Ancient History

2014 Senior External Examination: Assessment report

Statistics

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Paper One

Part A — Reflections on the research inquiry process

In general, good detail was provided and a clear understanding of the aspects of inquiry was demonstrated. Candidates exhibited progress in the development and detail of their ideas, as well as critically reflecting on research methodologies and pedagogies. Other observations are as follows:

- There was a marked improvement from previous years in candidates responding specifically to the planning and using a historical research process questions.
- More candidates developed specific (rather than generic) focus questions related to the topic and theme.
- There were some occurrences of candidates repeating the same response to each question. Responses need to be tailored to each specific question.

Question 8 was a key question in this part of the paper. It required candidates to specifically engage with the source material given and actively demonstrate understanding of how it might be used as part of a historical research process. The quality of responses to Question 8 was mixed, but some responses were very good.

Part B — Extended written response to an unseen question

Candidates had to prepare for four possible topics in this section of the paper, with the majority selecting the question on Spartacus. The candidates generally handled the question well, with knowledge and information centred on arguments that clearly responded to the question. Other observations are as follows:
• The question invited candidates to examine the historical accuracy of Spartacus: how much is fact and how much is myth. Candidates needed to identify the stereotypical modern view of Spartacus. They did not need to have viewed films and television programs about Spartacus in order to do this. Responses were assessed based on the quality and accuracy of historical arguments, facts and sources presented.

• Using sources or referring to primary sources was essential in responding adequately to the question and in being graded highly. Many responses made little mention of sources; this is an area that can be improved.

• Establishing historical context by referring to key dates, names and people is also encouraged. The better results reflected success in this area.

• Responses that were graded highly used historical facts well. They also challenged the stereotypical view of Spartacus, which was the purpose of the question.

Paper Two

Extended written response to historical evidence

Although there were some extremely good and well-targeted quote selections, the opportunity to evaluate authors and sources in order to strengthen arguments was not really fully grasped by most candidates. However, there was an overall improvement in this area over previous years.

Many high-achieving candidates responded to Questions 1 and 3, providing thoughtful arguments using a range of sources and some excellent quotes. All facets of the question were addressed.

Although democracy was the focus in Question 2, use of the term ‘best’ required candidates to compare democracy with other forms of government, e.g. tyranny, oligarchy, kingship. Some of the seen sources would have provided assistance in cueing into this question but they were, in most cases, not used.

To do well in Paper Two, candidates needed to use direct quotes from a range of sources and use sources critically (not just summarise them). They also needed to use sources in conjunction with historical knowledge, along with the explicit use of unseen sources.

Sample solutions

The following candidate response is of an A standard. It has been reproduced exactly as written and, therefore, includes any spelling or grammatical errors made by the candidate.
Paper One

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 Ancient History Senior External Syllabus 2008).

Part A refers to an inquiry topic of your own choosing based on Theme 4 of the syllabus, Studies of archaeology.

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

Suggested time allocation: 1 hour 15 minutes.

Write the topic you selected for inquiry during your study:

Schliemann’s excavations at Mycenae

Question 1

How does your inquiry topic highlight some of the important features of Theme 4 of the syllabus, Studies of archaeology?

To understand the development of modern archaeology, it is important to analyse the discoveries and excavations of Heinrich... Schliemann... considered by some to be the "father of archaeology"... it is critical to reflect on Schliemann's unorthodox and groundbreaking approach to archaeology... by analysing his methods at Mycenae, the involvement of the media, and using ancient texts as guides, Schliemann's discovery of Homer's 'Age of Heroes' must be considered in modern archaeology.
Question 2

State the initial focus question/s for each of the Aspects of inquiry that you used to guide an investigation into your topic.

i. Definitions:
   Define and highlight the methods that Schliemann used in his excavations. What archaeological definitions must be known to study Schliemann’s excavations?

ii. Sources:
   What sources added to and developed Schliemann’s ideas from the knowledge already formulated by Pausanias’ travel guide?

iii. Backgrounds, changes and continuities — motives and causes:
   Despite Schliemann not being officially qualified in the field of archaeology, how did he change the fate of excavating?
   Can his groundbreaking approach be validated despite his background?

iv. Effects, interests and arguments:
   What effect did Schliemann’s discoveries have on the ruling figures of the archaeological field? What criticisms did he encounter throughout his excavations? Did he influence modern archaeology?

v. Reflections and responses:
   Can Schliemann be awarded praise for his discoveries at Mycenae? In what way did these discoveries shape the understanding of the classical Greek Age?

