

Returning to Our European Shamanic Roots

A Spiritual Retreat on Crete

May 12-18, 2012

with

Robinette Kennedy, Ph.D.

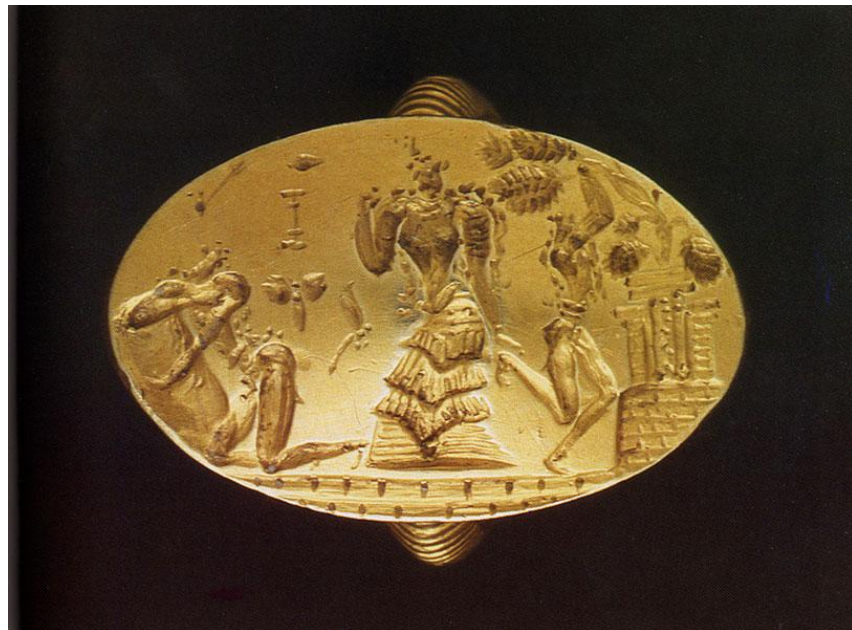
Join me this spring in one of the Mediterranean's wildest places to bring to life a shamanistic practice embodied in the sacred art of prehistoric Crete.

Your visionary experiences will nurture mind, body and soul through spiritual poses celebrated on Crete during the beginnings of European culture.

A Prehistoric Spiritual Practice

According to two papyrus scrolls, the Egyptians referred to their neighbors from Crete as the Keftiu, the "eagle conjurers" whom the pharaoh summoned to bring their "herbs and healing chants."

After Bronze Age Crete fell around 1100 BCE, legends of the Minoans as soothsayers and diviners lived on, but the details of their specific spiritual practices for healing and guidance were lost. A century ago, Sir Arthur Evans found a treasure trove of sacred art at Knossos, confirming that shamanic consciousness was indeed a part of Minoan culture.



*Gold ring from Bronze Age Crete, scene of ritual in progress.
(From the skeleton of a woman whose burial goods suggest she may have been a shamana.)*

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The Bee Spirit Pose

This retreat, based upon my original research, reconstructs how the Minoans may have entered altered states of consciousness through neurological changes generated by yoga-like poses. Retreat participants will learn how to perform five of the 13 poses I've identified, studied and taught to thousands of people since 1992.

The setting for this profound spiritual journey is a remote, stunningly beautiful mountain sanctuary in southwestern Crete, surrounding **Milia Mountain Retreat**: a completely off-the-grid, restored 17th century stone village, a perfect place to find the simplicity and stillness needed to absorb your visionary experiences.



Milia Mountain Retreat



*Cottage interior at Milia Mountain Retreat in
Southwestern Crete*

Each evening, our group will gather outdoors or in Milia's Community Room to practice rituals centered around a pose from Crete (learning a new pose each day.) Later, we will enjoy sumptuous candlelight dinners prepared by Milia's award-winning kitchen.

Each day, you will savor a generous breakfast while taking in the panorama of Milia's nature preserve for falcons, eagles and rare vultures. Then, we'll meet in a council circle (outdoors when possible) to explore the emerging body of knowledge created by our collective heightened awareness. Group sharing will be guided by gentle, skilled facilitation that supports you in exploring the meaning of your visions.

