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A LEVEL

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL GREEK

H444
For first teaching in 2016

H444/01 Summer 2024 series

Contents

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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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.

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Paper 1 series overview

This is the Unseen Translation paper. At this level, an amount of interpretation and even speculation is required. In both passages, candidates who read the English introduction carefully found there was a great deal of information to help them.

Previous examiners' reports have remarked that it tends not to be esoteric vocabulary or complex syntax that cause most difficulty, but insecurity over the 'basics' (whether in learning or application.) The same was true this year. Both passages were accessible - perhaps unusually, the verse passage seemed even more so than the prose - and candidates frequently got into the swing of both, writing confident English translations. Where there were derailments, these were often due to (e.g.) missing the tense of a participle or confusing two similar words, where the tense in question might well be tested at GCSE.

With this in mind, following the approach documented in previous reports, on both this paper and Paper 2, examiners made reference to the Defined Vocabulary Lists for both GCSE and AS when making choices about what to accept, and what alternative meanings to expect. This is not because either list is prescribed for A Level, but because examiners consider the lists to represent a scope of knowledge that an A Level candidate is expected to surpass, and substantially. In the comments below, 'GCSE' and 'AS' indicate that a word appears on those lists. The intention is constructive: to help centres and candidates by drawing attention to Greek words that significant numbers of candidates find difficult to pin down even after some years of study, most especially where more than one distinct meaning may be in use. For example, in this paper (and, as it turned out, Paper 2), there appeared various uses of παρά, with different cases and as a prefix.

> **Brackets or slashes should be a tool of last resort only.**
>
> The slashes in the translations offered in the MS are to illustrate some possible alternatives that should all be accepted; brackets indicate words that are not necessarily required to express the meaning of the Greek in English. Neither of these have a place in candidate responses, except in the very limited example below.

Candidates should have the confidence to write communicative English: they will only lose marks on this paper if their English does not put across the meaning of the Greek. A quick re-read should make it obvious. The rubric states that contradictory responses will not receive credit: this clearly applies to 'come/go' or 'come [go]' *even if either option would be acceptable on their own,* so candidates should make a firm choice and offer a committed translation. Brackets may rarely help to clarify a heavily metaphorical expression (e.g. 'he told him to get his head out of the gutter [lit. to think better thoughts]'); but of course, if the metaphor is an appropriate translation of the meaning of the Greek, the brackets will not be necessary. Examiners see perhaps one candidate response a year where a bracketed explanation has been helpful, and - to reiterate - brackets that offer any kind of alternative meaning are likely to be harmful.

Handwriting was generally good; almost all candidates wrote as requested on alternate lines. Candidates are reminded that it is completely acceptable to put an asterisk or number and rewrite a tricky sentence in full underneath the main answer. Very often where words are squeezed in, an essential word ends up crossed out and not rewritten; such a word cannot be credited. Again: take the time to proof-read before submitting. A good proportion of candidates had rewritten their translation of (only) the verse passage in full; this usually led to improved English in the fair copy and was well worth the time.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- paid attention to punctuation and particles, most especially (οἱ) μέν… (οἱ) δέ - paid attention to the tenses of participles - noticed the genders of variable nouns (e.g. ἑταίρας) and agreements (e.g. νομίζων) - thought about the sequence of events in the story - were unafraid to make (clear, legible) alterations to their English, or rewrite entire sections.	- confused the different clauses (especially on the prose passage), and/or didn't let the punctuation guide them - appeared unsure about the meaning(s) of important words such as τυγχάνω (AS) and ὡς (GCSE) - appeared unclear on the significance of the voice of verbs such as καθίζω - allowed 'impossible' agreements.

Section A overview

The passage seemed accessible and candidates generally kept the narrative going. The most crucial step for understanding the plot was probably to spot the difference between ἑταῖραι (ἑταῖρος AS), δέσποιναι (AS), θεράπαιναι and θεράποντες (both AS); some candidates omitted to make clear the genders, or lost the distinction between the promised 'women' mentioned in the introduction and the servants already attending.

