



UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA, SRI LANKA



CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

GENERAL DEGREE EXAMINATION IN ARTS (EXTERNAL) - AUGUST 2015

WESTERN CLASSICAL CULTURE I

(WCCG 1 – New Syllabus)

Greek Literature and Literary Theory

(Time Allowed: Three Hours)

Answer question 01 and FOUR other questions selecting at least ONE from PART II.

The total number of questions in this paper is 12.

01. Comment on the subject matter of any FOUR of the following referring them to their contexts.
- (a) These are a woman's words.
May good prevail beyond dispute, in sight of all!
My life holds many blessings; I would enjoy them now.
 - (b) What is the meaning of this loud argument,
You quarrelsome men? I wonder you are not ashamed,
In this time of distress, to air your private troubles.
Come in, my husband; and Creon, you go home.
You are making much of some unimportant grievance.
 - (c) No, you are free. I here absolve you of my
death.
 - (d) Honestly, I can't decide between them, when one's so clever that you can't tell what
he means, and the other's about as clear as the purest mud
 - (e) After this conversation Xerxes went over the battlefield to see the bodies, and having
been told that Leonidas was king of Sparta and commander of the Spartan force,
ordered his head to be cut off and fixed on a stake.

- (f) When the Spartans heard of what was going on they sent an embassy to Athens. This was partly because they themselves did not like the idea of Athens or any other city being fortified, but chiefly because they were urged on by their allies, who were alarmed both by the sudden growth of Athenian sea-power and by the daring which the Athenians had shown in the war against the Persians.
- (g) 'So what should we imagine it would be like', she said, 'if someone could see beauty itself, absolute, pure, unmixed, not cluttered up with human flesh and colours and a great mass of mortal rubbish, but if he could catch sight of divine beauty itself, in its single form?'

PART I – LITERATURE

02. Show how Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* brings out the futility of human achievements in the face of divine providence.
03. According to your opinion, what is the contribution of Creon's character to the play *King Oedipus* by Sophocles?
04. Do you feel that through his play *Hippolytus* Euripides ultimately asserts that human beings could prove themselves to be better than the gods? Give reasons for your answer.
05. Elucidate on the role of the chorus in Aristophanes' *Frogs*.
06. How does Herodotus bring out the difference between the Greeks and the Barbarians? Discuss with examples.
07. 'The depiction of Pericles best reflects Thucydides as a historian.' Critically analyze this statement in relation to his *The History of the Peloponnesian War*.
08. How does Socrates ultimately connect love with philosophy? What are his reasons for doing so? Explain with reference to Plato's *Symposium*.

PART II – LITERARY THEORY

09. Describe the ideals pertaining to poetry and the poetic experience reflected in Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.
 10. 'Plato's banishment of art from his ideal state is based on his profound understanding of the power art possess to shape human character.' Explain.
 11. What does Aristotle say with regard to character in a tragedy? How important is its appropriation for the success of a tragedy? Discuss.
 12. What are the characteristics that Longinus attributes to the 'Sublime' in literary writing? Elucidate.
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**WESTERN CLASSICAL CULTURE II
(WCCG 2 – New Syllabus)**

Roman Literature and Literary Theory

(Time Allowed: Three Hours)

Answer question 1 and FOUR other questions selecting at least ONE from PART II.

The total number of questions in this paper is 11.

1. Comment on the subject matter of any FOUR of the following excerpts referring them to their contexts.
 - (a) Is this a joke, for heaven's sake? Why all this speechifying, as if you had just come home, instead of just parted from me?
 - (b) The fears and anxieties that dog the human breast do not shrink from the clash of arms or the fierce rain of missiles. They stalk unabashed among princes and potentates. They are not awe - struck by the gleam of gold or the bright sheen of purple robes.
 - (c) Do not let your land
Lie idle. O what joy to plant with vines
All Ismarus and clothe the great Taburnus
With olives!
 - (d) In the theatre, there were brawls between gangs favouring rival ballet – dancers. Nero converted these disorders into serious warfare. For he waived penalties and offered prizes – watching in person, secretly and on many occasions even openly.
 - (e) Not till you have put chaos in your house
And with your coming set its kings at war.
Fill them with evil lust for battle, shake
Their raving souls with storms of insane strife.
 - (f) Need I tell you how anger burns in my heart when I see
the bystanders jostled back by a mob of thugs, whose master
has debauched and defrauded his ward?

