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THE ISLAND OF LAWS

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Abstract: According to the well-known opinion of Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Plato was not familiar with Cretan customs when he wrote the Laws. If we compare the text of Nomoi with Cretan law inscriptions from the 7th-5th centuries, we can conclude that Plato's knowledge of the laws of Cretan poleis was more profound than it had been assumed. It is especially true in the case of the regulation of alcohol consumption on the basis of Laws 666a-b and an inscription from Eleutherna (Nomima II.98; Lupu 323).

Key-words: Platon, Laws, Nomoi, Cretan Laws, Eleutherna, wine.

Minos and Rhadamanthys

The laws and lawgivers of Crete were held in high esteem through the course of ancient history.¹ It is not accidental that the origins of Cretan legislation were associated with the son of Zeus, mythical king Minos himself (at least from the 4th c. BC onwards).² It is also sure that according to the Odyssey (8th/7th c. BC) Minos ruled the island of Crete:

*There is a land called Crete in the midst of the wine-dark sea, a fair rich land, surrounded by water, and there are many men in it, past counting, and ninety cities. They have not all the same speech; their tongues are mixed. There dwell Achaeans, there brave-hearted native Cretans, there Cydonians, and Dorians in three divisions, and noble Pelasgians. Among their cities is the great city Cnossus, where Minos reigned when nine years old, he that held converse with great Zeus...*³

After his death, Minos acted as judge in the Underworld, which could imply that the poet may have heard something about the exceptional law-abiding be-

¹ To this estimation cf. K. Schöpsdau, *Platon Nomoi (Gesetze)*. Übersetzung und Kommentar. I-II. Göttingen 1994-2003, 1, 180: Hdt. 1, 65; Pl. *Cri.* 52e, *Prt.* 342a-e; *R.* 544c3; *Lg.* 683a; 691e ff; *Arist. Pol.* 1269a29 ff; *EN* 1102a 8-11: „Also, the true statesman seems to be one who has made a special study of goodness, since his aim is to make the citizens good and law-abiding men – witness the lawgivers of Crete and Sparta...” Tr. by J. Bywater. As Archilochus (7th c. BC) says: “but the Cretan law is taught” [Bergk, *Fr.* 133]. Polybius is the only one to express a strong contrary opinion, cf. 6, 45.

² Cf. the pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Minos*.

³ *Od.* 19, 172-179. (Tr. by A. T. Murray)

haviour of contemporary Cretans. Odysseus also met the wise king on his descent to the Underworld:

*There, you must know, I saw Minos, the glorious son of Zeus, golden scepter in hand, giving judgement to the dead from his seat, while they sat and stood about the king in the wide-gated house of Hades and asked him for judgement.*⁴

Plato maintains the priority of Minos in legislation, yet the king entrusted his brother Rhadamanthys (and Aeacus) with jurisdiction. However, their role slightly changed in Plato's mind: at first Rhadamanthys and Aeacus prepared the judgement that is made after all by Minos⁵, whereas in the *Laws* Minos is clearly the legislator, Rhadamanthys the judge, and Aeacus is not mentioned at all.⁶ The Athenians, however, had also a different and less attractive image of Minos. He was the father of the bull-headed monster called Minotaur and forced the Athenians to pay a tribute: young boys and girls who were devoured by this terrible creature.⁷ This tyrannical king, who subjugated Athens, (or rather his infamous son) was defeated by Theseus, an Athenian hero. It is small wonder that not only the dramas of Athenian playwrights but also early Attic historians reflect a negative image of Minos.⁸ Crete for Plato, however, is the very island of laws, which is difficult to imagine to have been founded by a cruel tyrant, thus someone in Plato's Academy composed the dialogue *Minos*, which claimed the Cretan king to have been a just lawgiver, whose fame was spoiled by Athenian dramatists partial to Theseus.⁹ The *Laws* apparently follows this image of Minos.

⁴ *Od.* 11, 568-571.

⁵ *Pl. Grg.* 523e; 526c-d; *G. R. Morrow*, *Plato's Cretan City*. New Jersey 1993, 38. According to Ephorus (4th c. BC), Rhadamanthys was the creator of Cretan laws, which were altered by Minos, cf. *Strabo* C 482.

⁶ 624b-625a; 630d; 632d. Aristotle also considers Minos the creator of laws, as it remained in the epitome of his study *On the Constitution of the Cretans* (Heraclides Lembus 14.): "Minos is said to have been the first to establish the Cretan constitution. He was both an effective and a good lawgiver. During the ninth year, he made his revision of the laws."