Question 1

1   Translate the following passage into English. **Please write your translation on alternate lines.**
[50]

Two Thebans, Phillidas and Melon, carry out their plot to assassinate the ruling polemarchs. The assassins, in disguise, kill some at an alcohol-fuelled feast, and another at his own home.

Since the polemarchs always celebrate a festival of Aphrodite at the end of their term of office, Phillidas was making all the arrangements for them. He had previously promised to bring them women.

ἐπεὶ δέ, δειπνήσαντές τε καὶ ταχὺ μεθύσθεντες, ἐκέλευον αὐτον ἄγειν τὰς
ἑταίρας, ἐξελθὼν ὁ Φιλλίδας εἰσήγαγεν εἰς τὸ <u>προταμιεῖον</u> τοὺς περὶ Μέλωνα,
τρεῖς μὲν στείλας ὡς δεσποίνας, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ὡς θεραπαίνας. αὐτὸς δ᾽
εἰσελθὼν εἶπε τοῖς <u>πολεμάρχοις</u> ὅτι οὐκ ἄν φασιν εἰσελθεῖν αἱ γυναῖκες,
εἴ τις τῶν θεράποντων ἔνδον ἔσοιτο. ἔνθεν οἱ μὲν ταχὺ ἐκέλευον πάντας   5
ἐξιέναι, ὁ δὲ Φιλλίδας εἰσήγαγε τὰς ἑταίρας δή, καὶ ἐκάθιζε παρ᾽ ἑκάστῳ.
ἦν δὲ <u>σύνθημα</u>, ἐπεὶ καθίζοιντο, τύπτειν εὐθὺς <u>ἀνακαλυψαμένους</u>. οἱ μὲν
δὴ οὕτω λέγουσιν αὐτοὺς ἀποθανεῖν, οἱ δὲ καὶ ὡς <u>κωμαστὰς</u> εἰσελθόντας
τοὺς ἀμφὶ Μέλωνα ἀποκτεῖναι τοὺς <u>πολεμάρχους</u>. λαβὼν δὲ ὁ Φιλλίδας
τρεῖς αὐτῶν ἐπορεύετο ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ Λεοντιάδου οἰκίαν· κόψας δὲ τὴν θύραν   10
εἶπεν ὅτι παρὰ τῶν <u>πολεμάρχων</u> ἀπαγγεῖλαί τι βούλοιτο. ὁ δὲ ἐτύγχανε μὲν
<u>χωρὶς</u> κατακείμενος ἔτι μετὰ δεῖπνον, καὶ ἡ γυνὴ <u>ἐριουργοῦσα</u> παρεκάθητο.
ἐκέλευσε δὲ τὸν Φιλλίδαν πιστὸν νομίζων εἰσιέναι. οἱ δ᾽ ἐπεὶ εἰσῆλθον, τὸν
μὲν ἀποκτείναντες, τὴν δὲ γυναῖκα φοβήσαντες κατεσιώπησαν.

Xenophon *Hellenica* V. 4, 5–7 (adapted)

Names

ὁ Φιλλίδας, -ου	Phillidas (secretary to the polemarchs)
ὁ Μέλων, Μέλωνος	Melon (a Theban exile)
ὁ Λεοντιάδης, -ου	Leontiades (one of the Theban polemarchs)

Words

τὸ προταμιεῖον, -ου	anteroom (a room which leads into the treasury)
ὁ πολέμαρχος, -ου	polemarch (a high-ranking officer)
τὸ σύνθημα, -ατος	agreement
ἀνακαλύπτω	I uncover
ὁ κωμαστής, -οῦ	partygoer
χωρίς	separately
ἐριουργέω	I work with wool

I i: Most translations started well, with a strong majority making good sense of μεθύσθεντες and connecting αὐτὸν with Phillidas. τὰς ἑταίρας was required to be 'the female companions': the gender was essential to the plot, and the article connected with the fact that these women had already been discussed. ἄγειν as simply 'lead' didn't suggest a grasp of the story, so was treated as a slight error.

