BEGC-102

European Classical Literature

Assignment - July 2026 – Jan 2027 Session

(Based on Blocks 1 - 4)

Max. Marks: 100

Answer all questions.

Section A

1. **Write short notes in about 100 words each:** **2 × 5 = 10**

   (i) Epic Simile in *The Iliad*
   (ii) *Catharsis* in Greek Tragedy

2. **Reference to the Context in about 100 words each:** **2 X 5 = 10**

   (i) "The greatest glory belongs not merely to the strongest warrior but to the one whose actions preserve honour even in defeat."
   (ii) "A man's greatest enemy may be the truth that he refuses to recognise."

Section B

Answer the following in about 350 words each: **4 X 20 = 80**

1. Discuss the conflict between personal honour and collective responsibility in *The Iliad*.
2. Examine the dramatic significance of prophecy and irony in *Oedipus Rex*.
3. Analyse the role of greed and material wealth in shaping the action of *Pot of Gold*.
4. Discuss the relationship between Horace and his father basing your answer on “Satire 1:4”.

1. Write short notes in about 100 words each: 2 × 5 = 10

(i) Epic Simile in The Iliad

Answer

An epic simile is an extended comparison in which a person, event or action is explained through a familiar scene from nature or everyday life. It goes beyond an ordinary simile because the poet develops the second scene in some detail before returning to the original action. In Homer's *The Iliad*, epic similes enrich the descriptions of battles and give readers moments in which to reflect on their human meaning.

Homer often compares warriors to lions, wild boars, storms and flames. When a fighter is compared to a lion attacking its prey, the image suggests courage and strength but may also indicate uncontrolled violence. In Book 22, the pursuit of Hector by Achilles is compared to a hawk hunting a dove. The comparison makes the difference in power between pursuer and pursued immediately clear, while increasing our fear for Hector. Other comparisons with farm work, shepherds and natural scenes bring the ordinary world into the violent world of war.

These similes serve several purposes. They create vivid pictures for listeners of an oral epic, enlarge the scale of heroic action and control the rhythm of the narrative. Just as importantly, they offer an alternative view of the battlefield. The beauty and peacefulness of a natural scene may contrast painfully with the deaths of young men. Homer can therefore celebrate bravery while also showing the terrible cost of war.

The epic simile is not merely decorative language. By linking human conflict with animals, weather and daily labour, it joins the heroic world to a wider human experience. It helps readers see both the greatness and the vulnerability of Homer's warriors.