



The Athens Greek Religion Seminar, Thursday December 13 2018

Eleni Fassa: *Isiac deities in Macedonia: introduction patterns, assimilation strategies and the politics of cultic incorporation*

**ABSTRACT:**

The Egyptian gods are introduced in Macedonia in the early Hellenistic period. In their Macedonian *epidemia* Isis, Sarapis and the other members of the *gens Isiaca* will interact with a rich mosaic of flourishing cults comprising of traditional Greek divinities (Zeus, Heracles, Dionysus, Aphrodite), the emblematic deities of *romanitas* (e.g. Jupiter Optimus Maximus, imperial cult), other gods conceived as foreign while retaining elements of their oriental origins (e.g. Ma, Syrian Goddess), but also a still vibrant, archaic religious substratum with strong local affiliations (e.g. the various Mother Goddesses of Macedonia).

Focusing on the two major centres of Isiac activity in Macedonia, Thessaloniki and Dion, in this paper I will explore the composite methods of permeation of the Isiac deities in the Macedonian religious context, the role of the individual in the propagation and development of the cult and the components of religious cohabitation, peaceful or dissonant, which determine the formation of the religious landscape both on a local and regional scale.