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Level 2 Drama, 2015

91215 Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text

2.00 p.m. Wednesday 25 November 2015
Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text.	Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text showing informed understanding.	Discuss a drama or theatre form or period with reference to a text showing perceptive understanding.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

You should attempt ALL the questions in this booklet.

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Excellence

TOTAL

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To answer the questions in this paper, name the drama/theatre form or period you have studied, and ONE text from the form or period to which you will refer. (If the text was not written as a script – as for example in commedia dell’arte – give brief details of the action.)

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Drama/theatre form or period: Ancient Greek Tragedy

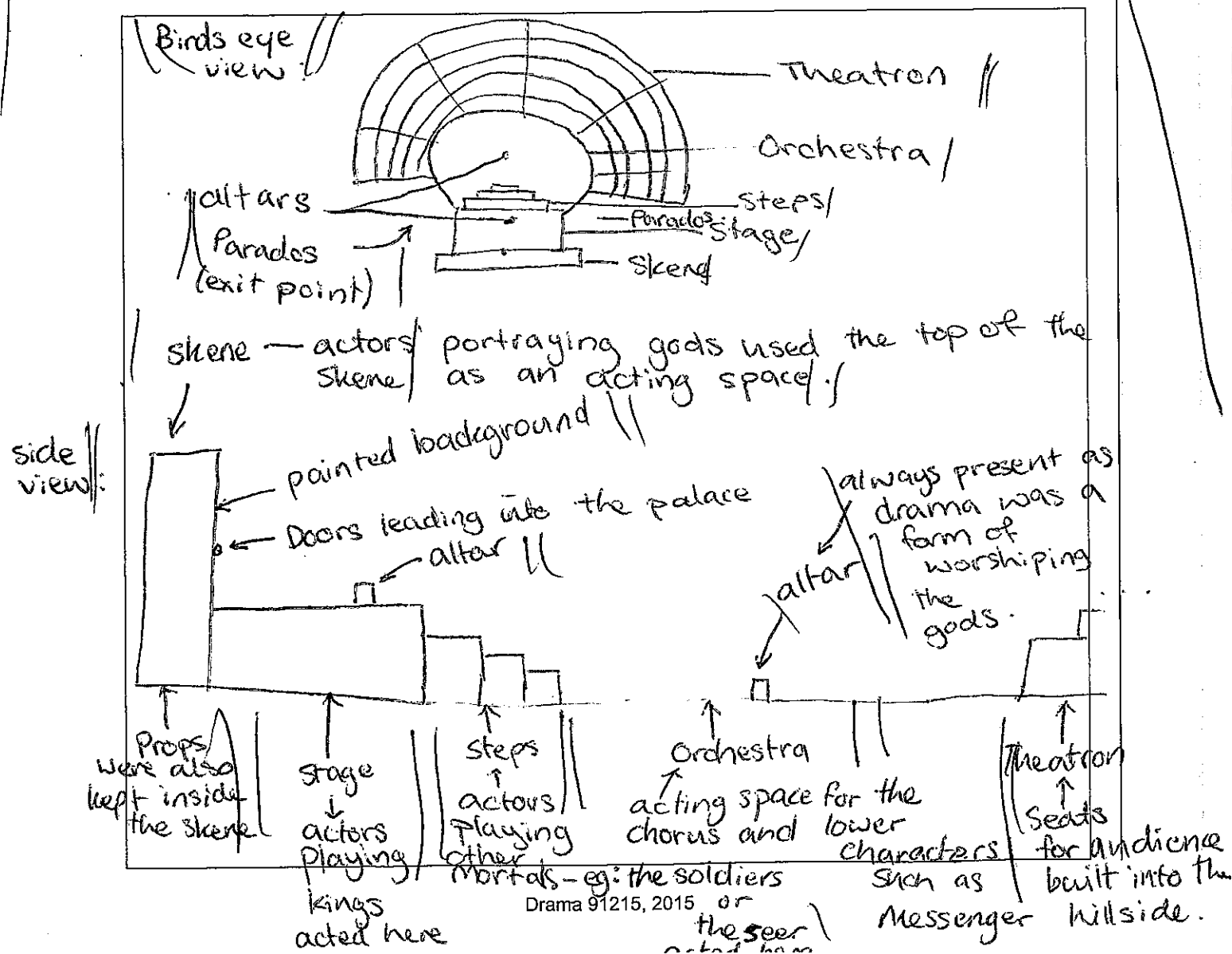
Title of the text (or summary of the action): Antigone

