


## Candidate 4 evidence

Classical Studies Higher Resource Sheet			
Candidate Name		Scottish Candidate Number	
<p>Source 1: "Pheidias seems to me the only artist to truly portray Olympian Zeus. I came to see his statue with high expectations, but he far surpassed them." - L. Aemilius Paullus, Conqueror of Macedonia, Polybius Histories 30.10</p> <p>Source 2: "They met together and decided on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, as the first-fruits of the wisdom, the far famed inscriptions, which are in all men's mouths- "Know Thyself", and "Nothing in Excess" - Socrates in 'Protagoras', by Plato, 380 BcE</p>			
			
<p>Source 3: Image of the Parthenon a former temple dedicated to the Goddess Athena on the Athenian Acropolis</p> <p>Intro: Importance of religion, Public festivals and rituals, role of oracles and prophecies, religion in daily life</p> <p>F1: Panathenaia; Athena, Olympics similarity, rituals and animal sacrifice, Libation; Dionysia, festivals and rituals brought together people, gave the Greeks a chance to prove to gods they were worthy of what they asked for</p> <p>F2: Importance of Oracles, Priestess of Apollo, without the help of the Oracle many important decisions wouldn't be made e.g war, instilled reliance on gods, Nostradamus and Baba Vanga Bulgarian</p> <p>F3: Household religion, Hestia the Goddess of the Hearth and home, marriage tradition, fruit and nuts, fruits sign of fertility; Demeter, helped people with identity, kept gods happy, Churches etc</p> <p>Conclusion: Religion in daily life most important, most relatable to now</p>			

How important was religion in shaping ancient Greek society?

Religion was one of the most important parts of Ancient Greek society as it was something whole communities participated in and it helped to shape how society acted and also what battles were fought by the Greeks. Through the imput of the Gods and religion many Greek's were given the chance to explore new ways of life which was beneficial to forming how Greece made political and also personal decisions. In this essay I am going to talk about the impact of Public festivals and rituals, the role of Oracles and prophecies and also what religion looked like in daily life.

To begin with public festivals were a crucial part of religion in ancient Greece as it gave the Greeks a chance to display to their gods that they were loyal towards them. One of the most important festivals that took place was called the Panathenaia which was a festival that was held for one week every 4 years similarly to the Olympics and was held in honor of the Goddess Athena. During this week the Greek men could participate in sporting events and dramatic performances were held as well as literary competitions.

Additionally a common ritual that took place was one of sacrificing animals to a god, generally this was done very particularly so that it would be guaranteed to satisfy the god or goddess it was dedicated towards. The animal would need to be the same sex as the god or goddess it was being sacrificed to in order to appease them and would be cut open with a knife or some sort of sharp blade and drained of its blood which would be used in the sacrifice; then the entrails and meat left over would be consumed by the participants of the sacrifice. Another ritual that was commonly performed was called a libation and those took part at the festival called The Dionysia which was in honour of the god Dionysus the god of wine and parties. A libation is a ritual that involved the participants pouring a cup of what could be wine, honey, milk or any other important beverage onto the floor to honour the god, heroes or the dead.

These festivals and rituals were an important part of religion and how Greece's society was shaped because they played a big part in bringing people together and gathering interest into religion. The festivals and rituals were seen as very rewarding and the gods would look upon you kindly if you took part in them. Because of mass participation it gave the Greek's a chance to prove to their gods they were worthy of whatever things they were asking for during the rituals and festivals that took place during the course of a year.

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This quote is a direct example which shows how sacred the gods were to people and how important it was to them that they were worshipped properly. As mentioned in this quote Paullus's expectations were succeeded because of how mighty he believed Zeus to be which suggests the reliance the Greek's had on the gods approval.

Something that is interesting to note is that the Olympic's are still a thing to this day, an Ancient Greek traditional festival that was made in honour of Zeus is still relevant. Much like how the Olympics was back then it runs for a week every four years and features a variety of different sporting events. The games was originally just limited to the participation of men in Ancient Greek times but now it has broadened its horizons and allows anyone good enough to participate to do so, the events ranged from running and boxing to equestrian and that hasn't changed to this day aside from a couple of additional sports which are newer like skateboarding. This just goes to show that

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the impact of religion on shaping society was massive as this tradition has been passed down through many generations and is still going strong today.

