

Commentary on candidate evidence

Justify an appropriate complex classical studies issue for research

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

The candidate makes clear exactly what their dissertation is going to do: “compare and contrast works of classical Greek writers and philosophers, particularly Plato and Aristotle, on their understandings of people who are foreign to them... and the resulting power dynamics and sense of superiority which follows”.

In their discussion, they have also clearly indicated the complexity of the topic, with skilful use of Herodotus in particular, and by presenting a coherent explanation of what is meant by ‘othering’, thus showing understanding of the theory which underpins their research.

This is then blended into a clear explanation of why it is important to study texts from this theoretical position.

The methodology has been implicitly indicated in the comments of the different authors within this section (Homer, Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle), rather than explicitly described, so they fail to pick up full marks.

The final mark is awarded for a clearly explained reason why the current title was preferable to others which were considered.

Research the issue using a wide range of sources of information

The candidate was awarded **10 marks**.

The candidate discusses at least five primary sources and two secondary sources effectively.

In their discussion, they comment on the usefulness of Aristotle, Herodotus and Aristophanes, and their comments on the nature of these sources is sophisticated.

Aristophanes, page 29

Aristotle and Herodotus, page 32

The referencing was also thorough and conventional

Analyse the issue

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

The candidate made at least five relevant analytical points and four of them were considered well developed:

Page 295, discussing religion.

Page 295, discussing the Persian ambassador in *Acharnians*

Page 317, discussing natural slavery.

Page 328, discussing othering.

Though there was reference to points made in secondary sources, there were no developed points of analysis which responded to opinions within secondary sources.

Compare the classical world and later times

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**.

The candidate has linked their comparisons to pieces of classical knowledge discussed in the body of the argument. The comparison to Aristotle's idea of natural slavery in page 33 works, however, the second comparison on page 33 is not a good match. They have not discussed any actual colonial atrocities in their classical evidence, so to use an example of colonial atrocity as their comparison, is not a good match with their points about Aristophanes. Simply selecting examples of popular comedy which includes casual racism would have been a much better choice. These could easily be sourced from the latter half of the 20th century.

The candidate may well have found it easier to access the marks for comparison if they had attempted to integrate the comparisons directly into their argument, rather than forming a standalone chapter which referenced the argument.

Evaluate the classical world

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

The candidate made several evaluation points during the dissertation and the following were considered well-developed:

Page 306, Herodotus' humanising the Indian custom

Page 32, the discussion of how travelling outwith Greece may have benefitted Herodotus' perspective

Synthesise evidence to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument The candidate was awarded **7 marks**.

The **justifying** section of the introduction indicated a clear goal for the argument and it proceeds in a coherent manner to try to respond to its stated goal of exploring "Classical Greek conceptions of 'The Other'".

It is also appropriately structured to address the question with chapters focusing on Herodotus, a key source; and then on later authors: Aristotle, Euripides and Aristophanes.

The conclusion does show some reasoning and refers to some of the points in their argument, however it is not thoroughly developed.

Total 36 out of 50.

This candidate has taken on a very complex task and done an admirable job. They seem to have read carefully on the topic to begin with and selected some specific areas on which to focus. They have also clearly defined the terms they are investigating and discuss their evidence with specificity.

Its main weakness is the comparison section. It would have been advisable for them to integrate the comparisons into the main body as this allows them to much more clearly describe the parameters of what they are comparing; and should enable them to more easily recognise when their comparisons do not fit as closely as is desirable.