THE MYSTERIES OF ZALMOXIS

Constantin DANIEL

The study consists of five chapters from a still unpublished book written by the Romanian orientalist Constantin Daniel. The book deals with the Thracian cult of Zalmoxis, considered as a cult of mysteries, similar to those practiced in the Hellenistic world.

The first five chapters don’t approach directly the topic of the cult of Zalmoxis; they rather deal with the very tight connexions between the Greek and the Thracian cultures. In the author’s view, the Thracian world represented the origin of many of the cultural and religious ideas of the Greeks. Constantin Daniel depicts Troja as a Thracian city and the Greek religious ideals as being inspired by the realities of the religious life of the Thracs. Hence, the Abioii, the Hyperboreans and the Agathyrses (according to C. Daniel, all these people being Thracians) and their communities are put forward as the models that inspired the Greeks in creating their own religious ideals. Later on, the author will avail of this eulogistic perspective upon the Thracian spirituality in order to justify the elevated, highly spiritual character of the cult of Zalmoxis.