Assessment for learning

Most grammar books contain tables of prepositions and their differing meanings depending on the case that follows. Some add a useful set of typical example phrases, often using distinctive vocabulary. Students often seem to find it easier to get familiar with the latter.

ii: τοὺς περὶ Μέλωνα is a phrase of a type commonly illustrated in grammar books or vocabulary courses; a variety of possible translations were added to the MS so as to reward those candidates who dealt sensibly with the word order even if they didn't recognise the phrase itself. '…led them in around Melon' however could not be made to work. στεῖλας ὡς caused frequent problems; the AS DVL gives 'send/equip' for στέλλω so 'having sent them as…' was not accepted. It was essential to make clear the act of deception by dressing men up as women, which the morphology of the nouns indicated clearly.

iii: The emphatic change of subject with αὐτὸς δέ needed reflecting in translation, but αὐτός was frequently omitted. οὐκ… φασιν was often not recognised, leading to 'that the women would not say to come in' prompted by the word order. It was clear how this happened; it was less clear how 'he said that the polemarchs' related to the Greek, as the dative case is very difficult to construe as a subject.

iv: Here the strongest translations came from those who appeared to consider the situation carefully. 'If a certain one of the servants…' was possible, but εἴ τις is a common phrase meaning 'if any', and the latter fitted much better with the polemarchs then ordering all of the servants to leave. '…ordered everybody to go out' was similarly possible but less feasible than 'all of the servants', as it became difficult to understand who was out and who in. It proved best to keep ταχύ where it belonged, with the adjacent verb rather than a different one.

v: Candidates made a thoughtful range of suggestions for δή, ranging from 'indeed' to '*so-called* courtesans'. The principal challenge here was to identify the transitive force of active ἐκάθιζε, which is given in the GCSE DVL. (It seemed unlikely in any case that one person could sit next to each of the polemarchs at once.)

Recognising the tense of ἀνακαλυψαμένους was helpful for the order of events; the masculine gender of this participle was of course in reference to Melon's men; and the middle meaning responded well to careful thought ('those having been uncovered' was common but grammatically inappropriate).

Exemplar 1

others as female servants. He entered and told the
polemarchs ^that the women said they would not come in,
if any of the male servants went inside. Thereupon they
quickly ordered everyone to leave, and Phillidas
brought in the "companions", and slept with each one.
There was an agreement, when they slept, that they
should immediately strike them once they were
uncovered. Some did indeed speak this way in — namely

Exemplar 1's translation shows an interesting mixture of strong syntactical skill and also awareness of the story (note the translation of δή using quotation marks, which is very astute), but also marks lost through relatively 'basic' mistakes: ἔσοιτο, ἐκάθιζε/καθίζοιντο and λέγουσιν all caused problems despite their relatively straightforward nature.

Exemplar 2

themselves. Some people indeed say that they died in this way, but also others [say] that, after they had entered as partygoers, Melon and his men killed the polemarchs. But

Notice in Exemplar 2 how the square brackets around 'say' are unnecessary. The rendering of the participle with 'after' is very apt.

vi: The first challenge was to recognise οἱ μέν… οἱ δέ and the verb doing duty for both subjects. The accusative-infinitive construction escaped the notice of a sizeable minority and 'came in to kill the polemarchs' was quite common as well. Candidates would do well to practise complex indirect statements, especially watching out for participle tenses. ὡς was less frequently successful here than previously, and the very similar τοὺς ἀμφὶ Μέλωνα was also missed more often here than in ii.

vii: The many candidates who wrote 'cutting down the door' might have done well to consider that this didn't distract Leontiades from his post-dinner nap or his wife from her wool-work; the polemarchs are indeed cast as evil villains, but it is stretching credulity that Leontiades would believe someone who had just smashed his door in to be a faithful friend.

