

Thanos Zartaloudis' *The Birth of Nomos* renovates entirely our understanding of a fundamental term in the history of Western culture. From this unprecedented book, it becomes clear that we will need to rethink all of the themes that our ethical and political tradition has gathered around the word 'Law'.

Giorgio Agamben

Generosity is not a word Zartaloudis explicitly deploys in this remarkable investigation – a veritable *cosmonomy*, to invoke the author's erudite terminology. And yet, what better way to describe what he does in *The Birth of Nomos*, as he genially apports and distributes, scrupulously gives and grants, deftly dispensing and setting apart the multiple sources and resources that have nourished, or been fed by, the word *nomos* (differentially accented) and its 'family of words'? Throughout, Zartaloudis reads and roams, disposes, arranges and orders anew centuries of use, fields of practice and thought (poetry and prophecy, tragedy and philosophy, shepherding and *mousikē*, to name just a few), engrossing traditions of reading, of performance and conduct, as well as persistent issues and concepts of manifest currency – and intense urgency. The outer edges of law (that most common translation of *nomos* from which Zartaloudis knowingly seeks to guard us, 'the danger', he says, 'is, as ever, to miss the point') are traversed and carefully circumvented, revealed for their still uncharted expanses, the multifarious forms of life and worlds they are and have been. A masterful and exemplary, truly creative and generous work.

Gil Anidjar, Columbia University

Writing in the grand tradition of humanistic legal research, *The Birth of Nomos* proffers an extraordinarily sophisticated and extremely precise tracking of the European roots of the legal tradition. Contemporary legal theory defines *nomos* and norm as law and rule. In a meticulously erudite work of philological and philosophical investigation, *The Birth of Nomos* patiently and decisively evidences the paucity and inaccuracy of such designations. Zartaloudis in this scintillatingly original study traces the plural roots and multiple forms of *nomos* and in doing so redraws the boundaries of jurisprudence.

Peter Goodrich, Cardozo Law School

Like no one else before, Thanos Zartaloudis has broken through the complexities of the concept of *nomos* with a tour de force. As incisive and imaginative as one wants intellectual work to be, *The Birth of Nomos* bursts even more with stunning philological prowess, poetic invention, and philosophical ingenuity – a real gem to behold and a treasure to mine over and over.

Stathis Gourgouris, Columbia University

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THE BIRTH OF NOMOS

Thanos Zartaloudis

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© Thanos Zartaloudis, 2019

Edinburgh University Press Ltd
The Tun – Holyrood Road
12 (2f) Jackson's Entry
Edinburgh EH8 8PJ

Typeset in 11/13 Palatino by
Servis Filmsetting Ltd, Stockport, Cheshire,
and printed and bound in Great Britain

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978 1 4744 4200 8 (hardback)
ISBN 978 1 4744 4202 2 (webready PDF)
ISBN 978 1 4744 4203 9 (epub)

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