

# The diva and plato

[Art & Culture](#), [Comedy](#)



Assignment Three Part One: How does the newspaper review help us to understand Callas's reputation as a diva? The newspaper review helps us to understand Maria Callas's reputation as a diva in many ways. It starts by using a well-known rumour about Callas being an actress but not much of a singer. Then the writer of the review blows it off as a fly away comment. The author tells us that although Callas's performance of Lucia was vocally flawed it was still a very good quality performance.

One that was 'incomparable in our time'. This is the first entry from the review which upholds Callas's reputation as a diva. A Diva, as described in the study material is 'The stereotypical diva in the classical music world is someone of supreme talent, with great vocal facility and an ability to convey the emotional nuances of the music to her audience'. The first paragraph of this review tells of how even though Callas's vocals may not have been quite up to scratch the way that she delivers them is of top quality. This tells us that her ability to connect to the audience on a more emotional level is really good and is part of her supreme talent, which in turn labels her as a diva. In the second paragraph of the review, its author says 'last night a mad scene marvellously sung ended in anti-climax because she amputated the climatic note before it could utterly betray her'.

This statement, when put in line with reading 6. 4 from the study material ( Book 1, Reputations, Chapter 6) mirrors somewhat the events of Callas's life. It mirrors how her international career was short lived by her not appearing regularly on stage to spend time with her new found love. Later in her life this love turns sour as he leaves her for another woman

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shortly after she retires from opera. This leads her to become something of a recluse and she dies alone. The way that the writer of the review conveys Callas's performance of this scene reflects her private life, as both the scene and her career were ended prematurely. The next few paragraphs of the review go on to tell us of her flawed vocal performance but also reiterate that she is very good at what she does.

As a whole the writer of this review captures Callas's reputation as a diva very well. It describes how even though there are rumours about the quality of her vocal performance she is still able to convey the emotional nuances of the music to her audience. Although her vocal performance lacks in areas people still flock to see her perform. This is more because of her reputation and not because of her performance on the night. She is able to deliver her performance well and she is able to connect to her audience on a deeper level than just with her ability to achieve vocal perfection, which she was unable to do on this occasion. It is this which is the strongest evidence of Callas's reputation as a diva, because without the presence of this reputation she would not have been allowed to make such a flawed vocal performance to her adoring public without receiving a highly negative review. Her audience love her for who she is not for her performance.

After listening to a recording of a performance done by Callas I can understand why the author of the review talks about her flawed vocal performance. Even to my untrained ear the higher notes of her voice sounded quite flat. However I understand that this scene can be very demanding on the star. (word count – 594)

review of Lucia di Lammermoor at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, Chicago Tribune, 3 December; reprinted in AA100 Assignment Booklet (2008), Milton Keynes, The Open University, p. 23-24.

Moohan, E., Jones, N. and Philip, R. (2008) ??? The Diva??™, in Moohan, E. (ed.

) Reputations (AA100 Book 1), Milton Keynes, The Open University, pp. 163-64, 174-81, 192-93. Part Two: Question 1: Premise 1: If knowledge is the only thing that benefits us, and virtue is a kind of knowledge. Premise 2: Knowledge is the only thing that benefits us. Conclusion: So, virtue benefits us.(word count -33)Question 2: My argument as set out in question 1 is valid. This is because it follows the definition of validity as set out in the study material. It states ??? If an argument is valid, then, if the premises are true, we can be certain that the conclusion is true.

??™?. My argument is valid because if virtue is a kind of knowledge and knowledge benefits us, then virtue must benefit us.(word count -69)Question 3: In this extract Socrates tries to establish that knowledge is the only thing that benefits us by picking specific examples of other things that could be beneficial to us and then explaining how they are only beneficial when used with knowledge. He uses examples such as wealth and courage, which are beneficial but only when they are used in conjunction with knowledge. The way that the argument is put forward suggests that knowledge is the key element to make something beneficial to us.(word count -83)Question 4: Nicias claims that courage is knowledge. By making this claim he is implying that people who have courage only have it because they have the

knowledge to see the outcome that is before them for their situation and their actions.

They also have the knowledge to put the right value on each part of the situation to make an informed decision. However there could be some objections to the claim that courage is knowledge. A good example is mentioned in the study material. The example shows that people can have the knowledge and know what the best thing to do is but they lack the willpower to do it.

It is of a woman who sees a child in a burning house. Now she has the knowledge to know that the best thing to do would be to rescue the child, but this does not mean that she will rush into the flames to do it. So if courage is knowledge and knowledge alone then the woman would go into the flames to save the child because she knows that saving them is the best possible outcome for the situation. However the likelihood of her rushing into the house to save the child is slim to none. So, if courage is knowledge then Nicias's argument would say that saving the child is not in fact the best thing to do in her eyes. Therefore Nicias's definition of courage in this situation would mean that because the woman knows that the best thing she could do would be to rescue the child and that because she knows this is the best thing to do she would act on this knowledge. Nicias would also have to say that she didn't think it was the best possible outcome if she didn't run into the flames to save the child.

In this example it is clear that courage is not knowledge but that courage requires knowledge. The knowledge of the woman has told her what the best

thing to do in the situation is and it would be her courage that makes her go into the flames to save the child. To summarise, the woman in this example has fulfilled both parts of Nicias's definition of why courage is knowledge. She has the knowledge of what is encouraging and what is fearful, and it would be her courage that would make her save the child but her knowledge of the fear that would stop her. Therefore courage cannot be knowledge.

(word count -416, total word count -601)BibliographyPrice, C. (2008) ???

Plato on Tradition and Belief™, in Price, C. (ed.

) Tradition and Dissent (AA100 Book 2), Milton Keynes, The Open University, pp. 3 ??“ 34.