viii: Most candidates did well with the first construction. Among those who were challenged here, τι was quite frequently translated as if ὅ τι, giving '…reported what he might want' or similar. 'Happen' and 'hit' are the meanings given for τυγχάνω in the AS DVL; together with the requirement to make clear the emphatic change of subject indicated by ὁ δέ, this meant that 'he met him' could not be made to work.

ix: παρά appeared in yet another guise here, this time as a prefix, and was handled well by most candidates. The gender of νομίζων made unambiguous the subject of the verb.

x: Almost all candidates dealt well with the μέν… δέ contrast, assigning the correct characters in the story and suggesting that centres have identified the value in teaching this common construction carefully. The biggest challenge was with the transitive force and active voice of φοβήσαντες, although the GCSE/AS gloss is φοβέομαι 'I fear', so careful thought was repaid. With κατεσιώπησαν, examiners noted that the verb can be transitive or intransitive, and so any sensible translation was therefore accepted. Among incorrect translations, 'they killed him, but they kept quiet because they feared his wife' was typical of a candidate taking care to write good English, thereby limiting the loss of marks.

Section B overview

This passage appeared to engage almost all candidates, with many offering thoughtful and effective translations that made the story clear. Most candidates kept up well with the changes of verb person and addressee, especially across the winding central paragraph between lines 6-9. Candidates appeared broadly familiar with the genre and style, and perhaps more than usual were willing to depart from the Greek word order where appropriate.

Question 2 (a)

2

(a) Translate the following passage into English. **Please write your translation on alternate lines.**
[45]

Agamemnon, the Greek general, was killed by his wife Clytemnestra when he returned home from the Trojan War. Their son, Orestes, killed his mother for her crime, and is now fleeing the avenging Furies. With his friend Pylades, he has come to the land of the Taurians as instructed by the god Apollo.

Orestes first speaks to Apollo, who has sent him to fetch a statue of the goddess Artemis. He then asks Pylades for further advice.

Ὀρέστης	ὦ Φοῖβε, ποῖ μ᾽ αὖ τήνδ᾽ ἐς <u>ἄρκυν</u> ἤγαγες	
	<u>χρήσας</u>, ἐπειδὴ πατρὸς αἷμ᾽ <u>ἐτεισάμην</u>;	
	ἐλθὼν δέ σ᾽ ἠρώτησα πῶς <u>τροχηλάτου</u>	
	μανίας ἂν ἔλθοιμ᾽ ἐς τέλος πόνων τ᾽ ἐμῶν,	
	οὓς ἐξεμόχθουν <u>περιπολῶν</u> καθ᾽ Ἑλλάδα·	5
	σὺ δ᾽ εἶπας ἐλθεῖν Ταυρικῆς μ᾽ ὅρους χθονός,	
	ἔνθ᾽ Ἄρτεμίς σοι σύγγονος βωμοὺς ἔχοι,	
	λαβεῖν τ᾽ <u>ἄγαλμα</u> θεᾶς, ὅ φασιν ἐνθάδε	
	ἐς τούσδε ναοὺς οὐρανοῦ πεσεῖν ἄπο·	
	ἥκω δὲ πεισθεὶς σοῖς λόγοισιν ἐνθάδε	10
	ἄγνωστον ἐς γῆν, ἄξενον. σὲ δ᾽ <u>ἱστορῶ</u>,	
	Πυλάδη (σὺ γάρ μοι τοῦδε <u>συλλήπτωρ</u> πόνου),	
	τί δρῶμεν; <u>ἀμφίβληστρα</u> γὰρ τοίχων ὁρᾷς	
	ὑψηλά· πότερα <u>κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις</u>	
	ἐμβησόμεθα; πῶς ἂν οὖν λάθοιμεν ἄν;	15

