

Call for Papers

Ritual Acts in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry

University of Crete, March 27-28, 2026

Organizing Committee: Prof. Lucia Athanassaki, Prof. Athena Kavoulaki, Katerina Doulgeraki (PhD cand.), Ioannis Karakirisidis (PhD cand.), Vassilis Karandinakis (PhD cand.)

We are pleased to announce our forthcoming conference *Ritual Acts in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry*, addressed to doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers within five years from receipt of their PhD working on subjects related to ritual. The conference will take place in Rethymnon, Crete, on 3 / 27 & 28, 2026.

Rituals represent a dynamic and multifaceted field of research, bringing together a variety of interdisciplinary approaches, including anthropology, history, religious studies, psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and gender studies. In ancient Greek society, rituals, such as sacrifices, processions, banquets and symposia, *theoriai*, rites of passages, performative utterances, were deeply intertwined with nearly every aspect of life, as reflected in the poetry (epic, lyric, and drama) of the Archaic and Classical periods. We welcome proposals exploring the representation of ritual practices and acts in the poetic texts of the Archaic and Classical times. Possible topics of contributions include, but are not limited to:

- Rituals as a medium for social interaction among different agents within or beyond the *polis*.
- The role of rituals in the context of interpersonal relations.
- The role of rituals in shaping both individual and collective identities of the performers themselves and the audience.
- The political impact of inscribed rituals.
- The role of women in ritual activities.
- The role of mortals and immortals in mythical narratives and in the performance of rituals.
- The pragmatics and / or gestural aspects of ritual performances.
- Ecocritical aspects of ritual behavior and activities.
- Ritual and Theatricality.

– ‘Inverted’ rituals, violation of ritual order, or conflation of ritual processes.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Prof. Andromache Karanika (University of California, Irvine)

Prof. Renaud Gagné (University of Cambridge)

Prof. Vassiliki Panoussi (William & Mary)

Proposals for 20-minute presentations in English, to be followed by 10-minute discussion, should be submitted to the Selection Committee –Katerina Doulgeraki, Ioannis Karakirisidis, Vassilis Karandinakis (ritualacts.conf@gmail.com) in the form of an abstract (max. 300 words, *.pdf file), with a brief bibliography, by 31 August 2025. Applicants will be informed about their participation by 31 October 2025.

We envisage mainly an in-person conference on the University Campus, but we will adopt a hybrid format, allowing for online participation of attendees and speakers unable to travel.

Speakers are expected to cover travel and accommodation expenses from their institutions or other sources. The organizers will recommend travel options and accommodation venues in good time. There will be no conference fee.