



THE ATHENS GREEK RELIGION SEMINAR, Tuesday December 14, 2021, at 17h Athens time (limited live presence and via Zoom link).

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Burial practices for elite Macedonians with cultic duties

The study of burial customs in Macedonia is based mostly on the elite burials and their inventories. Introducing the cultic status as an additional criterion for the study of rich burial contexts (royal and elite) may lead to a better interpretation of both. Cultic duties are not associated exclusively with priesthood. From the Iron Age to the Hellenistic period, and from the smaller towns to the capital, the most powerful one among the elite families assumed the role of the leading/royal family, the head of which was entrusted with cultic duties too. This status was based on the bloodline, and thus was inherited to offsprings. Of course, non-royal cult personnel existed too, either for life or for a fixed period. Thus, we can calculate the number of cultic agents to at least hundreds, taking into account the size of the region, the number of towns and the time span. It is therefore likely that priestly burials have already been revealed, and that those contained grave gifts associated to the cultic status of the deceased.

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