Euripides *Iphigenia in Tauris* 77–78, 82–88 and 93–98

Names

ὁ Φοῖβος, -ου	Apollo (god of prophecy)
Ταυρικός, -ή, -όν	of the Taurians
ἡ Ἄρτεμις, -ιδος	Artemis (twin sister of Apollo)
ὁ Πυλάδης, -ου (**voc.** Πυλάδη)	Pylades (friend of Orestes)

Words

ἡ ἄρκυς, -υος	net, trap
χράω	I instruct through an oracle
τίνομαι	I avenge, get revenge for
τροχήλατος, -ον	spinning, whirling
περιπολέω	I wander about
τό ἄγαλμα, -ατος	statue
ἱστορέω	I ask
ὁ συλλήπτωρ, -ορος	accomplice, assistant
τό ἀμφίβληστρον, -ου	encirclement
κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις	ladders

2ai: As in previous years, it was a major error to omit the speaking character's name; even some very strong translations made this mistake. By contrast, remarkably few candidates omitted αὖ, and most made a sensible attempt to reconcile 'where to' with 'into this net', even going as far as to translate ποῖ as 'why' as suggested in the sample translation.

ii: This section was translated uniformly well.

iii: Neglecting the elided τε (a word always structurally important in tragic verse) led to confusion with genitives, especially for candidates who supplied a notional ἀπό or thought μανίας might be accusative plural. The grammar of τέλος was also problematic even though it followed its preposition exactly as it would in prose; examiners noted that the noun and adverb meaning are both listed at GCSE.

Exemplar 3

2.	a)	Orestes: O Apollo, having instructed me through an oracle, to where did you lead me — into this net again, when I avenged the blood of my father? Having come, I asked you how I would come ~~from~~ through spinning madness to the last of my toils, at

---

Exemplar 3 finds a good way to reconcile the opening phrases using the dash. 'To the last of' is a stylish way to render ἐς τέλος + genitive; but by missing the elided τε and the other genitive, the translation is forced to make a conjecture in 'through' which was a major error.

iv: The relative pronoun caused many problems and was quite frequently omitted altogether. Many candidates' translations would have been clearer if they had shown the imperfect tense of ἐξεμόχθουν. But the principal trap in this section - including in some otherwise very strong scripts - was the word ὄρους, which was translated often as 'hills/mountains' (τό ὄρος, GCSE).

v: Most candidates did well with the τε this time, and there were many sensible (and duly accepted) proposals for σύγγονος beyond those listed in the MS, including 'kin' and 'family'.

vi: Here the relative was usually handled well, and there were generally few issues.

vii: The first line was mostly translated well. A number of candidates seemed unwilling to have adjectives in -ov agree with γῆν and ran into trouble as a result; it was of course more problematic to have these adjectives agree with the (nominative) subject. The meanings of the adjectives however were usually either known, or deduced or guessed successfully.

viii: The first part was handled well, although τοῦδε was quite often omitted. τοίχων was often not recognised, but greater damage was done to the sense by not knowing ὑψηλός (GCSE).

ix: Candidates who thought about what οὖν was connecting to, rather than simply introducing the question with 'therefore', found greater success. Most candidates made good sense of λάθοιμεν, showing a good understanding of the verb's slippery syntax. In general even those candidates who had found earlier sections very challenging made a stronger finish to their translation and remained engaged and purposeful to the end.

Assessment for learning

Make time to read examples of tragic speeches and stichomythia (including interactions with the Chorus), in Greek but also out loud in English, to learn to recognise the common features of passages from tragedy.

Later in the course, once students are familiar with these features, they may appreciate A E Housman's spoof tragic episode , with introduction and with D S Raven's translation into tragic Greek (antigonejournal.com).

Question 2 (b)

(b) Write out and scan lines 6 and 7. **[5]**

> σὺ δ᾽ εἶπας ἐλθεῖν Ταυρικῆς μ᾽ ὅρους χθονός,
> ἔνθ᾽ Ἄρτεμίς σοι σύγγονος βωμοὺς ἔχοι.

This was mostly done well. The most common error was to mark the first syllable of line 6 as heavy.

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