

## Course Syllabus

**CLA324 Crete and the Aegean from Prehistory to the early Byzantine Period (Athens, Santorini, Crete)**

**January 2026**

**Course Instructors:** N. Litinas, D. Kritsotakis

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**Class Times:** TBC

**Office Hours Available:** After each class

### Course Description

The aim of the course is to acquaint students with inscriptions and papyri as writing materials, archaeological objects and texts. In particular, the aims are:

1. To familiarize students with the various types and forms of the ancient inscriptions from Crete or Greek papyri as writing surfaces and with the epigraphical and papyrological bibliography.
2. The development of the ability to understand ancient texts and the cultural, political and economic reasons that created the need to write these texts.
3. The introduction to the major corpora of the Greek inscriptions and papyri and the understanding of the proper scientific ways to publish an ancient text.
4. To introduce students to various aspects of Cretan mythology and explore ancient Greek perceptions of Crete.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the course the students will be able to:

- To understand the use of the ancient writing materials, and to know how to draw various pieces of information from the ancient inscriptions.
- To discuss methodological issues regarding the study of an area and reconstruct various factors of the ancient society.
- To use the latest online instruments (databases, online editions etc.).
- To examine the development of key Cretan myths over time and explore shifting perceptions of Crete and its inhabitants within broader Greek cultural and historical contexts.

### Course Requirements

#### i) Required Reading

For each class/visit, the Reading of one or two papers is required. Ideally, the participants should read these papers before the class, in order to comprehend the topic and participate lively in the discussion. All the Required Readings are available on Moodle as pdf files.

#### ii) Recommended Reading (list of readings per class and full bibliography available on Moodle)

#### iii) Basic knowledge of Ancient Greek

### Class Field Work

There will be numerous outdoor activities, such as field tasks, visits to various archaeological sites and city walking. Ideally, as some of the visits are one off, you should carry with you your notebook and a pen/pencil, a photographic camera (be aware that in some museums and sites photography is not permitted) and your smile.

### Evaluation and Grading

#### 1) Attendance and participation (50%)

Students are expected to attend all classes, whether indoors or outdoors, and be prepared to actively participate, contribute and discuss the topics of the day, as well as offer their own thoughts and interpretations.

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons, which result in absences, should be reported immediately.

#### 2) Two reflections based on the readings and the site/ museum visits (400 words each, total 30%)

The course is divided in 3 parts (classes #1-#5, #6-#12, #13-#19 or 20). At the end of parts 12 and 20 you are expected to submit a reflection based on the relevant bibliography, your own observations, and thoughts. Feel free to add illustrations, such as photos, drawing, plans, etc.

#### 3) A group presentation (20%)

You are expected to form a group of 2-3 course participants and to present (3-5 minutes per individual) on a relevant topic of your choice at any point during the course duration. At the end of the presentation, you should provide the instructors with a summary (ca. 100 words) of your research.

### Evaluation Criteria - Course Assignments

The **Final Grade** is broken down as follows:

- Class attendance and participation: 50%
  - Two reflections:  $2 \times 15\% = 30\%$
  - Group presentation (& report): 20%
- Total: 100%**

### CYA Regulations and Accommodations

#### Attendance Policy

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately to the Student Affairs Office.

#### Policy on Original Work

Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own original work. Any ideas taken from the work of others must be clearly identified as quotations, paraphrases, summaries, figures etc., and accurate internal citations and/or captions (for visuals) as well as an accompanying bibliography must be provided (Check the Student Handbook, pg. 7).

#### Use of Laptops

In-class or onsite use of laptops and other devices is permitted if this facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if devices are not used for class-related work.