Playwright (if applicable): Sophocles

QUESTION ONE: THE ACTING SPACE

(a) Sketch the acting space that would typically have been used to perform your chosen text. Annotate your sketch to clearly show:

- the shape and position of the acting space
- the shape and position of the audience space
- entrances and exits to and from the acting space
- key pieces of set or staging.



(b) Explain how the actors would typically have used this space in a key scene from the text. Give specific details from the text to support your answer.

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The acting space of ancient Greek theatre was set up to maximise the audience's understanding and involvement in the play. Greek theatre was a form of worship for the gods and therefore, as it was a religious rite, it was important that every person, from every social class, and with every level of education could come to, and understand the play. It was for this reason that the acting space was set up the way it was. Actors used different areas of the acting space when they were portraying different characters, ~~then~~ of different social rank. The Greek society of the time had a very obvious and important hierarchy in society, and this was portrayed in the ancient greek drama. When actors played gods, they acted from on top of the skene which was the highest level, as gods were always at the top of the hierarchy. The next level down was the stage and this is where actors playing kings acted from. Beneath them on the steps leading up to the stage was the higher members of society, such as council elders, or the seer who delivered prophecies to the king. The last level was the orchestra. This was where the chorus (who often portrayed the citizens) and characters such as the messenger acted from. Because this hierarchy of staging reflected the important hierarchy of the society at the time so completely, the actors never deviated from it, as it helped

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(c) Discuss how the acting space affected the audience's experience of the performance.
You might consider:

- the interaction between actors and the audience
- the use of theatre technologies of the time
- the audience's experience in other theatre forms or periods.

People went to see an ancient Greek tragedy to achieve catharsis. Catharsis was the process through which people purged their emotions and it was seen as a way to worship the gods. A play would evoke emotions in the audience, and they would leave feeling drained. This was the process of achieving catharsis. Therefore the acting space was designed to help the audience achieve this. The circular shape of the theatron and the way it wrapped around the orchestra and stage made the audience feel as though they were part of the play. Greek audiences were very vocal, and the actors often addressed them directly (especially the chorus) as their involvement helped them achieve catharsis. The other way to help them achieve catharsis was to ensure that they understood what was happening in the play. The use of technologies in ancient Greek drama was very minimal (often limited to a single trolley which was used to wheel dead bodies onto the stage), and therefore, the entire play had to be conveyed through the actors and their use of the acting space. The actors use of the different levels of stage, orchestra and skene when playing different characters helped to convey the social status and mortality.

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The examination continues on the following page.

QUESTION TWO: A LANGUAGE FEATURE

Identify a language feature that is typical of your chosen form or period. If the form is traditionally silent, you may identify a feature of body language.

Language feature:

Choral odes

(a) Describe this language feature, and give an example of the feature in your chosen text.

Ancient Greek drama was made up of two set parts, the episode and the stasimon, which alternated throughout the play. The stasimon was usually where all other actors left the stage, leaving only the chorus who then performed their choral odes. Choral odes were ~~use~~ long speeches which were often sung by the chorus. (continued on pg 11)

(b) Explain how an actor would use the drama techniques of voice, body, movement, and/or use of space typical of the form or period to perform this example. Give specific details to support your answer.

Choral odes were performed by the chorus. They sang, using haunting tones, ~~one~~ a joyful tune to convey the tone of the choral ode - whether what had happened / was to come was good or tragic. They also used dance to portray their message and keep the audience interested. They used the entire space of the orchestra, moving in well rehearsed formations. They also used the presence of the altar on stage to convey to the audience how what they were saying was received by the gods. An example of this is during ~~the~~ a stasimon in Antigone where they talk of her beauty in the strophe, while approaching the altar, then in the antistrophe, talk of Creon's brutal actions while backing away from the altar. This shows that the gods favour Antigone, but ~~are~~ are not pleased by Creon's actions.

