of candidates</th>
<th>Level of achievement</th>
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Paper One

Part A: Reflections on the research inquiry process

The development of a focus question and a hypothesis were handled quite well, although some candidates focused on providing specific content detail about a particular subject rather than reflective qualitative comments on the nature of the research process itself. The revised 2008 Ancient History syllabus places greater emphasis on “critical reflection” than the previous syllabus. While this concept was generally understood, it needed to be demonstrated much more thoroughly. Responses to questions 1–4, involving research questions, focus questions and the hypothesis, were good. In responses to questions 5–7, most candidates needed to draw out the finer and more subtle features of the research process and identify problems encountered through genuine critical reflection.

Part B: Extended written response to an unseen question

The prepared nature of responses was obvious but it is the candidate’s ability to demonstrate their historical knowledge around the specifics of what the question asks that is a defining feature of Part B. While there was some variation in the ability of candidates to adapt historical knowledge to suit the set question, the overall standard was better than in previous years. Good historical knowledge was evident across the majority of candidates’ responses. Candidates have to prepare for four possible topics in this section of the paper, although all decided to respond to the Ramses II question. Candidates should have clearly targeted the word “evaluate” in the question and structured their paper around this concept/skill. Also, a more balanced approach to the topic would have led candidates to better argument and critical analysis. Responses were overwhelmingly supportive of Ramses’ “greatness”. Candidates would have benefited by mentioning issues such as the reliability of sources, the role of propaganda and the usefulness of Hittite sources/perspectives on the battle of Kadesh. Many were too willing to except Ramses’ version of events. In fact, to all intents and purposes, Kadesh was a victory for the Hittites. They became internationally recognised as a superpower following the battle. Ramses was lucky to escape with a stalemate. This example demonstrates the need for candidates to provide both positives and negatives for any topic question in this part of the examination, and then decide which one to support, citing clear reasons for their decisions.
Paper Two

Extended written response to historical evidence

The examination instructions indicated, among other things, four essential points that would assist in gaining a good result. They were:

- using direct quotations from a range of sources
- using sources critically (not just summarising)
- using sources in conjunction with your own historical knowledge
- explicit use of unseen sources.

Candidates understood and met these requirements. The use of unseen sources demonstrated the candidates’ ability to think on their feet and adjust responses accordingly to the new material. It is the most discerning of the features of assessment that truly test higher order thinking skills. Most candidates performed better in this paper than in Paper One, with markers being impressed by many of the responses.

Candidates also dealt well with the specifics of the question. They answered the question directly, and structured their response accordingly. Responses to Question 1 in particular, with a clear differentiation required between the “image” and the “reality” of power, led to good analytical and critical argument rather than descriptive narrative.

Prospective candidates would benefit by evaluating the motives of authors, both primary and secondary (but particularly primary), and researching the reasons behind their opinions on topics. Note, in particular, the criterion descriptors of Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry:

- perceptively interpret values and motives and identify perspectives, while acknowledging the time period and context of the production of a source
- evaluate the relevance, representativeness, likely accuracy and likely reliability of sources.

These are the key descriptors that differentiate the revised 2008 syllabus from the previous version.

Sample solutions

The response that follows was selected from those scripts that met the A Standard in all criteria in both papers. It has been reproduced exactly as written and therefore includes any spelling or grammatical errors made by the candidate.
Paper One

Part A

Part A: Reflections on the research inquiry process

Part A assesses your understanding and experience of "Planning and using a historical research process" (criterion 1 of the 2008 senior external syllabus for Ancient History).

Part A refers to an inquiry topic based on Theme 1: Studies of political structures from page 17 of the syllabus. For this year’s examination, the Roman options inquiry topic is excluded. The regional area chosen in Part A must be different from that selected in Part B.

Suggested time allocation: 1 hour 15 minutes.

Respond to all questions. The amount of space provided for each response is an indication of how much you are expected to write.

Write the topic you selected for inquiry during your study:

...Democracy in Ancient Athens: Pericles' influence

Question 1

How does your inquiry topic exemplify Theme 1: Studies of political structures?

Comment on how this topic highlights some of the important elements of the theme.

...There are many different forms of political structures throughout history and in modern times. Democracy has emerged as the most favored of these structures and is the basic political structure of most modern countries. Insight into a structure and working can be gained by studying its origins, development and progress through history.

Question 2

Specifically in Greece, Athens in the 6th and 5th century BC.

Develop five initial focus questions that could guide an investigation into your topic, based upon the aspects of inquiry below.

Definitions: What definitions are used in the basic structure of democracy and where do they originate?

Sources: What sources, both ancient and modern, give perception insight to the life of key democratic figures and public at the time.

Backgrounds, changes and continuities: motives and causes: What key events took place and led to the gradual changes from previous existing political structures to the end product of Periclean democracy?

Question 2 continues overleaf
Effects, interests and arguments: What are the qualities of Periclean democracy? (Pericles, final steps towards democracy) and how did they impact Athenian society?