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View from Milia Mountain Retreat

In lecture/discussions, you'll learn the spiritual archaeology and energetic context of the poses and how to use the poses' shamanic actions in a variety of ways such as healing, celebration, transformation, and so on. Always, our goal will be to develop appropriate ways to take our gifts back to our families and communities.

Each day after lunch, you will enjoy a long break with unstructured time for napping, contemplation, writing, drawing, resting or exploring the many trails that wind through the Milia grounds and out into the mountains.

The deeper meanings of your insights, connections to nature and spiritual guidance received during the retreat are threads of awareness to weave into more purposeful ways of living. As each of us is healed, we heal our relationships with loved ones, our communities and the earth.

I hope to see you at Milia Mountain Retreat in May.

Sincerely,
Robinette Kennedy



Pose from Phaistos

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Re-Discovering Sacred Poses from Prehistoric Crete

The poses are performed in a safe, respectful atmosphere with sacred intentions. After each participant is comfortably in the pose, they remain in the pose while listening for 45 minutes to specific percussion from a drum or rattle. Each pose generates visionary themes and energetic sensations unique to that pose. The effects of each pose correspond to a specific point in the earth's seasonal round. Together, the visionary content of all 13 poses form a calendar for the soul on its journey to wholeness.

The ritual actions of the five poses you'll perform during the Milia retreat help to align your soul with the energetic phases and spiritual opportunities of late winter (emerging from the underworld) and early spring (spiritual rebirth).



Figurine that was part of ritual artifacts buried in the Temple Repositories beneath Knossos, approx. 1450 BCE.

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Robinette is a visionary and a clinical anthropologist. All her ancestors were Irish and Welsh, yet the first time she set foot on Crete she felt as though she had come home.

As a graduate student in the mid 1970's, Robinette was the first non-Greek to live in the mountain hamlet on Crete where she studied women's lives. Contrary to views in the social sciences at the time (that women and children in such contexts have no friendship ties), Robinette discovered that women's strong, rich friendships existed but were largely hidden from view because they were perceived as a threat to Crete's patriarchal culture. Yet, resources from women's underground support networks are what kept life going in the village. Her research was published in *Gender and Power in Rural Greece* (J. Dubisch, ed., Princeton University Press, 1986).

In the early 1990's Robinette became intrigued by another dimension of Crete's culture. Expanding upon the work of the late German anthropologist Felicitas Goodman, Robinette began her own research into the spiritual practices of prehistoric Crete. Once again, her findings challenged conventional paradigms, and she is now completing a book about how a shamanic practice embodied in the sacred art of prehistoric Crete can heal Western culture.

Since 1981 in private practice in Atlanta, Georgia, Robinette works with people drawn to the healing benefits of safe, non-toxic, diverse ways of perceiving realities. She also teaches the poses to larger audiences in North America and Greece. And near her home in the Appalachian Mountains, she guides people in deep soul wilderness experiences. She especially enjoys extended stays at her village home on Crete, where she is blessed by a close circle of friends, neighbors and colleagues.

Robinette is also co-founder of **Wild Crete Travel, LLC**, a travel company that specializes in unique and personalized custom tours on Crete and other parts of Greece since 1997. Founders and tour leaders, Patricia Kyritsi Howell and Robinette Kennedy, have lived part time on Crete for many years. They are known for their ability to immerse guests in the essence of the island's art, culture, history, cuisine, archaeology and wild places.

Robinette was most recently featured in Sacred Hoop issue 72. We have attached a PDF of the article for your convenience.

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Itinerary Details

Day 1 Saturday, 12 May

18:00 hr. arrive Milia Mountain Retreat.

Introductions and orientation followed by candlelight dinner.

Day 2 Sunday, 13 May

09:00 hr. Following breakfast, gather outdoors or in the Community Room for a lecture/discussion: *The Shamanistic Landscape of Prehistoric Crete*. Coffee break and reconvene to learn how to perform the first pose to be experienced in the evening's ritual.

13:00 hr: Lunch and afternoon break.

18:00 hr: Community Room: Through visions generated by the first pose of the week, we Dream/vision together as the pose facilitates our safe return from the underworld.

21:00 hr: Candlelight dinner and bedtime on your own.

