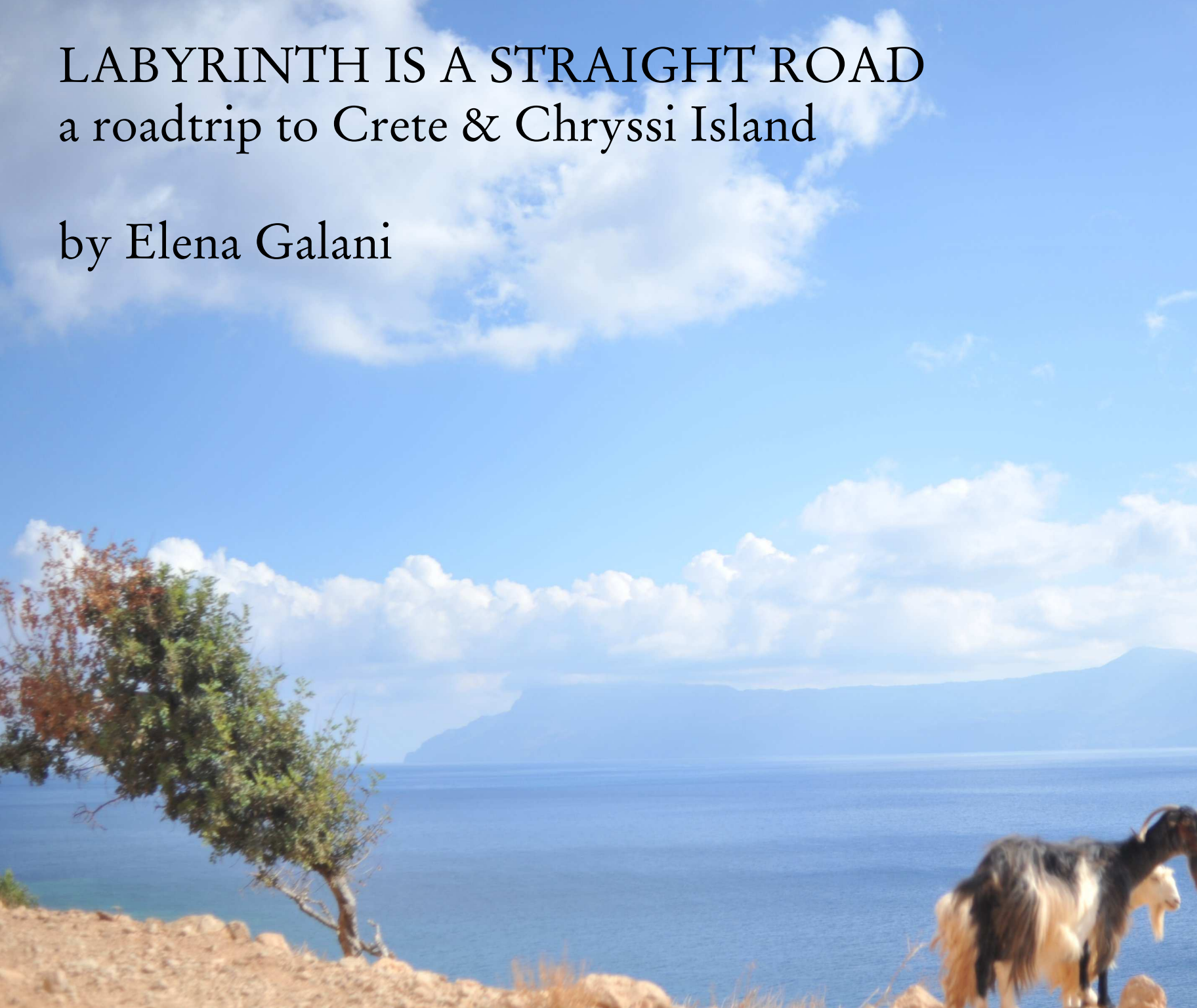


LABYRINTH IS A STRAIGHT ROAD

a roadtrip to Crete & Chryssi Island

by Elena Galani



LABYRINTH IS A STRAIGHT ROAD
a roadtrip to Crete & Chryssi Island

by Elena Galani
www.elenigalani.com



There is a fresco in Knossos, Crete depicting a custom from ancient Greece, named "Tavrokathapsia": a male dancer moves elegantly while trying to keep balance on the back of a bull. Unlike the Spanish custom, known as bullfight, in the greek "Tavtokathapsia" the animal is not killed at the end - a similar practice named Course Landaise is nowadays still alive in Mont de Marsan, a small village in France. When I first visited Crete I was ten years old. I was told then that the bull is a symbol for Minotavros· -in ancient Crete the palace of Knossos is related to the labyrinth (Greek: labyrinthos), an elaborate structure designed by the legendary artificer Deдалus on behalf of king Minos of Crete. In Greek mythology Minotavros was believed to be a malevolent creature that had to be killed at any cost. But I have always imagined him as a melancholic loner, the undesired hybrid child of a condemned love, trapped within