⁷ We can find traces of this story in *Pl. Lg.* 706b.

⁸ The works of Pherecydes and Hellanicus are referred to by *Morrow*, op. cit. (note 5) 23. Sophocles wrote a trilogy on Cretan myths, which is lost today, yet the titles (*Theseus*, *Daedalus*, *Men of Camicus*) reveal that Minos was not a positive character in it. Presumably, the *Cretans* of Euripides and the *Rhadamanthys* of Critias (or Euripides) are written in the same spirit.

⁹ *Morrow*, op. cit. (note 5) claims that *Minos* is written by Plato, cf. 35-39. To a favourable account of the Cretan king, cf. *Plu. Thes.* 16.

From Drerus to Gortyn

Many archaic texts of Crete survived in inscriptions of stone or bronze. The earliest inscriptions in other areas commemorated the acts of individuals (e.g. the winner of a dancing competition, the happy owner of a drinking vessel that brings love to those who drink of it, or a hero who had died for his homeland)¹⁰, however, such inscriptions in Crete, as Angelos Chaniotis also emphasized it, are not attested in this period (except for that of the boy-lover Herpetidas), though the number and length of legal inscriptions in the island is more than significant.¹¹ If we examine the vast corpus of legal inscriptions from archaic and early classical Greece edited by Henri Van Effenterre and Françoise Ruzé, in the two volumes we find altogether 209 items from 8th to 5th c. BC, though these make in fact 191 independent inscriptions (a long text was published in 18 parts) and not less than 76 items of them are Cretan laws.¹² Considering length, Cretan texts occupy the majority of the two volumes, since the laws of Gortyn (around 450 BC) alone make 620 lines. The chronological distribution of these texts is also interesting. We have genuine legal texts in the 7th c. BC (ie. not much after Homer) only from Crete: altogether twelve inscriptions. This number grows constantly in the following centuries:

7 th c. BC	12
6 th c. BC	20
5 th c. BC	34

Provenance sites are allotted disproportionately.¹³ It is especially spectacular that Cnossus, one of the most significant cities of the island, is hardly represented at all, while Gortyn, the second in significance, provides more inscriptions alone than the rest of Crete altogether.¹⁴ The reason for such disproportion is that no modern city was built on the site of ancient Gortyn, thus it was possible to excavate the complete territory of the ancient town, whereas Iraklion covers archaic Cnossus.¹⁵ We can conclude that the number of Cretan law epi-

¹⁰ IG I² 919; JHS 91 (1971) 67.

¹¹ A. Chaniotis, *Das antike Kreta*. München 2004, 58.

¹² H. van Effenterre–F. Ruzé, *Nomima*. I-II. Roma 1994-1995, E. Lupu, *Greek Sacred Law*. A Collection of New Documents. Leiden–Boston 2005.

Included only one of them (Nr. 22, see below) and two more temple inscriptions from the Hellenistic and Roman era.

¹³ Gortyn: 48; Eleutherna: 8; Drerus: 7; Axus and Lyttus 3-3; Arcades and Eltynia 2-2; Cnossus, Phaestus, and Rhittenia 1-1.

¹⁴ To the significance of Gortyn, cf. Pl. *Lg.* 708a.

¹⁵ Law inscriptions were written on refined stone tablets that were later often built into houses as e.g. threshold. The epigraph did not trouble masons: the surface with writing was easier to stick, thus it was turned towards the binder. Walls of early modern houses unbuilt during the excavation of the Athenian Agora provided more inscriptions than later periods of the excavation.

graphs used to be considerably higher than the number of those we know today.

The earliest extant law inscription of the ancient Greek world (around 650 BC) was found in the agora of Drerus, a town in Eastern Crete.¹⁶

“May God be kind.

