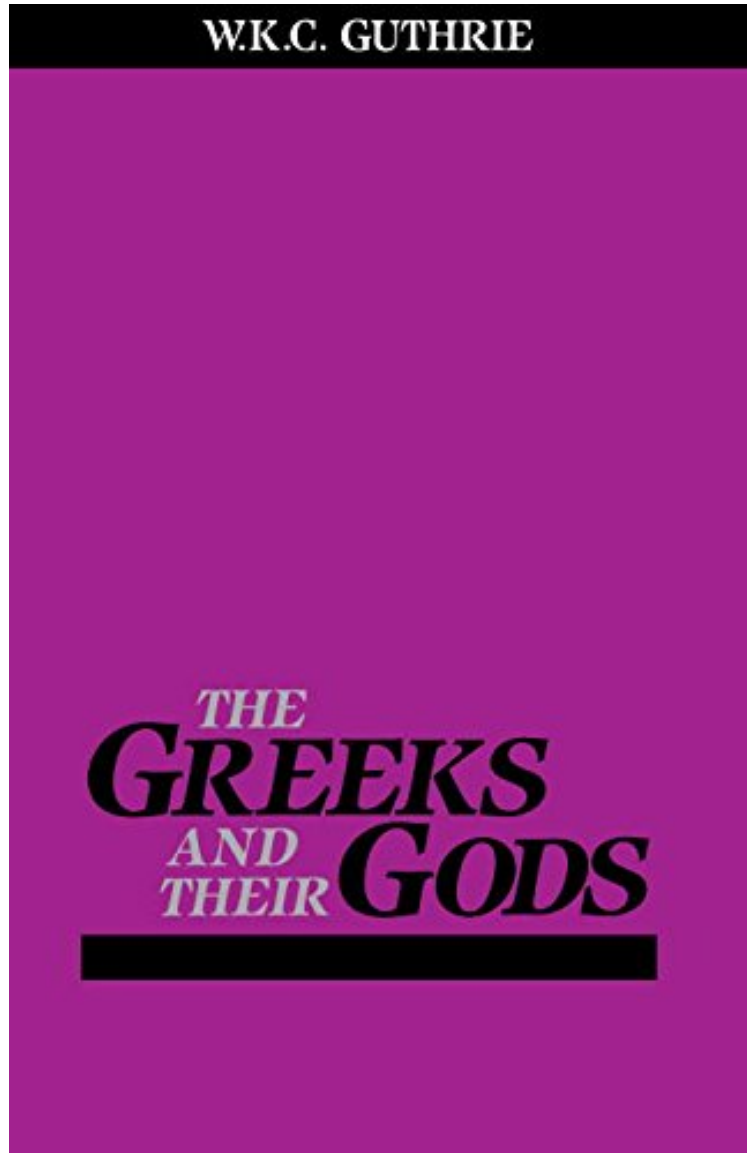


(Download free ebook) Greeks and Their Gods (Ariadne Series)

Greeks and Their Gods (Ariadne Series)

William Guthrie

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#1861995 in Books Beacon Press 1971-06-30 1971-06-30Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x .81 x 5.50l, 1.12 #File Name: 0807057932404 pages | File size: 58.Mb

William Guthrie : Greeks and Their Gods (Ariadne Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Greeks and Their Gods (Ariadne Series):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A classic on the classicsBy David H. EisenbergWhat the general public, and even people who have delved into Greek mythology a bit, think of the Greek gods is really a snapshot of a particular time and place that has been frozen for us in literature and movies based upon the Homeric tradition. But

this book is not Edith Hamilton or Bullfinch's for that matter. The Greek people were around for a millennium or more prior to the Golden Age in the fifth century, and went through several major periods of immigration and assimilation of and with other peoples, though most of the history is either unknown to us or more than a bit shadowy. Guthrie's book, in a most careful way typical of great scholarship, opens the door to different aspects not only of the Olympian gods with whom we are familiar from Homer but covers the multiple earlier forms of those same gods. In some cases, the early versions attached to the name were so different from that which we are familiar, that it is hard to see how they morphed into the Olympians. It also explores different aspects of Greek religion beyond the Olympians, the Dionysian, the Eleusian mysteries and Orphic doctrine, and even under Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy. Much of it is argument, of course, even pure speculation and Guthrie makes that clear. Nor does he pretend in any way to be comprehensive. This book was first published about 65 years ago and there have been more discoveries since then shedding light on the Greek gods and religion, however, not so much as to make this book obsolete. If you are not familiar with the Olympian gods, then the first thing you need to do is read Edith Hamilton (which I read with my mother when I was 4) or something equivalent. Then, if you want to know much more, this would be a great addition to your ancient Greek education.

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful. The most in-depth book of its kind

By Michael Strassberg

This book was fascinating. Most books about the Greek Pantheon start with the fully evolved and articulated gods such as Zeus, Hera, Apollo, Artemis, Hephaestus and their kin, as if they appeared on the scene ex nihilo. The fact is that all of these gods were gods of diverse tribes in the originally fragmented Aegean region. The gods of warring and seafaring tribes were of a much different character than those of the agricultural, sedentary tribes. Each god was originally the chief deity of some group, or an adoption from other cultures. As the culture became more homogenous through conquest and commerce, the once individual gods merged into a community of gods that eventually became the famous twelve. The status of each tribe's god reflected the relative position of that group in the social hierarchy. Thus, Zeus, being originally the god of the conquering tribes became the king of the gods, and Hephaestus, lame and hunchbacked, was at the bottom of the hierarchy, reflecting the lowly status of tradesmen.

Guthrie examines each god individually, starting with the earliest examples of that god's appearance and how it encapsulated the identity, values and world view of the society that worshipped it. He then shows how the god developed as the society grew and changed, eventually evolving into the god with whom we are commonly familiar. He tells how the god became a member of the pantheon. His analysis is broad in historical, psychological, symbolic and sociological approaches, and leaves the reader with an intensely deep appreciation and reverence for the Greek pantheon. You will never look at the Greek gods as characters in a series of charming myths again. You will see them as reflections of the development of a dynamic, fascinating society. Their development mirrors the growth of the society that worshiped them. The book is dense, but very readable, and extremely rewarding.

2 of 17 people found the following review helpful. The Gods

By A Customer

I really liked this book I had to write this report about the Greek Gods and Goddesses and this saved me from having to find a lot of other books about the subject. It has all these stories about the different gods and goddesses. One of them about Artemis about Medusa and Zeus and the Boy's all time favorite Hades. I personally like Artemis or as the Romans called her Diana. I also dressed up as her for the feast of the gods. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes the gods and goddesses, or has a really important report coming up

A religious companion to the Greek classics.

From the Back Cover

The primary aim of this book is to serve as a kind of religious companion to the Greek classics. It does not so much set out to interest specialists as to be useful to those who enjoy Greek literature, whether original or in translation, and have made the inevitable discovery that almost every branch of it is permeated by religion.