### Class Schedule

Class Day	Day/Date/Place	Topic / Readings / Assignments Due
1	Thursday, Jan 8  Visit: Old Town (Rethymno)  Visit: Archaeological Museum at Rethymno  (Night at Rethymno)	AM. Arrival of the Students in Rethymno, Crete. City tour in Rethymno and its old town (morning) Visit the Archaeological Museum at Rethymno (noon) Orientation (afternoon place TBD)
3	Friday, Jan 9  UoC, Room TBD  (Night at Rethymno)	#1 Inscriptions in the Graeco-Roman world. A general introduction  Required reading <a href="https://saxa-loquuntur.web.rug.nl/handbooks-introductions/">https://saxa-loquuntur.web.rug.nl/handbooks-introductions/</a> B.F. Cook, <i>Greek Inscriptions, London</i> , British Museum Publications, 1987. [A brief introduction on the basis of inscriptions in the British Museum] In <a href="https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_Kp806ShRDh8C/page/n11/mode/2up">https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_Kp806ShRDh8C/page/n11/mode/2up</a>  Recommended Reading B.H. McLean 2002. <i>An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great Down to the Reign of Constantine (323 B.C.-A.D. 337)</i> , Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2002.  #2 Epigraphic conventions, sigla, bibliography, Databases, Searching Greek inscriptions; Digital Epigraphy  Required reading <a href="https://saxa-loquuntur.web.rug.nl/sigla-numerals-abbreviations/">https://saxa-loquuntur.web.rug.nl/sigla-numerals-abbreviations/</a> <a href="https://saxa-loquuntur.web.rug.nl/abbreviations-of-corpora-and-publications/">https://saxa-loquuntur.web.rug.nl/abbreviations-of-corpora-and-publications/</a>  #3 Hellenistic and Roman Epigraphy of Crete (Part 1: a general introduction)  Required reading A. Chaniotis, "From Communal Spirit to Individuality. The Epigraphic Habit in Hellenistic and Roman Crete", in: A. Di Vita (ed.) <i>Creta Romana e Protobizantina: Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Iraklion, 23-20 settembre 2000</i> , Padua 2004, 75-87.

4	<p>Saturday, Jan 10</p> <p>TRIP 1</p> <p>Visit: Museum Messaras (<a href="https://messaramuseum.gr/site/index-en.shtml">https://messaramuseum.gr/site/index-en.shtml</a>)</p> <p>Visit: Gortyn (archaeological site)</p> <p>Visit: The “Small Labyrinth” at the vicinity of the village Plouti (Messara) (weather permitting)</p> <p>(Night at Rethymno)</p>	<p>#4 Hellenistic and Roman Epigraphy of Crete (Part 2: types of Greek inscriptions)</p> <p>#5 The Gortyn Law</p> <p>Required reading R.F. Willetts, <i>The Law Code of Gortyn</i>, Berlin 1967. Download from <a href="http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/1/metadata-204-0000000.tkl">anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/1/metadata-204-0000000.tkl</a>.</p> <p>Recommended reading M. Gagarin–P. Perlman, <i>The Laws of Ancient Crete c. 650-400 BCE</i>, Oxford 2016, 47-50</p> <p>#6 The myth of Labyrinth in the Cretan mythology</p> <p>Required reading N. Litinas, “Looking for the Λαβύρινθος Exploring the Maze of Evidence”, 10th IntCretCongr (Khania 2006) A5 (Khania 2011) 455-470.</p>
6	<p>Sunday, Jan 11</p> <p>(Night at Rethymno)</p>	<p>Day off</p>
7	<p>Monday, Jan 12</p> <p>TRIP 2</p> <p>Visit: Archaeological Site of Knossos</p> <p>Visit: Archaeological Museum of Herakleion</p> <p>(Night at Rethymno)</p>	<p>#7 The fascinating fiction of <i>Dictys Cretensis</i></p> <p>Required reading R.M. Frazer, <i>The Trojan War. The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian</i>, Indiana University Press, 1966 (borrow in <a href="https://archive.org/details/trojanwarchronic0000fraz/page/n9/mode/2up">https://archive.org/details/trojanwarchronic0000fraz/page/n9/mode/2up</a>)</p> <p>Recommended reading Gelbart Souza Silva, HISTORY AND NOVEL IN ANTIQUITY: THE CHRONICLES OF DICTYS AND DARES, REVISTA DE LETRAS-JUÇARA 2022, <a href="https://doi.org/10.18817/RLJ.V6I1.2829">https://doi.org/10.18817/RLJ.V6I1.2829</a>, in <a href="https://www.academia.edu/89912738/HISTORY_AND_NOVEL_IN_ANTIQUITY_THE_CHRONICLES_OF_DICTYS_AND_DARES">https://www.academia.edu/89912738/HISTORY_AND_NOVEL_IN_ANTIQUITY_THE_CHRONICLES_OF_DICTYS_AND_DARES</a></p> <p>#8 Hellenistic and Roman history of Crete</p> <p>Required reading P. Perlman, “Crete” in: M.H. Hansen – TH. Nielsen (ed.), <i>An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis</i>, Oxford 2004</p>

