

Religion and Society in Ancient Thessaly (Oxford Classical Monographs)

By Maria Mili

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The fertile plains of the ancient Greek region of Thessaly stretch south from the shadow of Mount Olympus. Thessaly's numerous small cities were home to some of the richest men in Greece, their fabulous wealth counted in innumerable flocks and slaves. It had a strict oligarchic government and a reputation for indulgence and witchcraft, but also a dominant position between Olympus and Delphi, and a claim to some of the greatest Greek heroes, such as Achilles himself. It can be viewed as both the cradle of many aspects of Greek civilization and as a challenge to the dominant image of ancient Greece as moderate, rational, and democratic.

Religion and Society in Ancient Thessaly explores the issues of regionalism in ancient Greek religion and the relationship between religion and society, as well as the problem of thinking about these matters through particular bodies of evidence. It discusses in depth the importance of citizenship and of other group-identities in Thessaly, and the relationship between cult activity and political and social organization. The volume investigates the Thessalian particularities of the evidence and the role of religion in giving the inhabitants of this land a sense of their identity and place in the wider Greek world, as well as the role of Thessaly in the ancients' and moderns' understanding of Greekness.

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Review

"The book is well written and splendidly readable, far more readable than one would imagine a book on such a lacunose subject could be. Whoever works henceforth on any aspect of
Thessalian religion will turn to Mili s fine study with gratitude."--*Mnemosyne*

About the Author

Maria Mili has studied history and archaeology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the University of Edinburgh, and the University of Oxford. She lives in Athens and Crete.

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