Reflections and responses: What were the criticisms of Periclean democracy and in what modern times was it?

Question 3

With what historical material will you begin your initial investigation? (Name actual authors and primary and secondary sources that are relevant to the topic.)

Ancient Primary Sources
- Herodotus - The Persian Wars
- Thucydides - The History of the Peloponnesian Wars
- Euripides - The Suppliants

Ancient Secondary Sources
- Aristotle - various histories
- Plutarch - Lives of the time

Modern Sources
- Roebuck - textbooks
- Bradley

Question 4

After the completion of the initial stage of investigation, develop a key research question and provide an initial hypothesis.

Key research question:
Democracy reached its peak in Athens during the 5th century BC, but to what extent was this the achievement of Pericles?

Initial hypothesis:
Democracy existed before and after Pericles. But under his guidance it reached a peak that wasn't to be surpassed until relatively modern times.
Question 5

Devise a plan to guide your research over the next stage of investigation.

In your response, refer to:

- time frames
- where to research
- the types of sources and resources to consider that offer a range of perspectives
- when/what to start writing.

This information can be represented in an appropriate format of your own choosing, such as dot point summary, flow chart (visual organiser), spidergram.
Question 6

What limitations or difficulties have you encountered in the research of your chosen topic?

Revise and refine your initial focus questions and hypothesis, clearly showing the development of your ideas.

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**Criticisms of Democracy**

- Slavery
- At the expense of the rest of the Athenian empire
- Limited citizenship - excluded woman and residents
- Foreigners that did not have Athenian lineage

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**Revise and define**

Athenian democracy may not be seen as very democratic by modern standards, however, it was a great progression/improvement at the time, which paved the way for the greater civil liberties of all (although restricted).

Citizens of Athens, in contrast to modern times, were more heavily involved with the decisions of state etc. than citizens today.

**Despite criticisms** — still democratic for the time despite imperfections.
Question 7

What is your understanding of “critical reflection”? How might critical reflection enhance the quality of both your research investigation and your finished written assignment? (Give examples in your response of where you have critically reflected on your sources and on the research process.)

.................................................................

(even though ancient primary)

All sources must be critically evaluated for bias, etc. and as to the reliability and accuracy of the information they contain.

.................................................................

Thucydides (ancient primary source) was Pericles’ greatest critic…was extremely critical of democracy in general and Pericles in particular.

“What was seen as democracy was in fact rule of the first citizen.”

He often refers to the Athenian citizens as the ‘mob’ and does not use subjective language.

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Euripides The Suppliant (ancient primary source -playwright) was a sensationalist and pro-democracy. His accounts in his plays, although reflecting general opinion at the time are heavily dramatised.

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End of Part A
Throughout Egypt’s history, many pharaohs have shaped the course of its development and success, none so much however as Ramses II. Ramses II was revered for his strong military leadership, extensive building program, and for the unprecedented 67-year span of his rule as pharaoh. These achievements echo through the everlasting statement of Ramses himself: “King of kings, I am. Ozymandias. If anyone would know how great I am and where I lie, let him surpass my works.”

Ramses II throughout his rule was recorded to have had many wives and over 100 children; however, very little is known about his personal interactions and the way in which he lived. In early adolescence, he accompanied his father, the pharaoh, on many military campaigns, learning the invaluable skills of combat and tactics that would later contribute to the success of his own campaigns, in which he established himself as the strong leader of Egypt. Ramses II was most noted for the two major campaigns within the span of his rule, the first of which his war with the Hittites. The second, his campaign to defend Egypt from the Libyans invasion.

Ramses II, long spanning war against the Hittites, is most noted for his unsuccessful invasion of Kadesh and
the disastrous consequences it rendered. The battle for the city of Kadesh was a technical victory, however, a tactical loss. Having defeated the Hittite forces, Ramses' own armies had suffered dramatic losses in numbers from desertion and casualties, and as such he was unable to hold the city with forces spent on both sides, an armistice was negotiated and the Egyptian troops and Ramses II forced to return to Egypt. The effect of this tactical defeat was twofold. For Ramses II, rendering him unpopular with his subjects and also causing him to appear vulnerable to neighbouring provinces, many of which ceasing the opportunity to rebel as a result. Ramses, after his failure in Kadesh was then forced to undertake many military campaigns in order to quash such rebellions and bring stability back to his kingdom. All the while, the Hittite threat remained. After 12 years of continuous war, Ramses II finally ceded the struggle against the neighbouring Hittites as a stalemate, negotiating a treaty with their leader. The treaty was beneficial to both countries, encouraging trade and pledging help against threats, both external and internal. Also negotiated was the policy of extradition of fugitives, an unprecedented term for the times. This treaty, in addition to his later defeat of the Libyan invasion into Egypt, cemented Ramses II as one of the greatest military leaders of Egypt.