(c) Discuss how the use of this language feature is typical of the form or period.

You might consider:

- the style of the form (e.g. realistic, surrealist)
- the time and place in which the form was performed
- the purpose of the playwright or creator(s) of the text.

The use of chorus and therefore choral odes was ~~the~~ hugely typical of Greek drama. Chorus was a huge part of all plays of this era. The purpose of the play was for the audience to achieve ~~(especially since drama of this period was part of a religious festival)~~ catharsis, and this only happened if the audience were able to understand the play. The chorus acted as a link between the audience and the play through their choral odes. They explained what had happened, foreshadowed what was going to happen, and reminded the audience what the bigger message was. They also often portrayed ~~members~~ ^{sections} of the audience in the play. They gave the audience a voice by playing groups such as 'citizens' or 'old men'. They were able to engage characters in dialogue and ask questions the audience would have asked. All this was very typical of the period, as audience involvement in Greek drama was crucial. ~~They~~ ^{The choral odes} also provided entertainment for the audience through the way they were performed through song and dance. This was also typical of the form and period, as, as Greek drama was a religious rite, everyone was expected to attend, and therefore the plays and choral odes were written to keep people of all ages, social rank, and walks of life entertained and interested throughout the whole, very long play.

QUESTION THREE: A THEME OR IDEA

(a) Describe ONE theme or key idea from your chosen text.

A major theme in Antigone is the theme of the authority of the individual against the authority of the gods. This is a theme discussing the question and struggle of who has authority, and the attempt mortals make to follow ^{under} the authority of the gods. It addresses the problem of what happens when people want to do one thing, but the teachings of their gods tell them to follow a different path, who has the authority then? This is a theme of great meaning and moral importance. //

(b) Explain what a character does or says to communicate this theme or idea to the audience. Give specific details from the text to support your answer.

In the play Antigone, this theme is mainly portrayed through Creon and Antigone. Antigone does not struggle with a question of who has the authority, but holds the authority of the gods above all else. This is seen through her firm belief that her brother must be buried, as that was the way the gods wanted it to happen, and therefore nothing else mattered if it was not done, not even her life. Creon, however, is seen to be struggling constantly throughout the play as he begins to believe that his own authority is greater than that of the gods. He refuses to back down on his own rules even when Antigone points out that what she is doing is //

// (continued on pg 12) //

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(c) Discuss the importance of this theme or idea to the people originally in the audience. You might refer to:

- social structures (e.g. class systems)
- the geographical or historical context
- moral or cultural values.

This theme is extremely important to the people originally in the audience. This is because society of the time was hugely based on honouring the gods. The gods were always at the top of the hierarchy, and people spent all their days doing what they could to honour them. Therefore the struggle of choosing the authority of the individual or the authority of the gods was a struggle that everyone in the audience faced everyday. This was also the reason that it was in the play in the first place. Playwrights used plays to educate people and to warn them about what would happen if they did not follow the gods. Through this, they tried to help people to live lives which honoured the gods. This theme in Antigone served as a warning to the audience which was very serious. It was an important message to always hold the authority of the gods ~~the~~ highest of all in their lives, and to never put their own authority above it. This was a very serious and important message to the audience, ~~at that time~~ as honouring the gods was such a huge part of their culture, values, society and their lives. //