Furthermore Oracles and prophecies played an important part in structuring decisions made politically in Ancient Greece as well as personally by everyday people. The Oracle of Delphi is the most notable Oracle that has ever come out of religion in Ancient Greece as she was the mouthpiece for the god Apollo who provided guidance to those that sought after it. The Priestess of Apollo was said to have actually been able to help with decisions such as if Greek states would go into battle or not or if they should colonise a piece of land and what decisions Apollo told the army generals and navy would be what they followed. This once again shows heavy reliance on the input of the gods on making crucial decisions. The Oracle of Delphi was said to have predicted the expedition of the Argonauts as well as the Trojan War, two massive pinnacles of history.

However it wasn't just army men and politicians that went to the Oracle, many ordinary people sought after her as well to make day to day decisions on what they should do in their lives, she was so well known that she attracted people from Asia Minor as well as people from the borders of Greece.

Because of the Oracle and the help of prophecies Greece managed to establish an incredibly strong army in some places and navies too. Which made them a powerful country and one that not many people were brave enough to rival. Without the help of the Oracle and her prophecies and foresight Greece wouldn't have been able to structure their big political decisions and create many powerful city states such as Sparta with their land army and Athens with their navy.

It's also important to mention that as much as the Oracle was a very important part in shaping society, she wasn't always able to reach everybody and not every person was able to visit her on a daily basis as they may have their own lives to tend to.

"They met together and decided on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, as the first-fruits of the wisdom, the far famed inscriptions, which are in all men's mouths- "Know Thyself", and "Nothing in Excess" – Socrates in 'Protagoras', by Plato, 380 BCE

This shows that the gods were persistent in ensuring that the Oracle would keep people level and maintain a balanced headspace so that they would make decisions smartly and without having too much bias towards one thing. The most important advice that the Oracle of Delphi could provide was to be sure of yourself and have confidence in your decisions but not to get too cocky that it would ruin your ego.

Oracles, fortune tellers and prophecies are certainly not a new thing as seen through The Oracle of Delphi and her many great prophecies, today in the modern world we still have people who claim to be able to tell the future and what may lie in your destiny. However it is a common belief that everyone's lives are premediated and we cannot choose how our lives will go, and what will happen will happen for a reason. Nostradamus and also Baba Vanga are two famously known prophets as they have been said to have been able to predict things such as World Wars and natural disasters. Baba Vanga herself is a Bulgarian woman who is said to know the day the world will end and has prophesied for up to over 100 years into the future, whether her prophecies are true or not are up to the world to decide.

My last factor I would like to discuss is the impact religion had on daily life. As we know it was something that many Greeks practiced and would do so whether they were a man, woman or a child. In daily life it could be seen as something miniscule such as someone worshipping the Goddess of the Hearth and the Home Hestia who would be honoured by dedicating food to her and also

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participating in Libations, doing these rituals was said to ensure that Hestia would protect your home and it would be blessed and safe from evil. A common tradition which took place in daily life was that of showering newly wed couples with fruits and nuts to bless them. It was said that the sound of nuts hitting the ground, particularly walnuts was a very good omen and would lead to a happy relationship. The choice of fruit and nuts isn't random either, as both of these foods were used as they were signs of fertility and also of love, relating to both Demeter the Goddess of Fertility and also Aphrodite the Goddess of Love.

Through these practices many Greek people managed to structure their own individual identities while also managing to keep their gods happy, this shows that religion was a big part in shaping society because it helped people come to terms with aspects of life and also give them a reason to look forward to their futures.

My final source is a picture of the Parthenon a temple that was dedicated to the Goddess Athena and was placed on the Athenian Acropolis. This shows that people had the choice to go to worship inside of a temple if they so wished too go that little bit further in their dedication in their daily lives, which many Greek people did in fact do because they wanted to ensure that they would be given a good life and would not be punished by the gods for being ignorant.

This relates to the modern world as nowadays many people still go to churches and synagogues or other places of worship to pray to their gods and show respect to them. Which suggests that no matter what kind of religion people still have the same sort of similar ideologies and ways of worship.

In conclusion I believe that Religion in daily life was the most important factor as it displays the dedication that people had to keeping their gods happy. It is more important than festivals and rituals as although they were fantastic at bringing people together and showing them the rewards that could be claimed from participating in the religion it was also something that many people could just skip if they didn't want to attend and they would not get to enjoy the rewards that would come from the gods leaving it slightly a grey area. Next the role of Oracles and prophecies was also very important but lacks slightly as in comparison to people being able to decide how they wanted to interpret the gods messages through omens and daily worship you would be directly told by the Oracle how you should go about your life. Overall I think that Religion in daily life was most important as it is the most relatable to people in the current day and it shows that you could worship the gods how you wished and still reap the rewards from it.

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