



ASSESSMENT and  
QUALIFICATIONS  
ALLIANCE

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# Mark scheme January 2004

## GCE

# Archaeology

## Unit ACH3

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**ACH3****Religion and Ritual**

Choose one of the Sources A to D. Study the figures corresponding to your choice and answer all of the questions below.

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**Question 1**

Using an example from your studies, explain what archaeologists mean by the term ‘votive offering’. (5 marks)

*Target: AO1 (3) AO2 (2)*

- L1: May discuss the term in general in the chosen period rather than with specific reference to anything concrete. Explanation and references will be at a basic level or lacking. 1-2
- L2: Discussion of the term which not only refers to knowledge of the period but firmly contextualises examples from the sources within a clear explanation. 3-5

**Indicative Content**

Something offered for the gods/ancestors as an appeasement or as a fulfilment of a vow/bargain and deposited in a sacred place such as a temple or natural location like a bog/river/sea. Often specially made, therefore can be high quality or mass produced.

- Prehistoric: Llyn Cerrig Bach/River Thames/Flag Fen  
 Egypt: Foundation deposits/Hierakonpolis mummified birds/figures at Elephantine  
 Maya: Ancestor bundles/caches of flint/blood.  
 Roman: Figures at Uley etc/Defixiones at Bath/Coventina’s Well

**Question 2**

Explain what is shown in **Figure 1**. (4 marks)

*Target: AO1 (3) AO2 (1)*

- L1: Some valid points made but description and explanation may be inaccurate or incomplete and grasp of possible theory weak. 1-2
- L2: Full explanation with good linkage to details of source which are accurately described within a clearly understood range of theory. 3-4

**Indicative content**

Prehistoric: Bronze votive shield from the Iron Age with stylised boar as decorative applied plaque. Inlaid with enamel. La Tène style. Too heavy for practical use as a shield – thrown into River Witham as prestige offering.

Egyptian: Sculpture showing the queen Nefertiti wearing royal crown with feathers and horn of Amun. She is making offering to the Aten (sun-disk) whose rays ending in hands reach down and seem to caress her. Below is a musician holding a sistrum. Her name is in the cartouche to the right, with the heart/windpipe hieroglyph indicating 'Nefer' or beautiful repeated several times. To the left below is the phrase 'neb tawy' or lord of the two lands. The queen's profile here bear comparison with the famous bust now in the Berlin Museum. On her brow is the royal uraeus or apotropaic cobra.

Maya: Two sculptures from one end of a stone bench in the House of the Bacabs or Pauhtuns represented two of the four deities who in Maya mythology were responsible for holding up the sky – thus the bench metaphorically symbolises the sky and whoever sits upon it is placed in 'heaven' relative to those on the floor. The Bacabs wear characteristic hair nets and around their necks conch shell pendants which mark them as the 'patron gods' of scribes. Conch shell 'star gorgets' were found in a workshop on the same site and probably belong to an important scribe Mac Chanal who owned the large house in this patio group. The marks on their knees represent 'stone' or in Maya the 'tun' part of their proper name.

Roman: Pedimental sculpture from the temple of Sulis-Minerva in Bath. It is seen as representing a Gorgon head but this one is male (female in this original Greek myth) and the hair is not particularly snake-like. The standard decoration around the edge is classically influenced leaf scrolls but the head of a male sporting a luxurious moustache has more in common with coin design of the time and the swirling naturalistic design of La Tène art. It is clearly a fusion of Roman and nature Celtic designs and beliefs.

### Question 3

Explain what is shown in **Figure 2**.

(4 marks)

*Target: AO1 (3) AO2 (1)*

- L1: Some valid points made but description and explanation may be inaccurate or incomplete and grasp of possible theory weak. **1-2**
- L2: Full explanation with good linkage to details of source which are accurately described within a clearly understood range of theory. **3-4**

### Indicative Content

Prehistoric: Grave pit from the end of the Iron Age just before the Roman invasion. Cross hatching represents the cremated remains. Grave goods include both local and imported pottery, bronze vessels, an Italian silver cup, a wine strainer, glass gaming counters and a set of Roman amphorae placed upright at the back of the grave which presumably held wine drunk at the funeral feast, analogous to earlier burial on the continent at Vix and Hochdorf but demonstrating the importance of imported wine as a status symbol in mortuary feasts. Food/feasting L2.