Question 3

What archaeological and historical materials did you use in your investigation? Name actual authors, collections and primary and secondary sources that are relevant to the topic.

Ancient Primary Sources: Linear B, Scripts (Lists)

Ancient Secondary Sources: Thucydides; Epic Poet Homer; The Iliad

No Literature
Question 4

After the completion of the initial stage of investigation, what key research question did you develop and what was your initial hypothesis?

Key research question:

In what way was Heinrich Schliemann's discoveries received? To what extent were these discoveries discussed in a historical context and how did they throw light on the antecedents of the Classical Greek Age?

Initial hypothesis:

Despite Schliemann's questionable background in the field of archaeology, he was able to prove himself worthy of a serious audience as he opened the understanding of the Greek Bronze Age with his unorthodox and showman-

Question 5

Select one key challenge or opportunity that you encountered in the research of your chosen topic. Explain how you dealt with this challenge or opportunity.

To develop and confirm the research of Schliemann's excavations at Mycenae, it was difficult to analyse the biased criticism at such discoveries by evaluating and balancing the criticisms Schliemann faced. It made for a more thorough and widened reflection of Schliemann's abilities and lack of abilities in areas of archaeology.
Question 6

State your final focus questions and hypothesis. Briefly explain the reasons for any changes or why no revisions were necessary.

Focus questions:
...It was important to refine my focus question to allow the criticism and response to those criticisms to be included, and also to allow the development of my ideas to be shown.
...Can Schliemann be accepted as a serious archaeologist despite his unusual methods and destruction at excavation sites? Can Schliemann's discoveries at Mycenae be considered to have developed the understanding of the classical Greek Age? Did the methods that he employed shape the field of archaeology, and if so, in what ways?

Hypothesis:
Although Schliemann caused some destruction at the site of his excavations, his groundbreaking methods of using a predetermined agenda, based on the guidance of ancient texts, prove him to be a serious archaeologist. His involvement of the media allowed a spark of public interest to be created, dominating the Western world with his discoveries, proving his efforts to be that of a qualified archaeologist. As Schliemann shaped the face of modern archaeology through the use of his ancient guide, Homer.

Question 7
What is your understanding of critical reflection?

Critical reflection in the context of historical inquiry allows for the refinement and evaluation of formulated ideas. By critically reflecting on any flaws or views found in my research, it will allow for stronger knowledge and proof of Schliemann's abilities as an archaeologist.
Question 8

How might you use the source below as part of your research process? Would it enhance or change the direction of your ideas stemming from your research? Explain how this might happen.

Professional inaugural address: The purpose of archaeology — Graham E Connah

Abstract

Thank you Mr Chancellor for your kind introduction. Respected colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, I have chosen tonight to address a topic of fundamental relevance, rather than examining some particular aspect of my own research as I was tempted to do. This decision was prompted not only by the nature of inaugural lectures in general but by the special character of this lecture. The chair to which the University has done me the honour of electing me is a foundation chair, that is to say that I am the first to hold a position that will, I hope, have a long line of distinguished incumbents. It seems appropriate, therefore, to speak about what must be the major issue relevant to my discipline area: namely what do archaeologists think that they are trying to do, and what point is there in doing it. In choosing to talk about this, I shall of course be taking issue with such opinions as that of the American archaeologist, Albert Spaulding, who achieved fame many years ago by cynically remarking that ‘the only purpose of archaeology is to make archaeologists happy’ (Spaulding 1953:390).


This source would be relevant when...

...analysing why Schliemann decided to excavate at sites such as Troy and Mycenae.

...could lead to questions being asked such as:

Did Schliemann begin excavations to fulfill his own childhood dreams of finding Homer's heroes? Or did he excavate for the pure reason and want to enlighten the world of the existence of such a civilisation?

The source would both enhance and change the direction of my research ideas. It would enhance the research as it would allow Schliemann's pure intentions to be revealed not only to discover ancient civilisations to ancient texts, but to share and proclaim this information to the world.

Question 8 continues...
the source would change. As Sherratt's direction of my research would change, it would question the extent to which Schliemann began excavating for his own personal ideologies, or Homer's own. Critical reflection piece to define and highlight what Schliemann was doing for archaeology and what his excavations meant for the development of archaeology.
Part B — Extended written response to an unseen question

Part B assesses *Communicating historical knowledge* (syllabus criterion 3).
The following questions are derived from Theme 5 of the syllabus, *Studies of conflict*.
Respond to one question in **600–800 words**.
In your response, refer to and evaluate historical evidence including specific sources.
Planning space is provided. Cross out any draft work that is not to be assessed.
Suggested time allocation: **1 hour 15 minutes**.

