

Water and Greek Religion: Landscapes, Uses, Mythology

We are pleased to invite you to the conference

Water and Greek Religion: Landscapes, Uses, Mythology

which will be held at Tufts University, Boston (Medford) on July 21-24 2015. This conference is organized by Tufts University (M.C. Beaulieu), the Université de Liège (V. Pirenne) and the Université de Montréal (P. Bonnechere).

Water is a central element in Greek cosmology. For this reason, water is associated with almost all religious categories, from the most abstract concepts to the most practical realities. The topic of water has rarely been addressed in comprehensive studies. One may cite: Borszák (1951) on immersion, Rudhardt (1971) on primordial water, Ginouvès (1962) on bathing, Davies (1978) and Daraki (1982) on Dionysus and the sea, Larson (2001) on Nymphs, Lesky (1947) on navigation, Koch on sacrificial precipitation into the sea (2005), Jourdain-Annequin (1989), Nesselrath (2005) and Roller (2006) on the Pillars of Heracles, etc.... Many multi-author volumes also address specific topics such as water and health (Ginouvès, 1994).

In this conference, we wish to explore the inner workings and consistency of the concepts surrounding water in Greek religion. We therefore invite papers which seek to establish, as well as it may be done, the connections between different themes. Our objective is to let a more complete, in-depth, and nuanced image of the topic "emerge" from the proceedings. What is the role of water in cult and what are its religious uses? To what extent do these practical uses overlap with abstract concepts? It would be useful to chart the Greek representation of water as a whole—from a theoretical, literary, philosophical, medical, and geographical point of view—in order to further our understanding of cults, and vice-versa.

We propose to explore how the Greeks conceive of water and its role, or more precisely the roles of different types of water, while keeping in mind that all waters depend upon a fully connected hydrological system. The various types of water under study include running water (rivers, sea, springs, dew), in nature and in human life (drinking water, water mixed with wine...), as well as in rituals (ordeals, divination, purification, diving, immersion, swimming, aspersion, baths, libations, sacrifice...). In addition, we must consider water as a physical entity, whether personified or not, such as the sea, the Ocean, lakes, marshes, ponds, waterways, waterfalls, underground rivers, islands and peninsulas; water managed by humans, such as fountains, baths, nymphaea, wells, ...; the bestiary of water: aquatic birds, dolphins, fish, monsters,...; and finally, the mythology, divinities, and etiologies associated with all these themes.

Specific topics deserve special attention, including but not limited to the following: "sports", metamorphosis, death, drowning (in association with cenotaphs), *katabasis*, astrology/astronomy; and from a practical perspective: canals, irrigation/watering, music, etc.

Chronological indicators: from the Archaic to the Roman period, with possible openings onto the Minoan/Mycenaean and paleochristian worlds.

After a thorough peer review process, the conference papers will be published in *Kernos. Revue internationale et pluridisciplinaire de la religion grecque antique* (either in the regular journal or a supplement, depending on the scope of the accepted papers). Papers will preferably be delivered in French and English but other languages are not excluded.

Practicalities:

1. Tufts University will provide most of the meals and lodging in the student residences (which are new, air-conditioned and functional) located on campus. The participants who wish to do so may stay in the student residences at their own expense before or after the conference to enjoy the Boston area in a cost-effective manner.
2. If you are interested in participating, please send a detailed abstract to wateringreekreligion@gmail.com. Abstracts must be submitted by **November 15, 2014**. Graduate students are welcome. However, they are asked to submit one-page abstracts which will have been reviewed by their advisors.