



THE ATHENS GREEK RELIGION SEMINAR, Tuesday, April 28, 2026

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Facing the Gods. Mycenaean statues and their possible role in rituals

ABSTRACT

Given the ubiquity of terracotta figurines, it is commonly thought that these played a major role in Mycenaean ritual. This paper argues that the focus on terracotta figurines has obscured an important side of Mycenaean religious life and that Mycenaean ritual also involved larger, and more elaborate, statues. These statues were made from a variety of materials and were sometimes treated in ways that seems to resemble later Greek practice. Because of their perishable nature, little of these statues remains. Some parts have, however, been recovered by archaeologists. By comparing those with textual and iconographic evidence, as well as to known practices from nearby contemporary societies (such as those in Minoan Crete and Hittite Anatolia), this paper aims to reconstruct the appearance of, and some of the rituals that surrounded, Mycenaean cult statues.

The seminar takes place Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 17.00 (Athens) in a hybrid format with live presence at the Swedish Institute at Athens and online via Zoom.

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