This has been decided by the city: When a man has been Kosmos, for ten years that same man shall not be Kosmos. If he should become Kosmos, whatever judgements he gives, he himself shall owe double, and he shall be useless as long as he lives, and what he does as Kosmos shall be as nothing.

v v The swearers (to this shall be) the Kosmos, the Damioi and the Twenty of the city. v v”

The aim of the code is obvious. No man can occupy the highest office more than once in every ten years.¹⁷ Should anyone break this law, his right to hold office is forfeited. It is a lot more interesting that this short epigraph inscribed in stone with scrawly letters reveals almost the whole constitutional system of Drerus. The head of the city was called Kosmos, who was a military and political leader as well as a judge. He summoned the assembly (which is now called simply polis, ie. the assembly of the polis), he proposed bills, and he was also responsible for public cults. The name of the office refers to the order that he had to maintain in the army and in everyday life.¹⁸ Besides the Kosmos, the *Damioi* and the Twenty of the city assembly also swore a public oath. Their function are not fully revealed. *Damos* means township, a settlement belonging to the polis, thus *Damioi* may have represented their own village.¹⁹ The Twenty were a numerically determined council. It is remarkable that we know three Cretan poleis (Axus, Cnossus, Tylissus) where the council was called *bola* (equivalent to Athenian *bule*), yet in Rhittenia we encounter a council of elderly (*preigistoi*).²⁰ This is in accordance with the report of Ephorus, who claims that one has to hold the office of the cosmos first to become a member of the council.²¹

The site where the inscription of Drerus was found is even more interesting. The earliest agora of the Greek world was built in Drerus, and it is surrounded

¹⁶ Ch. W. Fornara, *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War*. Cambridge 1977, 11; Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) 81.

¹⁷ Cosmos in Plato is called *cosmetes*, cf. *Lg.* 755c. A cosmos could be re-elected after three years in Gortyn in the 6th century, cf. Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) 82. According to Aristoteles and Ephorus, there were ten cosmoi (*Pol.* 1272a; Strabo C 484), however, inscriptions refer to 3 to 10 cosmoi, cf. S. Link, *Das griechische Kreta*. Stuttgart, 1994, 97; *Chaniotis*, op. cit. (note 11) 66.

¹⁸ Thus cosmos still means world order.

¹⁹ In Attica, cf. *demos* and its leader: *demarchos*.

²⁰ Cf. Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) I. 7; 63.

²¹ Strabo C 484.

by stone steps on three sides (since it is situated between the two Acropoleis of the city). On one side, there was temple of Apollo on a rock platform. The stone with law inscriptions was built into the basement of the temple, at eye level. The law was thus put under the protection of Apollo (as it is often referred to in the *Laws*)²², and it was situated on the edge of the sacred sphere and the political sphere (the agora being the location of the assembly).²³ The law, which must have been considered of special importance, was always to the fore for members of the assembly.

The earliest Cretan laws (7th c. BC) tried to control various problems. One fixed the requirements of citizenship in Gortyn, another one from Drerus determined the school semester for the *agelai*, bands to train the youth,²⁴ and all the others, from homicide to pasturing, from communal dining (*andreion*) to the duration of hunting season, from oaths to the protection of flowing rivers, controlled numerous important issues.²⁵ In this period not even a single law inscription is attested in any other part of the Greek world.²⁶

However, the aforementioned ones are not the most representative pieces of Cretan law inscriptions. The huge legal corpus of Gortyn (620 lines) was found at the end of the 19th century on the rear wall of the Roman odeon. There was a special building in the agora, the peers of which can be attested in Southern Italy: the round, theatrical halls of the assembly (*ekklesiasterion*) in Metapontion and Poseidonia.²⁷ In Gortyn a large (33.3 m in diameter), rotund hall was built sometime before 480 BC, the central part of which was open. The laws were inscribed inside, on the concave surface of the wall in the middle of the 5th century, yet the laws themselves probably date back to earlier periods. The laws of Gortyn provide us the largest inscription and the longest legal text in Greek. The citizens of Gortyn had their code always at hand while having a meeting, thus the sessions were held in the hall of the assembly, in the focal point of laws. Romans built the auditorium of an odeon onto this round building, which

²² Pl. *Lg.* 624a; 632d; 686a; 691e; 696b; 738c; 759c; etc.

²³ K.-J. Hölkeskamp, Tempel, Agora und Alphabet. Die Entstehungsbedingungen von Gesetzgebung in der archaischen Polis. In: H.-J. Gehrke (ed.), Rechtskodifizierung und soziale Normen in interkulturellen Vergleich. Tübingen 1994, 135-162. 141.

²⁴ Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) I. 68. Plato makes several references to *agelai*, cf. *Lg.* 666e; 680e. Public education existed not only in Sparta but also in Crete (804c-e), just as the *paidonomos*, cf. Ephorus, *FGrHist* 70 F 149 = Strabo C 484; Arist. *Pol.* 1300a 4-6. Schöpsdau, op. cit. (note 1) 2, 553.

