



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ  
UNIVERSITY OF CRETE



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ - HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού και Αθλητισμού  
Ministry of Culture and Sports



# Press Release

## CRETAN CITIES THE TESTIMONY OF COINS

JUNE 30 – DECEMBER 15, 2019  
MUSEUM OF ANCIENT ELEUTHERNA

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY:  
THE UNIVERSITY OF CRETE  
THE EPHORATE OF ANTIQUITIES OF RETHYMNO  
THE MUSEUM OF ANCIENT ELEUTHERNA  
THE ALPHA BANK NUMISMATIC COLLECTION

On Sunday, June 30, 2019, the temporary exhibition “**CRETAN CITIES. THE TESTIMONY OF THE COINS**” will open at the Museum of ancient Eleutherna. The Exhibition is jointly organised by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Rethymno/Museum of ancient Eleutherna, the University of Crete and the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection.

The Exhibition presents the coinage of ancient Cretan cities and the circulation of coins on the island, in order to shed light on aspects of these cities’ history at a time that remains somewhat obscure to research, that of the Classical and Hellenistic times.

Coins are indisputable witnesses to social developments, while the study of their iconography reveals important historical data relating to religion and cult practices, to the economy, as well as to contacts, commercial or other, even alliances forged both between the cities themselves and with the rest of the Mediterranean world – and beyond. The study of numismatics shows that, in historical times, city-states existed in Crete that were defined by indigenous populations, self-sufficiency and a distinct local identity. It is estimated that forty mints operated in Crete during the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

The Exhibition is structured along two thematic sections.

The first section presents the coins of ancient Cretan cities along the lines of Crete’s current geographic division into four Prefectures. The tour begins from the west, in the Prefecture of Chania, continues to the Prefecture of Rethymno, then moves on to the Prefecture of Herakleio and concludes at the eastern part of the island, in the Prefecture of Lassithi.

The second section indicatively presents the circulation of coins in Crete. Foreign coins reached the island mainly through the mercenary activities of Cretans in military operations carried out by the great powers of the Hellenistic period, as well as through the presence of foreign troops in Crete. Foreign coin issues were hoarded and several of these were overstruck – that is, they were used as flans to mint local coins.

The 124 coins on loan from the four Ephorates of Antiquities of Crete (Herakleio, Lassithi, Rethymno and Chania) and the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection, highlight aspects of the island’s history during the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

## **ORGANISATION - SUPERVISION**

Professor Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis, Professor of Archaeology in the University of Crete, Director of Excavations/Research Centre, Museum of ancient Eleutherna  
Dr Dimitra Tsangari, Numismatist, Curator of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection  
Dr Mimika Giannopoulou, Archaeologist, Executive Member of the Board of Directors, Head of the Division of Cultural Products, Archaeological Resources Fund

## **MUSEOLOGICAL DESIGN**

Dr Mimika Giannopoulou  
Dr Dimitra Tsangari

## **ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AND GRAPHICS**

Stamatis Zannos

## **COMMUNICATION MATERIAL AND CATALOGUE DESIGN**

Tatiana Vaitsou

## **EXHIBITION DURATION:**

**June 30 – December 15, 2019**

The Exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, in Greek and English, containing rich photographic material.

The Exhibition is complemented by:

- the Coin-o-rama, a multimedia application developed by the Institute of Computer Science (ICS) of the Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH), which offers visitors blow-up images of the coins on display and additional information about them. The application also enables visitors 'to make their own coin'.
- the digital projection of coin circulation in Crete, developed by Tassos Bellas/Radiant Technologies.

## **Museum of ancient Eleutherna**

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Athens, June 12, 2019