



Benefaction and Rewards in the Ancient Greek City: The Origins of Euergetism

Marc Domingo Gygax

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This volume presents for the first time an in-depth analysis of the origins of Greek euergetism. Derived from the Greek for 'benefactor', 'euergetism' refers to the process whereby citizens and foreigners offered voluntary services and donations to the polis that were in turn recognised as benefactions in a formal act of reciprocity. Euergetism is key to our understanding of how city-states negotiated both the internal tensions between mass and elite, and their conflicts with external powers. This study adopts the standpoint of historical anthropology and seeks to identify patterns of behaviour and social practices deeply rooted in Greek society and in the long course of Greek history. It covers more than five hundred years and will appeal to ancient historians and scholars in other fields interested in gift exchange, benefactions, philanthropy, power relationships between mass and elite, and the interplay between public discourse and social praxis.

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