

## Précis 1: CSS 2022

(20)

Write a précis of the following passage and suggest a suitable title:

The fear of human being 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 supervisor powers which they believed regulated the universe and determined their own fates, Knowledge for 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 sings 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 scarified, 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 Tarsiers, Calchas, Helenus, Amphioxus 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 message with the intervention of Apollo, while the oldest that of Dodona, functioned with the assistance of Zeus.

**How to make précis? Procedure:**

The following 4 steps detailed method / efficacious procedure may be adopted:

## PRECIS

When human beings faced the mystification of life, they **felt** the need to communicate with god.

They wanted to know the desires of god and for this, soothsayers helped them, who can translate the <sup>divinely</sup> signs and signals.

The soothsayers interpreted the different instances such as lightening, thunder, and flight of birds.

Interpretation of dreams and palmistry were also popular among

them. But there are many such instances where gods communicated directly with people through

prophets and prophetess. In ancient Greece, the oracles worked

by foreseeing the future. Each oracle was linked to one

god. Appolo was the prominent god.

The oracles of Delphi and Dodona  
functioned with Apollo's and Zeus's  
assistance respectively.

**Title:** Divine messengers: The role of  
Soothsayers