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Recommended reading

J.Francis – A. Kouremenos (edd.) *Roman Crete: New Perspectives*, Oxford 2016, i-vi, 1-9, 235-238)

#9 Practice: Discussing the Greek inscriptions of the Museum (if access is granted)

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8	Tuesday, Jan 13	#10 The cultural context of the caves and their inscriptions
	TRIP 3	Required reading
	Visit: village Roumeli	N. Litinas, <i>Inscriptions of the Cave Latsida ston Keramo</i> , Wien 2014. (pdf. 4, pp. 1-2, 11-15, 34-39, 97-105)
	Visit: Melidoni cave	#11 Religious practices in Crete from antiquity to nowadays.
	Visit: Diskouri monastery	#12 Cretan and Crete in the ancient Greek proverbs
	(Night at Rethymno)	Afternoon: Study time and coursework completion

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9	Wednesday, Jan 14	#13 Papyri in the Graeco-Roman world. A general introduction.
	UoC, Room TBD	#14 Papyrological conventions, sigla, bibliography, Databases, Searching Greek papyri; Digital Papyrology
	(Night at Rethymno)	Required reading Roger S. Bagnall, <i>The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology</i> , Oxford 2009, 3-29
		#15 Crete and Cretans abroad (inscriptions, papyri and ostraca)

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10	Thursday, Jan 15	#16 Ostraca and texts on ceramics.
	TRIP 4	Required reading
	Visit: The village of Margarites, and a pottery workshop (weather permitting)	N. Litinas, <i>Greek Ostraca from Chersonesos, Crete</i> , Wien 2008, 25-39, 75-81.
	Visit: Museum of Eleutherna ( <a href="https://mae.uoc.gr/">https://mae.uoc.gr/</a> )	#17 Practice: Discussing the Greek inscriptions of the two Museums (Eleutherna and Arkadi)
	Visit: Arkadi Monastery	

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		( <a href="https://www.arkadimonastery.gr/home.html">https://www.arkadimonastery.gr/home.html</a> )
		(Night at Rethymno)
11	Friday, Jan 16	#18 Documentation of inscriptions. Making squeezes of original inscriptions (permission granted by the Archaeological Service)
	Visit: Fortezza, Rethymnon	Afternoon: Study time and coursework completion
	(Night at Rethymno)	
12	Saturday, Jan 17	#19 Aspects of epigraphic habits from antiquity to nowadays
	TRIP 5	
	Short Visit: Aghios Antonios (small church in the cave near the entrance of Patsos gorge) on the day of the celebration of St. Anthony.	Free afternoon
	(Night at Rethymno)	
13	Sunday, Jan 18	
	TRIP 6	
	Visit: Archaeological Museum of Chania	#20 Practice: Discussing the Greek inscriptions of the Museum
	Visit: Old Town of Chania	Afternoon: Study time and coursework completion
	(Night at Rethymno)	
14	Monday, Jan 19	Study time and coursework completion
	(Night at Rethymno)	
15	Tuesday, Jan 20	Discussion and group presentations
	Visit: <i>Papyri Cretenses</i> in the UoC Library	

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UoC, room TBD

(Night at  
Rethymno)

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16	Wednesday, Jan 21    End of the course (departures)
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*N.B.: The course schedule, in terms of subjects and readings, may be subject to change to benefit student learning and to keep up to date with current research.*

#### **COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY** (Required and Recommended)

R.J.A. Talbert (ed.), *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, Princeton University Press 2001.