²⁵ To Cretan laws from the 7th c. BC, cf. Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) I. 66; 68; II. 10; 11; 22; 23; 61; 78; 89; 92; 93.

²⁶ Draco's homicide law (621 BC) is known from a copy made in 408 BC, whereas the oath of the founders of Cyrene was copied even later.

²⁷ Ancient Crete. A Hundred Years of Italian Archeology (1884-1984). Rome 1984, 42.

kept the laws safe. The inscription is 9 m in length, 1.5 m in height and it is divided into 12 columns. The corpus includes paragraphs of only civil law (paragraphs dealing with individuals, families, inheritance, possession, and debt). Several parts of the text reveal that it is composed of earlier, amended laws. The code helps us understand much of the structure of the society in Gortyn in the 5th century.

The structure of the code: 1, 2 - 2, 2: lawsuits of slaves; 2, 2 - 2, 45: crimes of sexual nature (raping, adultery, etc.); 2, 45 - 3, 16: law of property for divorced women; 3, 17 - 3, 37: proceeding in case of the death of spouse; 3, 37 - 3, 40: fines; 3, 40 - 3, 44: cessation of marriage (divorce, death) for *woikei* (sing. *woikeus* – Cretan peasant, similar to helots in Sparta); 3, 44 - 4, 23: illegitimate children; 4, 23 - 5, 9: division of property among children belonging to the family; 5, 9 - 5, 54: division of property among inheritors; 6, 1 - 6, 2: donation of father to his daughter; 6, 2 - 6, 46: selling or pledging family property; 6, 46 - 6, 55: ransom for prisoners; 6, 55 - 7, 10: children from mixed marriage; 7, 10 - 7, 15: damage caused by purchased slaves; 7, 15 - 9, 24: legal status of a heiress in matrimonial and property law; 9, 24 - 9, 40: commitments a deceased person had made; 9, 40 - 9, 43: sons as guarantors; 9, 43 - 9, 54: regaining debts under special conditions; 10, 14 - 10, 25: presents; 10, 25 - 10, 32: inalienability of individuals; 10, 33 - 11, 23: adoption; 11, 24 - 12, 19: supplemental measures.

The texts of the Gortyn Code (including not only the great inscription but numerous other, earlier documents as well) reveals the following social structure. Government and executive power were in the hands of the elected magistrates called *kosmoi*, assisted by also elected *titai* (sing. *titas*). *Titai* were monetary supervisors, who collected fines. There was a *kosmos* in Gortyn called *xenios* dealing with the issues of foreigners, who could be re-elected only after five years.²⁸ Years were recorded according to the first *kosmos* (*protokosmos*, like the *archon eponymos* in Athens). The council of elderly and (in a limited way) the popular assembly had the right to take part in political issues.²⁹ The decisions of the *kosmoi* and the council had to be submitted to the assembly for confirmation. Citizens were divided into *phylai* (*pyla*) and tribes (*startos*). Male citizens forming groups (*hetaireia*) participated in community dining (*andreion*). Thus free inhabitants without citizenship were called *apetairoi*, ie. not members of a *hetaireia*. The lands (*klaros*) of citizens were cultivated by *woikeis*, whose social position was similar to that of the Spartan helots. Only

²⁸ Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) I. 82.

²⁹ The council of elderly (*preigistoi*) is known only from a treaty between Rhittenia and Gortyn, cf. Nomima, op. cit. (note 12) I. 7. The council also oversaw the actions of the *kosmoi*.

the members of the most influential and richest families could become kosmoi, thus they were rather delegated than formally elected. Limiting re-election secured the opportunity to members of each family to hold the highest office.

In footnotes I referred to the aforementioned oligarchic social structure and the elements of the Gortyn code whenever they appeared in Plato's Magnesia. It is inevitable that foreigners visiting Crete in the 7th-5th centuries BC noticed not only the longer or shorter law inscriptions in public places but also the fact that other types of inscriptions are much less frequent. Consequently, it is not exclusively because of the (changing) fame of Minos that Crete was regarded as the island of laws in the Greek world.

Plato's sources

Our preliminary question is the following: did Plato know these laws? If yes, what were his sources? The works of Homer were the foundation of Greek education in the 5th-4th century BC, thus Plato must have heard about the name of Minos and about the settlements in the island "of the hundred cities" as a young boy.

