

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE
EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREE OF B.A

June 1997

Greek & Roman Drama

7230/6180

Time: Three hours

In addition, candidates are allowed ten minutes, before the examination begins, to read the paper

Candidates should answer FOUR questions on plays by four DIFFERENT authors.	Level III candidates may not answer a question on a play which has been discussed at length in the MAJOR essay.
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Discuss the Io scene of the *Prometheus Bound*. Is it dramatically effective? Is it relevant to the main theme?

Aristotle (*Poetics* 13) recommends that the main character in a tragedy should not be altogether bad or altogether good, but “*the sort of man who is not conspicuous for virtue and justice, whose fall into misery is not due to vice or depravity, but rather to some error, a man who enjoys prosperity and a high reputation.*” Does Ajax seem to fit this formula?

- 3 The *Philoctetes* may be seen as a conflict between different values. What values do Odysseus, Neoptolemus, and Philoctetes seem to represent? Does the play as a whole appear to endorse any of these values, or to refute any?
- 4 What contribution do you think the role of Jason makes to our understanding of key themes in the *Medea*?
- 5 The *agon* scene in Euripides’ *Electra* might be considered a dramatic weakness in the play in that it resembles too closely a legal debate and adds little to the play itself. What is your view?
- 6 What do you see as the contribution of Theonoë and Theoclymenus to the effectiveness of the *Helen*?

What does the *Birds* have to teach us about methods by which political power is gained and held? (Consider both the power of individuals and the power of nations).

- 8 ‘The humour of the *Lysistrata* is too closely related to the concerns of the Athens of 411 to make it funny today’. What do you think?
- 9 ‘Menander’s *Old Cantankerous* is more a moralising tale with various messages on good social behaviour than a comedy’. Comment.
0. ‘The evidence of the *Amphitryon* (divine sexual indulgence with a beautiful, if married, woman) is that Plautus has nothing more in mind than vulgar entertainment.’ Do you agree with this assertion?

. In your opinion, would Seneca’s *Oedipus* be effective as a play, or is it merely a collection of rhetorical speeches?