

AS LEVEL

Examiners' report

ANCIENT HISTORY

H007

For first teaching in 2017

H007/01 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 1 series overview

Overall the candidature seemed to cope well with the demands of the questions and there was evidence that the demands of this new specification were being met.

The vast majority of candidates coped well with the time constraints with very few examples seen of candidates demonstrably running out of time.

In all questions it is important that candidates keep to the precise terms especially sticking within any dates mentioned in the wording of the question.

Section A overview

Question 1 requires no additional support from sources; a simple factual response to the issue which then goes on to make convincing judgements is all that is required. The central issues are wide enough for all candidates to score highly even by approaching the question in different ways.

Question 2 asks the candidates to extract relevant support from the passage(s) sited and to use supporting evidence from other relevant sources to address the question posed.

Question 1

- 1 To what extent did Corinth influence Sparta's relationship with Athens during the period 446–431 BC? [10]

The responses were on the whole encouraging, showing good knowledge of the precise period in the question and the events in which Corinth was involved, including good knowledge of the Samos event, Corcyra, Potidaea, and the debate in Sparta. Understanding of Sparta's own position on Athens contrasted with Corinth's role showed substantiated analysis.

Common misconceptions involved the relationship of Corinth and Megara (outside the period) and Corinth's conflict with Athens in 450s being relevant; the assumption that Corinth's complaints to Sparta affected Sparta's view with little argument in support. Responses used material after 431 BC as if it was relevant, for example the situation after the Peace of Nicias in 421 BC.

Exemplar 1

Athens and Sparta made a Thirty Year Truce in 445. However, terms of the treaty were not liked by Corinth and other Peloponnesian allies. The main term which they opposed was that Athens & Sparta signed the treaty on behalf of their allies, who still had to ~~stay~~ keep to the terms.

Samos revolted from Athens in 440. Corinth did not vote to get involved in the revolt, so due to the bicameral nature of the Peloponnesian League, it means that Sparta did. Here, Corinth is stopping Sparta angering Athens and actually influencing good relations between the two. Event at Epidamnus and Corcyra really damaged Athens' relation with Corinth, and therefore with Sparta. Athens made a defensive alliance with Corcyra, to help her against the ~~invaded~~ attacking Corinthians. Corinth thought this was against the terms of the treaty, and this ~~later~~ provided reasons for war against Athens. ^{also} When Corinth was having problems with their colonies on the Ambracian

gulf, Athens involved herself. Although barely mentioned by Thucydides, this was another reason increasing Corinth's hatred of Athens. All this came to the forefront in 432 - known as the Corinthian complaint. Corinth told Sparta of the aggression of Athens and of the neglect of Sparta. Among the points I have mentioned previously, Corinth was able to greatly influence Sparta's anti-Athenian view, eventually get the whole of the Peloponnesian League, including Sparta, to vote for war against Athens. In conclusion, Corinth greatly influenced Sparta's declining relations with Athens in the period 446-431.

This response received full marks for Question 1. The answer is focused on the specific question of Corinth's influence on Sparta regarding their relationship with Athens. There is a range of examples from the period 446-431 which are detailed and directly relevant to Corinth's influence. Facts are accurate and fully relevant to the question. The range of examples are appropriate and detailed.

Question 2

2 Read the following passage.

On the basis of this passage and other sources you have studied, to what extent were Athenian allies responsible for the growth of Athenian power? [20]

Responses varied in success in terms of the detailed use of the extract and other sources in relation to the growth of Athenian power. Analysis of the information in the extract showed understanding of the extent of allies' responsibility. Good points were the role of allies in just paying money and not fighting, allowing Athens to develop her navy at their expense.

Responses developed balanced arguments by reference to Sparta's inactivity (examples such as allowing Athens to build walls, not acting when asked - Thasos) and Athens' own actions (revolts - Naxos, Samos etc; transfer of treasury). Good use was made of other sources, e.g. Thucydides' Pentakontaetia. Good use was made of decrees (Chalkis, Thoudippus, Tribute Lists) in support of the growth in power.

Common misconceptions led responses to focus on the Persian Wars and Athens' role in them; interpretation of Plutarch's statement on the allies unwilling to fight led to the idea that in that way they did not aid Athens' growth, whereas by not fighting they were making Athens' position stronger.

Misattributions of evidence was a feature of some responses - a claim that Thucydides recorded the transfer of the treasury and/or the Peace of Kallias being too common.

Section B overview

Most answers to the essay questions reached sensible conclusions derived from the ancient evidence and answers, which provided a mere factual response with unsupported assertion masquerading as analysis, were thankfully a lot rarer this year. To repeat the advice from last year: evaluation of the sources must be specific to the point being made. There was still far too much generic evaluation bolted on at the end of an essay, which, quite reasonably, received very little credit.

Question 3

- 3* To what extent did Athenian and Spartan strategies develop during the course of the Archidamian War (431–420 BC)?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge. **[30]**

Precise adherence to the period in the question and knowledge of the exact nature of the initial strategies gave responses a good grounding from which to analyse the development of those strategies and assess the extent of change.

Sound responses went beyond a basic understanding of Pericles' strategy of staying within the walls of Athens, e.g. keeping the Empire safe, engaging attacks on the Peloponnese, avoiding a battle on land. Development was linked to change of leader: Cleon for Pericles, although not always explained except in terms of Cleon's 'aggressiveness'. Sparta's strategy of invasion was generally covered well, although the actual years of invasion were not known by some.

The changes were argued as the result of Brasidas' more inventive approach. Responses made good use of Thucydides (e.g. on the plague, Pylos, Brasidas and Amphipolis). Some good analysis of developed strategies focused on the desire for peace at the end of the decade.

There were issues with responses which focused outside the precise period in the question with material from 450s, and post 420 BC (e.g. Decelea, Sicily, Mantinea; Cleon was associated with Sicily; reference to Alcibiades in the context of 431–420). There were issues of key omissions, e.g. battle of Delium (an essential change by Athens), early approaches to Persia by both sides, naval battles in Gulf of Corinth, Sparta's peace approaches in 425 BC, Sparta's early attempt to cause revolts in the Empire (Mytilene).

Misconceptions occurred over the years in which invasions took place, the effect of the plague and its role in strategy, and the effect of Helots on Sparta. Some were aware of negotiations with Persia but these tended to place it in the period after 413 which is irrelevant to the question.

Question 4

- 4* To what extent did the Persian defeat in 479 BC cause Persia's relationships with Greek states to change in the period 478–404 BC?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge. **[30]**

Good detail of the chronology of the period was evident in responses. There was detail of the immediate effect of Persia's defeat on Athens and Sparta, the gradual development the Delian League and Persia's retreat from conquest of Greece, the watershed of the Egyptian failure and the Peace of Kallias (with very good detail of the issues on this). Responses made good use of the final years of the war and Sparta's deal with Persia. Thucydides and Xenophon were used appropriately especially in the second part of the period, and Herodotus for the Persian relations with Greece up to 479 BC. There were good explanations on the extent to which the defeat caused changes in relations, whether there was some change or no change at all often with reference to change from 480 to 479 in Persia's attitude. The limited nature of Persian sources was a feature of some arguments.

Common misconceptions included the assumption that the defeat caused Persia to ally with Sparta in the Ionian War without explaining why this was so. In addition, there was a misconception that Persia took no interest in Greece after 449, ignoring the Samos incident and the attempts by both Athens and Sparta to get Persian aid. It was also not uncommon for Thucydides to be used for the period after 411 BC. There was some narrative of the end of the period in place of reasoned and substantiated analysis.

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