*And the Cretans had as leader Idomeneus, famed for his spear, even they that held Cnosus and Gortys, famed for its walls, Lyctus and Miletus and Lycastus, white with chalk, and Phaestus and Rhytium, well-peopled cities; and all they beside that dwelt in Crete of the hundred cities. Of all these was Idomeneus, famed for his spear, captain, and Meriones, the peer of Enyalios, slayer of men.*³⁰

Plato's family may well have had some fancy to Crete, since probably his uncle Critias (protagonist in one of his dialogues) was the author of the tragic drama *Rhadamanthys*.³¹ However, no ancient source testifies that he had ever visited the island, even though it is difficult to imagine his journey to Egypt without stopping at Crete. The circuit to the island while on the way to Sicily (assumed by Effenterre) seems to be an improbable suggestion to me.³² The relationship of Plato and Crete became highlighted after Wilamowitz-Moellendorff laid down in his book on Plato that the distinguished philosopher had no idea at all about Cretan conditions.³³ Many scholars attempted to refute the summary judgement of the *pater philologiae*. Angelos Chaniotis, a professor in Oxford of Cretan origin and researching also Cretan inscriptions, drew the attention that the foot-walk from Cnossus to the cave of Zeus on Mt. Ida (described at the beginning

³⁰ *Il.* 2, 645-651. (Tr. by A. T. Murray)

³¹ An alternative theory claims that the play was written by Euripides.

³² H. van Effenterre, *La Crète et le monde Grec de Platon à Polybe*. Paris 1968, 67-68; Morrow, *op. cit.* (note 5) 25.

³³ U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Platon I*. Berlin 1920. 661; 686.

of the *Laws*) used to be indeed covered by woods until the 17th century, when invading Venetians cut cypress and cedar trees.³⁴ Therefore the comparison of Plato's description and the modern surroundings can be misleading. Morrow enumerated all institutions and customs minutely described by the imaginary founder of the Magnesian settlement, and concluded that Plato was indeed well-informed about Cretan circumstances.³⁵ Morrow mentions communal dining (625c), application of archers and light-armed troops instead of cavalry and heavy infantry (625d; 834b), pederasty (636b; 836b), the martial nature of training (626a-b), calling their homeland motherland (*metris*) beside fatherland (*patris*),³⁶ the ignorance of foreign poets (680c; 629b), neglecting mathematics (818e), regulation of poetry and dance (660b), etc.

Yet Effenterre makes a sobering remark claiming that similarities between Cretan law and Plato's text do not prove that the *Laws* follow a Cretan pattern.³⁷ There are many customs found both in Cretan and Platonic regulations that are shared by almost all Greeks (e.g. rape, exposure of children, monogamy). In some other instances Cretan and Platonic laws coincide, yet they differ from the practice of other Greek poleis (certain regulations concerning last will and female inheritors)³⁸, and in some cases Plato contradicts well-known Cretan laws (marital age of girls, individual property of consorts, adoption beside living children, guardianship).³⁹ Even if we can see the similarities only between the laws of Plato and those of Crete, we should remember that most Greek laws are lost or extant in fragmentary form and we have the largest comparative material right from Crete. Notwithstanding, the abundance of similarities compel us to accept that Plato did know Cretan laws profoundly. Yet is it possible only if he had visited the island and examined the law inscriptions himself? The answer is definitely no.

Besides Plato, other authors also dealt with Crete. Strabo, for example, cites a lengthy quotation from Ephorus' description of Cretan laws.⁴⁰ Apart from some remarkable differences, his text shows convincing similarities with the notes of Plato and Aristotle.⁴¹ The latter makes reference to Crete in *Politics*

³⁴ "True, Stranger; and as one proceeds further one finds in the groves cypress-trees of wonderful height and beauty, and meadows too, where we may rest ourselves and talk." Pl. *Lg.* 625c. (Tr. by R. G. Bury.) *Chaniotis*, op. cit. (note 11) 12-13.

³⁵ *Morrow*, op. cit. (note 5) 28-31.

³⁶ Pl. *R.* 452c.

³⁷ *Effenterre*, op. cit. (note 32) 60-62.

³⁸ Pl. *Lg.* 923d; 925c; 878a; 929c; 924e.

³⁹ Pl. *Lg.* 784a; 806a; 923b; 774e. These measures are against the regulations found in the Gortyn Code.

⁴⁰ C 480-481.

⁴¹ *Morrow*, op. cit. (note 5) 22.