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1. b) ~~the~~ audience to understand the play, by helping them to understand the social rank of the characters. One example of this in the play ~~at~~ Antigone is when Antigone and the chorus (who are playing the citizens of Thebes) confront Creon about how he is ruling. Creon is standing on the stage, Antigone is on the steps, and the chorus are looking up at them both from the orchestra. Even though the chorus are important parts of this conversation, they would never come up on the stage to talk to Creon, because they are not of the same social class as him, and can only look up to him. Creon is always dominating over, and looking down on the other character, and this shows the audience his power, because of his social class. Actors and chorus members also interacted a lot with the altars on the stage and in the orchestra. Because Greek drama was always ~~a~~ a form of worshipping the gods, and was ~~a~~ usually a part of ~~the~~ a religious festival (usually the festival of Dionysis), plays were based on myths, and gods featured a lot in them. Actors would help the audience to keep the gods in mind, by doing things such as turning away from the altar as they plan to do something in defiance of the gods. This is shown in many versions of Antigone, in scenes such as when

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Creon plots Antigone's death. //

1. c) ~~or~~ divinity of their character the minute they walked out on stage. This helped the audience to understand the play, and if they understood what was happening, they were able to appreciate when things went wrong, and often how terribly wrong they went, and therefore to achieve catharsis with greater ease. The huge involvement of the audience is very different from the way we watch plays today in silence, and is closest to the way plays in Elizabethan times (plays by Shakespeare at theatres such as the globe theatre which were based on Greek theaters) were watched, and the way crowds of that era were ~~not~~ ~~or~~ vocal as well. This interaction involved the audience in the events that were happening on stage a lot more than plays today too. And by making the audience care about what happened, and feel part of it, they could achieve catharsis, and ultimately, worship the gods more completely. //

2. a) // They were used to comment on what had just happen, to foreshadow what happened next, and to ~~fit~~ link the action to a larger picture. As the tragedies were all based on myths, this larger picture was usually the message the myth held, or the way the gods would respond //

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to what had happened. They were also entertainment for the audience, and were often the most anticipated part of the play, as the singing and dancing of the chorus was always great entertainment. Antigone had 5 stasimons, the most ~~potent~~ ^{important} of which contained the choral ode about love. "Love, never conquered in battle..." where the ~~and~~ chorus warns the audience of the dangers of Creon's brutal actions ^{because of how he is disrespectful} and foreshadow Haemon's ~~death~~ suicide in the name of love. //

3.6 soely in honour of the gods, and she is following their commands. We then see that Creon chooses his own authority over the gods when he orders the death of Antigone. The theme is then developed even more, as we see the consequences that come from choosing the authority of the individual over the authority of the gods as Creon then ~~loses~~ loses his family because of his actions. His last words of the play are also "the authority of the gods must be revealed." This then obviously communicates to the audience that his misfortune arose from his choosing his own authority over that of the gods, and warns the audience that only misfortune comes from disrespecting the authority of the gods. //

Q1 Candidate clearly and accurately annotates typical ancient Greek acting space. In (b) there is a lot of discussion about where different things happened within the space which demonstrated strong knowledge. To secure their grade, the candidate then detailed the moment where Antigone confronts Creon. The demonstrate understanding of where Creon, Antigone and the chorus were standing during this scene when they say, "Creon is standing on the stage, Antigone is on the steps and the chorus are looking up at them both from the orchestra." The candidate demonstrates insight when they relate the performance space to audience response (catharsis).

Q2 Student identifies and clearly describes the purpose and function of chorus odes. They also give an example. They identify typical use of voice by the chorus and how they moved "dances to portray their message...moved in well-rehearsed formations." The candidate also explains how the alter is used (use of space) to show an idea "talk of Creon's brutal actions while backing away from the alter."

The candidate shows understanding of the form by explaining the role of the chorus as "a link between the audience and the play." To achieve insight the student could have explained statement like "they were able to engage characters in dialogue and ask questions the audience would have asked." This would have helped show understanding of w=the wider world questions of the day.

Q3 The theme of "the individual against the authority of the Gods" is clearly described. The candidate explains in detail how Antigone holds the "firm belief that her brother must be buried," and compares this belief to what Creon believes. There is a detailed understanding the journey both Creon and Antigone take towards their own fates through their actions.

The candidate demonstrates understanding of the importance to audience of the time to "honouring the gods," as well as the purpose of the play, "to educate people and warn them about what would happen if they did not follow the gods." Examples of what audience members would have faced if not following the gods, would have helped to show insight.