



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

CLASSICAL TRIPOS Part II
Group C History

Thursday 8 June 2006 1.30 to 4.30

Paper C1

THE GREEKS AND THE SUPERNATURAL: MAGIC, ORACLES AND
RELIGION IN ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL GREECE

Answer three questions.

**Candidates who do not write legibly may find themselves at a grave
disadvantage.**

Irrelevance will be penalised.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

20 Page Booklet x 1
Rough Work Pad x 1

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

None

**You may not start to read the questions
printed on the subsequent pages of this
question paper until instructed that you
may do so by the Invigilator**

1 Either (a) How significant is it that the Greeks did not 'have a word for' religion?

Or (b) What do you understand 'making sense of Greek religion' to entail?

2 'The world is full of gods' (THALES, attr.): what limits, if any, were there to the extension of the Greek pantheon?

3 Either (a) How helpful is it to distinguish 'magic' from 'religion' in ancient Greece?

Or (b) 'The leaden objects suggest that some of these men also engaged in black magic' (D. JORDAN). Discuss.

4 Either (a) 'As for oracles, I cannot rebut their truth' (HERODOTUS): how typical an attitude was this?

Or (b) 'Oracles merely said what the consultant wanted to hear'. Discuss.

5 Why did Greek states and rulers go to such lengths to secure the exclusive services of particular seers?

6 To what extent was personal contact with the divine regularly sought? Discuss with special reference to **either** incubation **or** necromancy.

7 Plagues and earthquakes are for us metaphorical 'acts of god': how far were they literally so for ancient Greeks?

8 To what extent were Greeks agreed on what counted as pollution?

9 Is there good reason for thinking that initiatory rituals had a peculiar importance for Greek women ?

10 How far can different sorts of evidence - literary, epigraphic, archaeological - be deployed coherently to explain the role of children in religious ritual?

11 Socrates was accused of 'introducing other newfangled divinities': why should that have been regarded as a criminal offence?

12 To what extent was the sacrificant's having a proper mental attitude considered a requirement for sacrifice to be efficacious?

13 How far and in what senses was official Greek religion an attempt to control the supernatural?

END OF PAPER