*Either*

**Question 1 — Egypt**
To what extent was the Amarna ‘revolution’ truly revolutionary?

*or*

**Question 2 — Rome**
To what extent is the ‘portrayal’ of Spartacus in film and television **similar** or **different** to the real ‘historical’ Spartacus?

*or*

**Question 3 — Mesopotamia/Asia**
To what extent was King Nebuchadnezzar the egotistical tyrant depicted in the Bible?

*or*

**Question 4 — Medieval Europe**
Was the First Crusade (1096–1099) caused primarily by religious devotion or by the desire for political and economic gain?

End of Part B

End of Paper One
Throughout the years of television and film, the portrayal of ancient figures has often varied significantly from the actual historical figure. The exaggerated portrayal of the heroic nature of Spartacus as a revolutionary war leader differs from the historical, while his brutal defeat, however, the portrayal is similar to the heroic nature of his character. Film and television portrayals of Spartacus are similar to the character depiction, however, diminished by the exaggeration of him as a revolutionary war leader.

The depiction of Spartacus’ strong personality is similar to that of the historical Spartacus, which can be seen from his actions in the Third Senile War. Spartacus had a will to change the outcome of his life as a slave, which manifested itself in his character. A gladiator slave in 73 B.C., Spartacus used this will to escape his confinement in Capua, along with other gladiator slaves. The media portrayal of Spartacus is similar to his historical character as Spartacus was intelligent and strong-minded, which worked in his favour when fighting in battle. Truthfully, Spartacus often was mistaken for Greek as he was extremely intelligent, affirming the portrayal of his strong character in the media. There are similarities between the depiction of Spartacus...
In film and television, however, there are differences.

The amplifying and exaggeration of Spartacus as a revolutionary war hero differs from the historical events of his brutal defeat. Spartacus was not a revolutionary, and did not want to defeat Rome. Spartacus wanted peace for slaves and equality, and never realised his only chance at freedom was to escape Capua. In 72 B.C., Spartacus began the Third Sertorian War, and was successful as the Romans didn't see him as a threat. The media portrayal amplifies this act of war and heightens Spartacus' intentions for beginning the war. Spartacus wanted freedom for his fellow slaves, but it was the over-confidence of their success that ultimately led to their demise in 71 B.C. at the hands of Roman generals and Pompey. The difference in the portrayal of Spartacus' intentions in the war led to imbalanced perceptions of the historical events.

The exaggerations of Spartacus as a revolutionary war hero outweigh the similarities portrayed in the strengths of his character. Although Spartacus did unintentionally threaten the fabric of Roman society, the media portrayal exaggerates the common anti-establishment (Rome) revolutionary
The traits that were prominent in Spartan personality: Spartans succeeded initially because the Romans did not feel threatened by his presence, however, when they did, Spartans were brutally defeated and his soldiers crucified on a Roman way. Spartacus' real personality was strong and intelligent; slightly mirrored in portrayals of him in literature, are diminished because of the exaggeration of him as a war leader.

The portrayal of war and their leaders in the media often becomes skewed from the original historical events. The glamorising of Spartacus as a revolutionary leader in film and television diminishes from his strong personality and will for freedom. Despite actually being a threat to Roman society, it was not Spartacus' intention and it was what led to the destruction of him and his army by Rome. The media attempts to portray the real context of Spartacus, however, gets lost in the battle and further itself from the true heroics of Spartacus as a gladiator.
Paper Two

Extended written response to historical evidence

Paper Two relates to your study of Greece: Democracy from Theme 3 of the syllabus: Studies of power.

Consider the sources in the historical sources book before responding to one of the questions below in 600–800 words.

You must:
- use a range of seen and unseen sources in your response
- use the sources critically; do not just summarise them
- reference the sources you use.

The referencing of sources can refer to the source letter/number or the author.

Planning space is provided. Cross out any draft work that is not to be assessed.

Suggested time allocation:
- studying the sources: 30 minutes
- planning and writing your essay response: 2 hours.

Either

Question 1

To what extent did the problems within Greek democracy outweigh its benefits?

or

Question 2

To what extent was Greek democracy the best form of government in Ancient Greece?

or

Question 3

How did the power of Pericles either enhance or negate the principles of Greek democracy?