Egypt: The famous Step Pyramid of Zoser/Djoser is visible in the background with other smaller ones such as Unas. In the foreground a group of four shaft tombs from the period before the West bank at Luxor became popular. It comprises mortuary temples which would have been decorated with scenes of the deceased before the gods (see Horemheb's). The one on the right has a conspicuous pylon entrance like much grander temples. The actual tombs were reached by subterranean shafts leading to galleries, further shafts and eventually to the burial chambers, often for man and wife and occasionally highly decorated such as the Tomb of Maya. Most of the tombs were looted in antiquity.

Maya: Lots in key therefore higher detail needed. Stone line cist burial covered with capstones deep inside nested pyramid that is known as Structure 26 at Copán. The skeleton is badly presented and is in a fragmentary state. In fact it is two individuals – one scribe and one commoner boy as sacrifices. Grave goods include jade jewellery, several collections of ceramic vessels, spondylus shell ornaments and a red colour that may be due to the use of mercuric sulphide or cinnabar to symbolise life and blood. The carbon probably represents remnants of bark ‘codices’. Crowded cemetery multiple burial. Change of orientation of bodies – religious change. Food in pots for afterlife.

Roman: an inhumation burial oriented east-west, partially disturbed by a later intrusive burial on the north side which contained a small fineware beaker. The primary burial is articulated and extended with a large beaker beside the pelvis in many shards. There is evidence of corroded iron coffin nail surviving around the edge of the burial cut showing the position of the original wooden coffin. Other partial remains underlie the body in the main burial.

#### Question 4

What evidence is there, in your chosen period, that worship and ritual did not always take place in specific, purpose-built structures? (8 marks)

*Target: AO1 (5) AO2 (3)*

- L1: Able to discuss basic ideas about this topic, using the sources at a basic level with little sophistication of understanding or expression. Aware of some contemporaneous examples but precision, accuracy of reference and detail may be lacking or patchy. **1-3**
- L2: May produce more confident interpretation of the sources together with more assured and detailed discussion of other examples from the same culture. Descriptive vocabulary and style of argument will be more confident and sophisticated showing some awareness of the problems and limitations inherent in this kind of cognitive study. **4-6**
- L3: Able to discuss the sources in detail, abstracting and explaining particular elements to illustrate how archaeological evidence can encode ‘messages’ and project particular concerns of the society that created it. Will be able to allude confidently to parallel forms of expression in other contemporaneous sources. **7-8**

#### Indicative Content

Prehistoric: Use of natural locations for ritual and votive deposition. Ritual shafts. Sites like River Thames, Flag Fen, Fogon/Wilsford in much more detail than for Question 1. Cup and ring marks on stone in landscape. Offerings in pit. Re-use of grain pits at Danebury.

Egypt: Profile element of festival when gods came out of shrines to meet the people – that Heb Nefer Inet and Opet Festival. Domestic ritual and ancestors at Deir el Medina. Sacred nature of landscape. Atenism and birthplace of the sun at Tell el Amarna. Some elements of funeral – mourning.

Maya: Cenotes at Chichen Itza etc with evidence of votives and child sacrifice. Evidence from caves. Evidence from Ceren for domestic ritual in ordinary buildings. Ethnographic parallels from modern Maya practices.

Roman: Lararium - lares and penates in domestic sphere. Offerings in rivers and springs. Worship of numina and genius of place.

