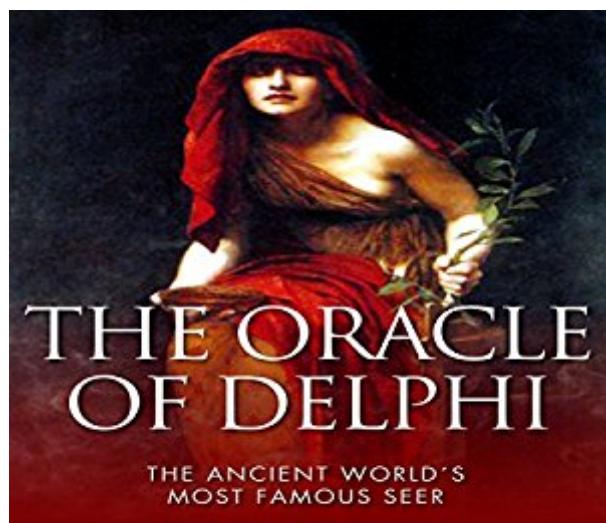


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The Oracle Of Delphi: The Ancient World's Most Famous Seer



by
CHARLES RIVER EDITORS



Synopsis

"Not often nor regularly, but occasionally and fortuitously, the room in which they seat the god's consultants is filled with a fragrance and breeze, as if the adyton were sending forth the essences of the sweetest and most expensive perfumes from a spring." - Plutarch "[T]he seat of the oracle is a cavern hollowed down in the depths... from which arises pneuma [breath, vapor, gas] that inspires a divine state of possession." - Strabo, Geography 9.3.5 The Oracle of Delphi was one of the greatest religious institutions in Ancient Greece. It played a significant role not only in the formation and collective decisions of Hellenic localities and city-states but also in the personal lives of Greeks known and unknown. The site was dedicated to the god Apollo, and the Greeks believed the god spoke his oracles through his prophetess known as the Pythia. The judgments and decisions rendered by the oracle were so important to the Greeks that they often put them above all other interests, even security threats posed by the likes of the Persians. Delphi was popular even amongst outsiders. The Pythia delivered the god's oracles to such famous persons as Midas and Croesus, and it provided consultations during such important historical moments as the Persian War and the Peloponnesian War. Many authors of antiquity mention the oracle for one reason or another, and there even survive epigraphic collections that preserve the god's words on stone. The ancient Greeks called Delphi the omphalos ("navel") of the Earth. The black rock that symbolized this imagined center stands at the site to this very day. Sitting at the foot of Mt. Parnassos, Delphi overlooks the Gulf of Corinth, so it is no wonder why the setting mesmerized contemporaries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an essay, not a book.

It really does not add much new knowledge on the subject but I liked it.

Everyone should know more about our world and Charles River books do not let you down Happy reading!!!!

We listened to this as an audio book on our way to Delphi. It did give a nice overview, different theories about the origins, the temple buildings, and the oracle. It also gave quite good arguments for why common (mis)interpretations about the oracle are probably wrong. Like the oracle actually being an older woman, that she probably didn't need a priestly interpreter, and that she probably did not inhale fumes from the ground. The last issue is apparently an issue of diverging scholarly opinions, though. The book is short, about one hour long. I would have liked some more descriptions of the site itself, but apart from that, it is a quite good treatise on an often misunderstood topic.

It is a good article of 20 pages, but not a book and should not be sold as a book

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