Day 3 Monday, 14 May

09:00 hr. We co-create a council circle where everyone may safely and respectfully explore last night's dreams and visions. Coffee break and reconvene to begin developing our action plans to bring medicine power of our visions "into the world for the people to see" (Wallace Black Elk.) Introduction to 2nd pose.

13:00 hr. Lunch and afternoon break

18:00 hr. Milia Community Room: Ritual and the second pose. (Artifacts of this pose found in 35 places around the Aegean.)

21:00hr: Dinner and bedtime.

Day 4 Tuesday, 15 May

09:00 hr. Council circle sharing about the larger stories unfolding as we recover from spiritual amnesia. Coffee break and reconvene for introduction to the 3rd pose, one that releases the powerful spiritual energies of mid-Spring.

13:00 hr: Lunch and afternoon break.

18:00 hr: Community Room: Ritual and experiencing the 3rd pose.

21:00 hr: Dinner and bedtime.

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Day 5 Wednesday, 16 May

09:00 hr. Circle beneath the olive trees on mountain side overlooking Milia's cottages: to discover how last night's visions relate to the springtime miracle of Creation in our own lives and purpose. Coffee break and introduction to 4th pose.

13:00 hr: Lunch, afternoon break.

18:00 hr: Milia Community Room: Ritual and 4th pose.

21:00 hr: Dinner and bedtime.

Day 6 Thursday, 17 May

09:00 hr. At a quiet place in the mountains, we'll co-create a closing ritual for the evening, when we celebrate 5th pose: one that was embodied in Cretan figurines for 4,000 years.

13:00 hr: Lunch and afternoon break.

18:00 hr: Community Room: The fifth pose and a closing ritual.

21:00 hr: Candlelight celebration dinner and goodbyes.

Day 7 Friday, 18 May.

10:00 hr: The retreat ends during breakfast. Farewell.

Transfers from Milia to Chania.



Chania Harbor

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Rates

The price quoted for the workshop with Robinette Kennedy is as quoted. However, prices for lodging and meals at Mila, and transportation costs in Greece may change between now and May, 2012. We reserve the right to alter rates for these items by giving notice in writing at any time between now and May, 2012. For current exchange rates, visit www.xe.com

Please Note: All deposit payments for the workshop portion of the retreat will be held in escrow until a minimum of 10 participants have registered. By December 20, 2011 if fewer than 10 participants have registered, we reserve the right to cancel the retreat and refund your full deposit.

Final Payment

In order to guarantee your place in the spiritual retreat, final payment for the workshop must be received no later than January 1st, 2012. If final payment is not received by this date, your reservation is automatically canceled, and your deposit forfeited. Once your final payment is made, no refunds of any kind will be issued.

Cancellation & Refund Policy

A \$250.00 deposit per workshop attendee is required. Balance of payment is due no later than January 1, 2012. Written requests for a deposit refund must be received before December 20, 2011. After this date, no refunds will be issued. Please allow 30 days for refund requests to be processed.

The price of this itinerary includes only the items, services and activities listed below. No refunds will be issued for portions of the retreat itinerary in which you choose not to participate for any reason. Please note Milia's policies regarding refunds for cancelled accommodations: www.milia.gr.

Double & Single Occupancy

All accommodations are double occupancy unless you reserve a single room when you make your reservations at Milia. Unless two people request each other as roommates, roommates of the same gender will be randomly assigned by Milia. If a roommate is not available (due to late registration or the number of people in the group), you are responsible for paying for a single room. If for any reason, at any time, you decide not to share a room with your assigned or requested roommate, and another single room is available, you will be responsible for paying Milia all additional fees for the cost difference between one double occupancy room and two single rooms.

Flights to Greece and Crete

The price of this tour does not include airfare. Flights from various cities in Europe are available to Chania (airport code CHQ, sometimes spelled Hania), Crete, Greece. The cost of a one-way flight (45 minutes) between Athens and Crete on Greek carriers is approximately €90 (\$125.00) each way.

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You may also choose to fly into Iraklion (sometimes spelled Heraklion), Crete. Iraklion is a 2 hour drive from Chania (and an additional hour's drive from Chania to Milia.) Public buses (4-5 hours) travel between Iraklion.