**Question 5**

What is the evidence that sacrifice of people and/or animals played a part in ritual in your chosen period? (10 marks)

*Target: AO1 (7) AO2 (3)*

- L1: Shows general awareness of this religious trait for the period but does not link this well to specific elements in the sources except in a superficial way. May show some awareness that specific practices were linked to particular types of source without being able to demonstrate this convincingly through the evidence. **1-4**
- L2: Shows clear awareness of the possible range of evidence for this type of ritual activity and associated belief that might reasonably be suggested for the period relating structures and their layout to other aspects such as skeletal evidence, images and associated artefacts where appropriate. Demonstrates more explicitly that belief can be inferred from a range of evidence. However contextualisation may be patchy. **5-8**
- L3: Shows a more detailed awareness of the types of evidence and their complementarity that archaeologists might employ in discussing this topic, mentioning specific sites and ranges of monuments and artefacts, whilst maintaining a healthy degree of scepticism about the limitations of such enquiry, particularly in regard to the potential contribution of palaeopathological studies of both animal and human bones. **9-10**

**Indicative Content**

Prehistoric: Iron Age horses and sheep deposits in pits and joints of meat, especially pork, in burials as food for afterlife. Sea-eagles at Isbister? Deposits in ditches of causeway enclosures. Dog sacrifice: Flag Fen/Caldicott. Mass cattle sacrifice – Beltane at Godmanchester.

Egypt: Huge scale of votive sacrifice of birds: falcon to Horus, ibis to Thoth and cats to Bastet at Memphis. Animals sacrificed to put into tomb – everything from crocodiles to shrews and mice. Human prisoners sacrificed to Ma'at - smiting scenes and Narmer's Palette. Possible evidence of 'retainer graves' at Abydos and Saqqara only in First Dynasty.

Maya: Prisoners of war sacrificed to encourage repayment of blood owed to gods. Blood only or executed on important occasions – fate of 18 Rabbit. Bonampak murals. Bodies outside tomb of Pacal. Body in scribe burial at Copán. Jaguars under Altar Q at Copán. Losing teams in the ballgame.

Roman: No people sacrifice unless gladiators considered that way. Beast fights/Christians, lambs, cockerels offered at shrines or pilgrims' votives. 'Suovetaurilia' Animals sacrificed and burnt on altar outside temple. 'Popa' with axe in relief sculptures. Augur and Haruspex.

**Question 6**

Using **Figure 2** and your own knowledge, discuss mortuary practice in your chosen period. (15 marks)

*Target: AO1 (13) AO2 (2)*

- L1: General discussion of approaches to the study of this topic but without specific evidence in support of argument. May suggest looking at structures, artefacts and art in imprecise terms without mentioning any sites and will be unable to appreciate possible limitations. Mentions sites but for effect without real understanding. **1-7**
- L2: More aware of case studies of work in this area with a basic understanding of limitations and ability to link the discussion to named sites within the context of clearly defined topics such as ritual activity carried out in special places, suites of artefacts, artistic material and other iconography, textual evidence where appropriate together with what the shape and form of structures may imply about belief. 10-11 sites. **8-12**
- L3: Fully conversant with detailed case studies and able to adduce specific pieces of evidence in support of argument about the validity of the various approaches. Will be aware of limitations and will use the term ‘cognitive’ to explain the difficulties inherent in work that reaches the top of Hawkes’ ‘Ladder of Inference’. Able to explain that there are no ‘right answers’ here and that sources in architecture, in symbolism, in iconography and even texts are susceptible to a number of possible interpretations. **13-15**

**Indicative Content**

Prehistoric:

Two routes - one period detailed  
- several periods less detailed.

- Excarnation – disarticulation, communal causewayed enclosures/long barrows
- Inhumation – Bronze Age round barrows, more single internment, rich grave goods.
- Cremation – Bronze Age mixture of cremation - Westhampnett and burial – Wetwang chariot burial.

Egypt:

If one element only – chapter and verse.

- Mummification process and ancillary items.
- Mastabas, shaft grave, pyramid and rock cut tombs – form and symbolism.
- Iconography – tomb decoration. Painting and relief.
- Books of the Dead: opening mouth/weighing heart.

Maya: early mass cave burial Copán and later beneath floor of houses and patios. Pot in niches for ancestors. Grave goods. Rich grave under pyramid at Tikal, Copán and Palenque. Textual and iconographic evidence.

Roman: mixture of cremation and inhumation cremation in jars and pots/tiles. Inhumation in cemeteries, also along roads. Mausolea. Grave goods. Wooden and lead coffins.

Tombstone. Continued visits. Spitalfields/Poundbury/East London. Holes for libations.  
Very specific, otherwise *not* ancestors.