<https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691031699/barrington-atlas-of-the-greek-and-roman-world>

P. Perlman, "Crete" in: M.H. Hansen – Th. Nielsen (ed.), *An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis*, Oxford 2004

LGPN I: P.M. Fraser – E. Matthews (edd.), *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, I. The Aegean Islands, Cyprus, Cyrenaica*, Oxford, 1987. Online search in <<https://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/>>

IC: Margarita Guarducci (curavit), *Inscriptiones Creticae. Opera et Consilio Friderici Halbherr Collectae*, R. Istituto di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte, Roma, 1935-1950.

IC I: Tituli Cretae Mediae Praeter Gortynios, 1935; IC II: Tituli Cretae Occidentalis, 1939; IC III: Tituli Cretae Orientalis, 1942; IC IV: Tituli Gortynii, 1950. Download from <<https://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/2/2/0/metadata-203-0000001.tkl>>

Michael Gagarin–Paula Jean Perlman, *The Laws of Ancient Crete c. 650-400 BCE*, Oxford 2016, 47-50

B.F. Cook, *Greek Inscriptions*, London, British Museum Publications, 1987. [A brief introduction on the basis of inscriptions in the British Museum] In [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_Kp806ShRDh8C/page/n11/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_Kp806ShRDh8C/page/n11/mode/2up)

I.F. Sanders, *Roman Crete. An Archaeological Survey and Gazetteer of Late Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine Crete*, Warminster 1982.

B.H. McLean 2002. *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great Down to the Reign of Constantine (323 B.C.-A.D. 337)*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2002.

G.W.M. Harrison, *The Romans and Crete*, Amsterdam 1993.

R.F. Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn*, Berlin 1967. Download from <[anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/2/2/0/metadata-204-0000000.tkl](https://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/2/2/0/metadata-204-0000000.tkl)>.

A. Chaniotis, "Milking the Mountains. Economic Activities on the Cretan Uplands in the Classical and Hellenistic Period", in: A. Chaniotis (ed.), *From Minoan Farmers to Roman Traders. Sidelights on the Economy of Ancient Crete*, Stuttgart 1999, 181-220.

A. Chaniotis, "What difference did Rome make? The Cretans and the Roman Empire", in: B. Forsén – G. Samleri (edd.), *The province Strikes Back: Imperial Dynamics in the Eastern Mediterranean*, Helsinki: The Finnish Institute at Athens 2008, 83-105.

J. Francis – A. Kouremenos (edd.) *Roman Crete: New Perspectives*, Oxford 2016, i-vi, 1-9, 235-238.

N. Litinas, "Looking for the Λαβύρινθος Exploring the Maze of Evidence", 10th IntCretCongr (Khania 2006) A5 (Khania 2011) 455-470.

R.M. Frazer, *The Trojan War. The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*, Indiana University Press, 1966 (borrow in <https://archive.org/details/trojanwarchronic0000fraz/page/n9/mode/2up>).

A. Kouremenos, "In the Heart of the Wine-Dark Sea: Cretan Insularity and Identity in the Roman Period", in: A. Kouremenos (ed.) *Insularity and Identity in the Roman Mediterranean*, Oxford 2018, 41-64.

N. Litinas, *Inscriptions of the Cave Latsida ston Keramo*, Wien 2014, 1-2, 11-15, 34-39, 97-105)

J. Francis – M.J. Curtis (edd.), *Change and transition on Crete interpreting the evidence from the Hellenistic through to the early Byzantine period*, Oxford: Archaeopress Archaeology 2022.

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P. van Minnen, "The Millennium of Papyrology (2001-?)", in B. Palme (ed.), *Akten des 23. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Wien, 22.—28. Juli 2001*, Pap.Vind. 1, Vienna 2007, 703-714.

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<http://web.philo.ulg.ac.be/cedopal/base-de-donnees-mp3/>

<https://papyri.info/>

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