PART – I: LITERATURE

2. How much does Plautus' play *Amphitryo* depend on confusion? Discuss with examples.
3. Show how Lucretius uses his account of universe's creation in his argument against superstition.
4. 'Virgil's *Georgics* presents an account of the world of the farmer in a way that compels the reader to look at farming in a new way.' How far do you agree with this statement? Give reasons.
5. How does Tacitus' *The Annals of Imperial Rome* reflect on him as a historian? Elucidate.
6. Critically analyze how Seneca's *Thyestes* embodies the darker side of human nature.
7. Do you consider Juvenal a racist? Discuss with regard to his attitude towards Greek influences in his *Satires*.

PART II: LITERARY THEORY

8. Discuss the importance Cicero attributes to character and education in making an ideal orator.
 9. What does Horace consider as the ultimate source of good poetry? Explain with reference to his *Ars Poetica*.
 10. How does Quintilian explain the relationship between the teacher and the student? How significant is this relationship in his theory of education?
 11. 'Tacitus' *Dialog on Oratory* clearly expresses his hope in uplifting oratory from the decadent state it has fallen into.' How far would you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.
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**WESTERN CLASSICAL CULTURE III
(WCCG 3 – New Syllabus)**

Greek Thought

(Time Allowed: Three Hours)

Answer question 1 and FOUR other questions selecting at least TWO from EACH PART.

The total number of questions in this paper is 09.

1. Comment on any FOUR of the following excerpts selecting two from each philosopher.

PLATO: *THE REPUBLIC*

- (a) So Simonides says that justice is to benefit one's friends and harm one's enemies?
- (b) The society we have described can never grow into reality or see the light of day, and there will be no end to the troubles of states, or indeed, my dear Glaucon, of humanity itself, till philosophers become kings in this world, or till those who now call kings and rulers really and truly become philosophers, and political power and philosophy thus come into the same hands, while the many natures now content to follow either to the exclusion of the other are forcibly debarred from doing so.
- (c) If different faculties have different natural fields, and belief and knowledge are two separate faculties, as we maintain, then it follows that the fields of knowledge and opinion must be different.
- (d) 'Really, Socrates,' Glaucon commented, 'that's just the fodder you would provide if you were founding a community for pigs!'

ARISTOTLE: *ETHICS*

- (e) Probably, then, no one even suggests that choice is the same as opinion in general; but neither is it the same as any particular opinion; for our characters are determined by our choice of what is good or evil, not by our opinion about it.

- (f) First, then, we must consider this fact: that it is in the nature of moral qualities that they are destroyed by deficiency and excess.
- (g) So evidently wisdom must be the most finished form of knowledge.
- (h) The study of pleasure and pain is the task of the political philosopher, because he is the master craftsman who decides the end which is the standard by which we call any given thing good or bad without qualification.

PART I
PLATO: *THE REPUBLIC*

- 2. How does Polemarchus define Justice in Plato's *The Republic*? Show how Socrates refutes this definition eventually.
- 3. Why does Socrates say that the simple state that he initially discussed was a healthy state? Explain how such society as it changes into a civilized society loses its health.
- 4. What are the problems that Plato associates with the oligarchic government and character? How do these qualities differ from that of his ideal state?
- 5. Discuss the significant role that the myth of Er plays in Plato's appraisal of Justice.

PART II
ARISTOTLE: *ETHICS*

- 6. Evaluate the significance of moral responsibility in Aristotle's discussion of ethics in his *Ethics*.
- 7. 'According to Aristotle everything is relative.' Discuss Aristotle's theory of the Mean in his *Ethics* with reference to this observation.
- 8. Analyze Aristotle's views on Justice in his *Ethics*. How do they reflect upon some of the significant features of Aristotle's philosophy?
- 9. How practical is Aristotle in his approach to ethics? Elucidate with reference to his *Ethics*.