



Call for Papers | 32nd EAA Annual Meeting | 26–29 August 2026 | Athens

Session: #289

Cretan Sanctuaries Between Marginality and Connectivity: New Archaeological Evidence and Reassessments

Theme: Beyond the Middle Sea: Rethinking the Mediterranean in motion

Session Organizers:

Manolis Petrakis (University of Patras/Greece)

Anna Bertelli (Ruhr University Bochum/Germany)

Contact:

petrakisman@upatras.gr

anna.bertelli@rub.de

Crete—from the collapse of the Minoan palaces to the Roman Imperial era—stands out as a region that followed its own path of cultural development. The island has been viewed both as a communication hub within the eastern Mediterranean and as an insular, introverted landscape. These seemingly opposing tendencies are eloquently reflected in the material culture of Cretan sanctuaries, which occupy a distinctive place in the study of ancient religion. Within the broader framework of Mediterranean connectivity recent attention has been directed, especially toward Early Iron Age Crete. On one hand, we see the persistence of Minoan traditions, singular temple architecture, local particular pottery, and the island's distinct trajectory in the major developments of Greek history. On the other hand, the import of luxury items, influences from Egypt and West Asia, and technological innovations in jewelry production, metallurgy and terracotta production with moulds from the Early Archaic period onward underlines Crete's participation in wider Mediterranean area. The architectural and cultic particularities of Cretan sanctuaries continue into the Classical and Hellenistic periods, while we register a relatively smooth incorporation into the Roman Empire marked by cultural flourishing.

New evidence has substantially revised the view of Cretan sanctuaries as isolated, modest places, revealing instead a complex picture of interaction and transformation, both within Crete and beyond. This session aims to explore these dynamics across a broad chronological span, understanding Cretan sanctuaries as focal points of social negotiation, economic exchange, and symbolic performance. We particularly welcome papers addressing the tension between marginality and connectivity. Contributions may, for example, present new excavation data, re-examinations of legacy material, or archaeometric analysis illuminating the materialities and practices of Cretan cults; provenance and petrographic studies tracing object biographies; epigraphic and iconographic studies exploring multicultural entanglements; and landscape approaches situating sanctuaries within routes of movement and visibility.

Submission by February 5, 2026: <https://submissions.e-a-a.org/ea2026>