

THE BIENNIAL MARTIN P. NILSSON LECTURE ON ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION,  
Friday, November 7, 2025

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***To Take Place: Divine Appropriations of Space, Beyond the Notion of  
«Religious Landscape»***

**ABSTRACT**

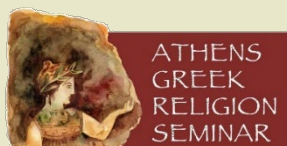
The inscription of gods in space is a crucial issue. Many publications try to recreate a “religious/cultic landscape” inhabited by several divine powers according to multiple logics. Landscapes are shaped by a network of connections with natural or human-made elements, together with human activity, which is defined by social, political and gendered features. The gods of a place and a community are placed in certain locations so that people can interact with them every day. But the gods have different ways of “taking place”. As early as 1962, in *The Savage Mind*, Claude Lévi-Strauss highlighted the “order of things”, which ritual practices integrate through what J.Z. Smith calls “micro-adjustments”. The lecture will move from Smith’s proposal that the gods “take place”, an expression that he uses in the title of his volume containing a theory of ritual in 1987. The analysis will draw in particular on the vast reservoir of divine names in context provided by the MAP database. The aim of the discussion will be to analyse some strategies for the territorialisation of deities in the Greek world, putting the emphasis on the agency of the gods themselves.

The lecture takes place on **Friday, November 7, 2025, at 7 p.m.**  
at the **Swedish Institute at Athens, Mitseon 9.**

**Places are limited, and registration is required.**

To participate, please register at:

<https://www.sia.gr/en/events.php?eid=521#ParticipationForm>



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