End of Paper Two
The development of Greek democracy can be summarised by Abraham Lincoln's famous statement, "for the people, by the people, with the people", as it was the enhancements of Pericles that influenced modern democracy. The power of Pericles' abilities to govern Athens enhanced the principles of Greek democracy into the 'Golden Age', despite its undeniable critics and flaws... Pericles' ability to reform the structure of democracy, understand what it meant to the forefathers of democracy, and work against criticism, allowed him to thoroughly enhance Greek democratic principles.

To enhance the flow and ensure equality in Greek democracy, Pericles worked to reform the principles developed previously by Solon and Cleisthenes, as well as introducing his own. Pericles' power to reform enhanced the principles of Greek democracy as he rid the aristocrats of their power, allowing all citizens to have equal rights, regardless of wealth or class, which best mirrored the intrinsic concepts of democracy in Athens. By allowing all citizens to participate in the Ecclesia, Boule, and Dikastria through sortition and rotation, "the Athenian government was
(became) a form of ‘direct’ democracy, in which all citizens were expected to participate.” (Source A).

By creating an ideal of expected participation in the running of the democracy to its citizens, it showed that the power of Pericles enhanced the equality and running of the state. By introducing payment for jury service and allowing all citizens to participate in the Ecclesia (assembly), the principles of Greek democracy were enhanced as the most important democratic institution became accessible to all citizens. (Source C). The ability of Pericles to implement these reforms allowed Athens to become more direct and reflect the fundamental values of Greek democracy, which was possible because he understood these values.

Pericles’ ability to introduce new methods, influence the people and implement the values of the people shaped Athens to become one of the most progressive political systems as he entered Athens into the ‘Golden Age’ of democracy. Pericles understood the importance of Athenian values in democracy and shaped his leadership, including the citizens in the democracy (with equal rights) to show his power in understanding the principles of democracy in Athens. The Athenian people accepted the leadership of Pericles as the recognised superior individual (Source L) and he was voted ‘strategos autokrator’ consecutively for 15 years, all of which became the ‘Golden Age’ of
Athenian democracy. By understanding the power he had acquired with the citizens of Athens, Pericles understood not to misplace the trust and ensured that "the majority of the citizens run the state, (as) all citizens are equal before the law" (Source K). As Pericles understood that the citizens must have equality and trust in an elected leader, this enhanced the principles of Greek democracy and authoritarian power based on wealth and class focusing on worth. By understanding what democracy meant to Athenians, Pericles was able to use his power to enhance the system, however, still earned critics.

Despite Pericles enhancing the principles of Greek democracy, his reforms were not without their flaws or critics. Although Pericles’ reforms had downsides, his time as Strategos Autokrator led Athens into the ‘Golden Age’ of democracy as it enhanced the rights to citizens, in accordance with the principles of Greek democracy. Pericles was able to lead Athens into this Golden Age with his power as a public speaker, however, his reforms were a limited franchise. No metics, resident aliens, women, or people without both parents born in Athens were allowed citizenship, resulting in the citizens with ‘rights’ was diminished to only c. 40,000 out of 300,000. Pericles’ power
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Thucydides did like Pericles but he himself was exiled by a demagogue to control the Athenian democracy did not lead to his dominance as he was elected by the people consecutively. Thucydides suggests that “in what was nominally a democracy, power was really in the hands of the first citizen” (Source P) however this is untrue as Thucydides did not believe in democracy and Pericles did allowing Pericles not to extend his power but rather use it to enhance democratic principles. Pericles’ criticisms had mainly been earned from those against democracy, such as the Old Oligarch who didn’t think well of their constitution (Source P) and Plato who found it to be a “veiled dictatorship” (Source S).

However, these criticisms are written in bias against Pericles and with a lack of understanding about Pericles had developed as a leader. Pericles knew of his power and yet all throughout his position as Chief General he never corrupted the power focusing constantly on improving the citizens’ democratic rights. Despite minor flaws in the system, Pericles’ criticism was unwarranted as he proved his power to be focused on the cause of enhancing the principles of Greek democracy.

Democracy under Pericles thrived into the Golden Age, creating a standard for modern democracy, as Pericles balanced his power to enhance the principles of...
Greek democracy. Pericles' ability to balance his influential power with the rights of citizens (in a democracy) worked in his favour to enhance the principles of democracy. The ability of Pericles to lead Athenian democracy allowed him to successfully claim that "our city as a whole, is an education to Greece." (Source 8), as despite the flaws and criticisms, Pericles successfully enhanced the democratic principles of his forefather that culminated in Athens becoming a model system for modern democracy.