

PART-II

Q. 2. Write a précis of the following and suggest a suitable title:

(20)

The fear of human beings when faced with the mysteries of life and their weakness by comparison with the vastness of nature created in them a need to communicate with the divine, with the superior powers which they believed regulated the universe and determined their own fates. Knowledge of wishes of the gods was always a sure guide for human behavior. In ancient Greece, the precise nature of these wishes was 'decoded' by the art of giving oracles, practiced by soothsayers who had the gift of understanding the signs or signals sent by the gods.

The soothsayers uttered their oracles by interpreting flashes of lightening, rolls of thunder or the flights of certain birds of prey (omens); alternatively, they might observe the direction in which the fire burned when a sacrifice was made, examine the entrails of animals which had just been sacrificed, or base judgments on the sacrificial beast's willingness to approach the altar. The interpretation of dreams was popular too, and so was palmistry. The most notable soothsayers of ancient Greece were Tiresias, Calchas, Helenus, Amphiaraus and Cassandra.

However, there were abundant instances in which the gods did not manifest themselves to the faithful in the forms of signs but spoke directly to an intermediate who for a short time was overcome by a 'divine mania' and transcended his own human essence. Here the prophet- or more usually the prophetess- entered a state of ecstasy in which he or she delivered the message from the gods to the suppliants.

These practices for foreseeing the future were the basis on which the ancient Greek oracles operated. Each oracle was located within a properly-organized sanctuary and was directly associated with one or other of the gods. Apollo was the archetypal soothsayer for the Greeks, the god who was responsible for conveying to mortals the decisions pronounced by Zeus. The most important of all the oracles, that at the Delphi, delivered the messages with the intervention of Apollo, while the oldest that of Dodona, functioned with the assistance of Zeus.

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PRECIS

CSS 2022

Rough draft — out line

segmentation title

Soothsayer's oracle: connection ^{with} to the God

Fears and naivety of human beings can be overcome by the direct communication and connection with the divine authority. Awareness of God's desires is guidance for mankind which was interpreted by soothsayer's oracle in ancient Greece.

Methods of interpretation:

Soothsayers used to interpret Gods' signs through light flashes, thunders, omenous birds movement, burning fires direction while animals are sacrificed, dream telling & palmistry. Famous soothsayer's of that time were Tarsiers, Calchas, Helenus, Amphioxus & Cassandra.

Message through Prophets and Prophetess:

Nonetheless, Gods not always revealed themselves through signs but also through Prophets & Prophetess to convey their messages.

Different Gods and their functions:

Ancient Greek oracles operated on these practices, which belonged to one or other God. Apollo was responsible

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for conveying the message of Zeus to human beings.
Delphi & Dodona functioned and delivered message with
the help of a guidance of Apollo and Zeus.

Precis — Final Draft

Role of soothsayers' and Prophets in Ancient Greece

Fears and weaknesses of mankind can be overcome by the direct communication and connection with the divine power. Awareness about God's desires is guidance for mankind which by soothsayer's oracle in Ancient Greece. They used to interpret Gods' signs through light flashes, thunders, ominous birds movement, fires' direction, divination & palmistry. Nonetheless Gods not always revealed themselves through their signs but also through prophets & prophetess to convey their message. Ancient Greek Oracles operated on these practices which belonged to one or other Gods. Apollo was famous God who was responsible for conveying the message of Zeus to mortals/mankind. Delphi & Dodona functioned and delivered message with the guidance of Apollo and Zeus.

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