Ramses II was also similarly revered for his extensive building and projects of architecture in times of peace. Early in his reign, Ramses II demonstrated his keen appreciation
... of construction... building himself a new residence city... "Per. Ramses" (the house of Ramses), however, the magnificence of this new city was to be surpassed... with the constructions... to come... Ramses extensive building program was most noted... for producing... the great Hypostyle... and... temples at Karnak. The most famous of which... his temple... in the Hataract of Abu-Simbel, upon which... four giant statues... reside, three of Egyptian gods... and... the fourth... himself depicted... along side them as a god. The temple and statues are regarded... in modern times... as... one of the most... magnificent feats of ancient architecture...

Undeniable achievement...

Despite his... military and architectural successes... and... the unprecedented duration of his rule... it is... his legacy... in which his claim to magnificence resides. The greatness of Ramses II was to live... beyond... his... death... with... several... of the Pharaohs... following... his... rule... choosing to name themselves Ramses... in... his... honour... The... highest form... of homage... from... one Pharaoh to... the previous... it... is... for... these reasons... that Ramses statement "King of kings... I am... Ozymandias... If... anyone... would... know... how... great... I am... and... where... I... lie... let... him... surpass... my... works"... remains... true... to... this... day. He was... undeniably... the... greatest... and... most... influential... Pharaoh... that... Egypt... had... or... would... ever... see...
In his *Res Gestae*, Augustus claims that he strove and succeeded to restore the Roman Republic. Source D, point 34, "I transferred the state from my own power to the control of the Roman senate and the people." However, the truth to this claim has been a source of much debate throughout history and also in modern times. Although Augustus’ achievements are large in number and for the most part undeniable, many ancient sources, including Tacitus and Dio Cassius, did not regard the restoration of the republic among them, an opinion that the majority of respected modern historians subscribe to. It is the opinion of such historians that Augustus achieved his power and built his rule upon a carefully constructed foundation of propaganda, tactfully designing a public image of restoring the republic and subsequently the power back to the hands of the Roman people, whilst in reality gathering resources, both political, military and monetary, to promote his own personal power and agenda, which was to come to fruition when he was elected Princeps of Rome.

Augustus’ public image was, for the most part, a politically constructed facade, however, it did in many ways benefit the power of the Roman Republic by implementation of many reforms to the senate and political structures, but also by the measures to ensure that he was never publicly perceived as having too much personal power. Augustus was the product of the labours of the emperors that...
had preceded him and as such, he was careful not to follow too closely in their footsteps. He would not appear ignorant, as mark Antony, as the opinions and public views of the Roman populace, nor as ambitious for personal power as Sulla or Caesar. Thus, he can be seen in source 1. Cassius Dio: “Augustus did not enact all laws on his sole responsibility, but some of them he brought before the popular assembly in advance, in order that, if any features caused displeasure, he might learn it in time and correct them.” This indicates Augustus’ appreciation of the power of public opinion and favor, which in source 2, Horace, is seen to be favorable as the poet/lyrist writes, “As long as Caesar (Augustus) is guardian of the Senate, neither civil dissenstion nor violence shall banish peace.” This can also be seen through his efforts to insist that he did not receive or adopt any office uncustomary or by illegal means within his Res Gestae. A book he wrote himself, throughout his life, of his many achievements that was designed essentially to direct discussion in the Senate after his death and to prescribe what future generations of Romans would think of him and his achievements. And possibly, the greatest surviving example of his facade to the Roman public.

Although the Res Gestae details many legitimate achievements of Augustus’s, it also omits and fails to mention the reality of the means he took to acquire such power and also the reality of the great personal power he actually possessed. This is detailed in source 2.
which Tacitus characterised the Principate as being indirectly initiated by two considerations, "firstly, as government became progressively the business of one man, general knowledge of events and the plotting that lay behind them deteriorated." An example of such events, subsequently committed was the use of Sullas infamous prescriptions. Augustus employed similar methods using murder to raise profit and to silence political competition. This can be seen in Source A... Tacitus... "and gradually grew in power, concentrating in his own hands the functions of the Senate, the magistrates and the laws. No one opposed him, for the most courageous had fallen in battle or in the proscription." Also underlying his public persona of minimal power was his efforts to ensure that the greater majority of Roman military power remained in his hands... this is supported by Source B, "In order to keep such men in their place and avoid recurrence of civil wars and also to maintain his own pre-eminence, he would need to make sure that most of Roman military power remained in his hands at all time..." and Source C... "yet the forces in his hands were overwhelming and supported a moral authority even greater. Half the empire had already sworn allegiance to him.... This massing of personal military control, and means of proscription to render profit and silence opposition was the true reality in which Augustus' reign were founded upon...

In regards to securing the success of his reign both his image and his fatal methods were essential, as
...was his keen understanding of politics and the mistakes of previous rulers. Augustus was able to appear to restore the people's republic and rule for their benefit through his propaganda whilst successfully amassing more personal power than any emperor before his reign or after his death. Both image and reality were essential to the fruition of his position of princeps of Rome.