(1271b) and in the fragments of the *Constitutions*. Morrow did a valuable research to clear the questions of chronology: Plato cannot follow Ephorus, since the latter published his work some years after the *Laws*. However, Aristotle was still a member of Plato's Academy when he started collecting Cretan sources for his *Politics*, which may reflect the influence of an old Plato, since conversation must have often shifted to Crete while the *Laws* was being composed.⁴² Concerning communal dining, we know e.g. the report of Dosiadas from his lost *History of Crete*, which testifies that (unlike in Sparta) the Cretan *andreion* was financially supported by public budget.⁴³ The *Cretica* (around 400 BC) written by Charon of Lampsacus portrayed Minos as legislator.⁴⁴ Yet the sources of Plato and Aristotle were not necessarily only written ones. We hear about Cretans in contemporary Athens, e.g. Nikias from Gortyn, a guest of Athens, or Cretan archers fighting for Athens in the Peloponnesian War.⁴⁵ We even know that there was at least one Cretan member of the Academy in Plato's old age.⁴⁶ Theudius of Magnesia (in Asia Minor) could inform Plato and Aristotle about the site of Cretan Magnesia and its relation to its namesake in Asia Minor, since in this period he was in Plato's Academy as a mathematician.⁴⁷ For those who are still not convinced about the authenticity of the information in the work of the Athenian philosopher, I quote Plato's measure on drinking wine: "Shall we not pass a law that, in the first place, no children under eighteen may touch wine at all, teaching that it is wrong to pour fire upon fire either in body or in soul, before they set about tackling their real work, and thus guarding against the excitable disposition of the young? And next, we shall rule that the young man under thirty may take wine in moderation, but that he must entirely abstain from intoxication and heavy drinking. But when a man has reached the age of forty, he may join in the convivial gatherings and invoke Dionysus, above all other gods, inviting his presence at the rite (which is also the recreation) of the elders, which he bestowed on mankind as a medicine potent against the crabbedness of old age, that thereby we men may renew our youth, and that, through forgetfulness of care, the temper of our souls may lose its hardness and become softer and more ductile, even as iron when it has been

⁴² Morrow, op. cit. (note 5) 20-23. It is indeed unusual that Aristotle referred to Cretan laws as if they had been uniformed everywhere in the island. To the contrary, *Chaniotis* (op. cit. [note 11] 74-77) emphasizes that there were several types of e.g. subdued agricultural people, and there was a considerable variation in the terms applied to them in certain poleis (*klarotas*, *woikeus*, *hypooikos*, *mnoitas*, *aphamiotas*, *katakeimenos*, *nenikamenos*).

⁴³ *Athenaeus* 143a-d.

⁴⁴ At least according to *Chaniotis*, op. cit. (note 11) 78.

⁴⁵ *Thucydides* 2, 85, 5; 6, 43; 7, 57.

⁴⁶ Morrow, op. cit. (note 5) 27; *Effenterre*, op. cit. (note 32) 71.

⁴⁷ Proclus' *Commentary on Euclid* is cited by Morrow 31.

forged in the fire.”⁴⁸ Consequently, although the laws of the Magnesians ordered total prohibition of drinking alcohol for youth, over forty it was allowed to get even drunk in proper company and in honour of god Dionysus. This measure is strikingly similar to the one we can read in an inscription of Eleutherna found in 1987: “One shall not drink. [- - -] an adult (*dromeus*) at Dion Akron, drinking at a symposium shall drink (*syninpinonta*).”⁴⁹ Effenterre, the editor of the text notes that we have no similar regulation except the aforementioned citation from the *Laws*. It is difficult not to presume that the Athenian philosopher had known about this Cretan tradition recorded in the 6th century BC. Whatever the source, the information that he received proved to be correct. Relying upon these findings, we do not need extraordinary courage to say that prospective Cretan discoveries shall provide further parallels to the vast material of the twelve books of the *Laws*. Nevertheless, we can surely claim already that the best location for Plato’s Magnesia was positively Crete: in spite of the summary judgement of Wilamowitz, we can ascertain that Plato had thorough if not direct knowledge of the island of laws.

⁴⁸ Pl. *Lg.* 666a-c.

⁴⁹ Nomima op. cit. (note 12) II. 98; *Lupu*, op. cit. (note 12) 323. Late 6th c. BC. The mount of Zeus lies at the border of Eleutherna and Axus, so Effenterre assumes that the measure concerns a garrison of frontier sentry, yet the text of the inscription does not confirm his theory. The second part of the epigraph is fragmentary, *Lupu* reads (op. cit. [note 12] 324): “Nor shall the priest. But if he performs cult for the god ---”