Transportation to and from Malia Eco-Lodge

There is no public transportation to and from Milia. Milia is a 45-60 minute drive from the Chania airport. We will arrange the option for a group transfer from the Chania airport to Milia on Saturday, May 12 (cost: approximately €30.) Departure time of the group transfer will accommodate arrival times of a majority of retreat participants.

All retreat participants must arrive at the airport in Hania, Crete by 12:00 hr., Saturday, 12 May, 2012.

If your arrival time on Crete doesn't coincide with the time of the group transfer, we'll gladly discuss other options with you before you finalize your travel plans. Guests arriving after 12:00 hr. will be responsible for their own transportation. A one-way taxi transfer from the airport to Milia is approximately €85 per taxi, maximum three passengers.

We strongly recommend that you contact us before booking your flights, so that we may help you to determine if your arrival and departure plans conform to our planned travel schedule.

The Retreat ends after breakfast Friday, May 18, 2012.

Group transfers (approximately €30 per person) or private taxis (approximately €85 per taxi, maximum three passengers) may be arranged from Milia to Chania or the airport.

Athens, Santorini and Beyond

Are you flying overnight to Crete? Then, you may enjoy arriving in Greece a few days before the retreat begins with time to site see and recover from jet lag in Athens or Crete. We will gladly make suggestions and arrangements for transportation, hotels and guides anywhere in Greece before or after your visit to Crete. Contact us for details.

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Is this Trip for You?

Our approach to travel is unusual. Unusual, in how we carve out time for daydreaming, naps and reflection. In the possibilities to taste, touch, smell and see what it means to live in an ecologically sound way, in a modern culture that still cherishes tradition. And, in how we meld intriguing archaeological seminars with profound visionary experiences.

Much of our time at Milia will be spent out of doors. Some part of the day's activities may involve walking. Participation in this trip requires the ability to walk at least one mile at a moderate pace without physical discomfort.

The island of Crete is basically a mountain range protruding from the Aegean Sea, and everywhere seems to be steeply uphill or downhill. Most excursions involve walking some distance. So, our events on Crete are best described as strenuous. Vigorous physical fitness is a must, as we cannot provide alternative motorized transportation, and we would not want to leave anyone out of any activity due to difficulties with accessibility.

We welcome anyone who enjoys being part of a small, intimate group with all the inherent challenges and benefits. Are you culturally flexible? Do you enjoy different foods, people, customs and activities? We welcome guests who are willing to respect general behavior guidelines and manner of dress that local residents of rural Crete consider appropriate.

If this all sounds good to you, and you enjoy safe, meaningful, worry-free travel, we hope you'll join us on Crete in 2012.

Milia Mountain Retreat: Your gracious Milia hosts will treat you as an honored guest during your stay in a charming room restored to perfection and furnished with Cretan antiques.

Because we want to introduce you to the Cretan way of life, we invite you to be ready to live as if you are a resident of rural Crete. Electricity and water services at Milia are supplied by various sources of harnessed electricity such as solar, wind and hydro power. Candles are available in each room to supplement these sources. Plentiful wood-fired hot water is available at sunset.

Your accommodations do not include room service, TV, telephones in the room, or a 24-hour front desk. Depending upon weather conditions, free Wi-Fi internet service is available in the Milia dining room.

We'll enjoy all our meals served family style in Milia's restaurant. Breakfasts offer a selection of home-made breads, preserves, cheese, olives, meats, fruits and eggs. Most ingredients are organic and produced at Milia or nearby.

Lunch and dinner selections are based on traditional recipes using the freshest seasonal ingredients available from the Milia farm or local sources. Wine and beer are available.

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To Register

1. To request a registration form and send an email to hold your space for 24 hours while you complete the forms please contact: robinettekennedy@windstream.net
2. Complete and return the **Wild Crete Travel Registration Form** and return with a \$250.00 deposit payment per participant.
3. Balance of \$250 is due before January 1st, 2012. Please read the RATES section below for important details about the cost of this retreat.
4. Contact us to learn payment options: robinettekennedy@windstream.net



Along the trails at Milia Mountain Retreat



Ruins along the south coast of Crete near Milia Mountain Retreat



Milia Mountain Retreat cottage with sitting room