his own flesh and desire. I bet he was lonely and sad into his dark prison meant to keep him isolated for ever- until his own death. In my childish mind Minotavros needed to be saved at all costs.

In English, labyrinth is generally synonymous with maze, a term which refers to a complex branching multicursal puzzle with choices of path and direction. But Labyrinth could also stand for a single path (unicursal) design - such a unicursal seven-course "Classical" design without branches or dead-ends which became associated with the Cretan Labyrinth on coins as early as 430 BC.

Contrary to the maze, this unicursal labyrinth would only have a single path to the center and would be relatively easy to navigate.

If Minotavros lived in such a labyrinth why couldn't he just break free?

Many years later, as I roam the Cretan land, I think that it resembles a lot to a labyrinth. But of which type (a unicursal pattern or a maze)? Landscapes change constantly from mountain to plains and vice versa -images of land and sea unfold gracefully and gradually like a ribbon in every turn.

There is an inner rhythm in every change, connecting the past with the present and future, resembling to the waves of the sea, this ever-loving sea that surrounds the island from every sight.

What is to be found at the end? And which direction has to be taken? Hopefully there is a center to be reached, a hidden soul, where everything finally takes its place like in an eloquent choreography. Or maybe one needs to walk backwards- towards the unseen exit and break free. Perhaps none or both - there is a spiritual healing effect in the trip itself -one can walk the path, whichever the direction, ascending toward

salvation or enlightenment -travel in that sense is like a pilgrimage or, as I would suggest- a ritual dance, similar to the dance at the "Tavrokathapsia" fresco.

As days go by, ancient secrets and pictures from the beginnings of time are revealed before my eyes, vanished and born again, ever new. I cherish the experience, savoring every moment. Which path am I heading towards? I can sense there is no choice or alternative, I can sense there is not much time left, but I hope freedom is to be found at the center or the end - however called, depending on the direction.

There is one thing I am sure of: I need to dare this exodus, either way, right now, even alone. This is a noble deed- yet only for the braves. I need to become one.

Hopefully salvation is a possibility here - though impossible it may now seem-

Labyrinth is a straight road.





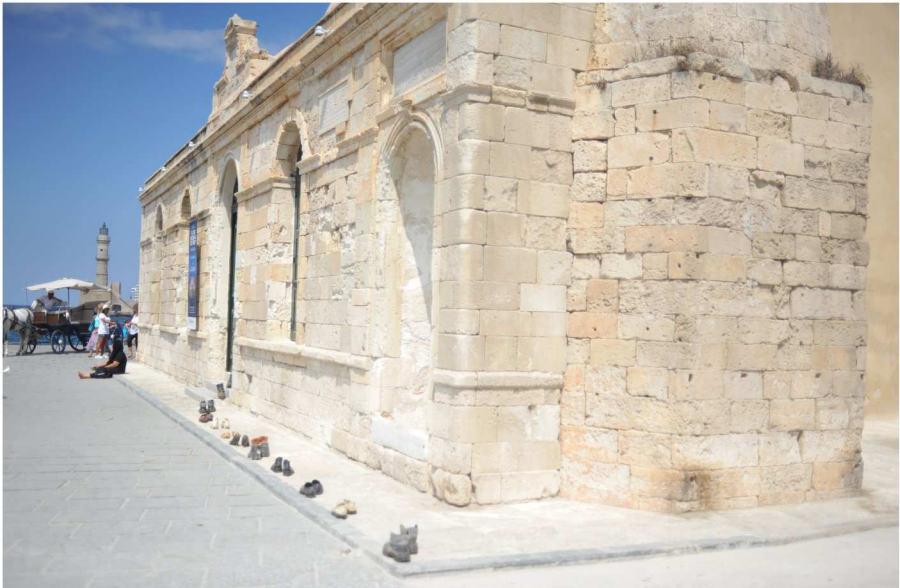












































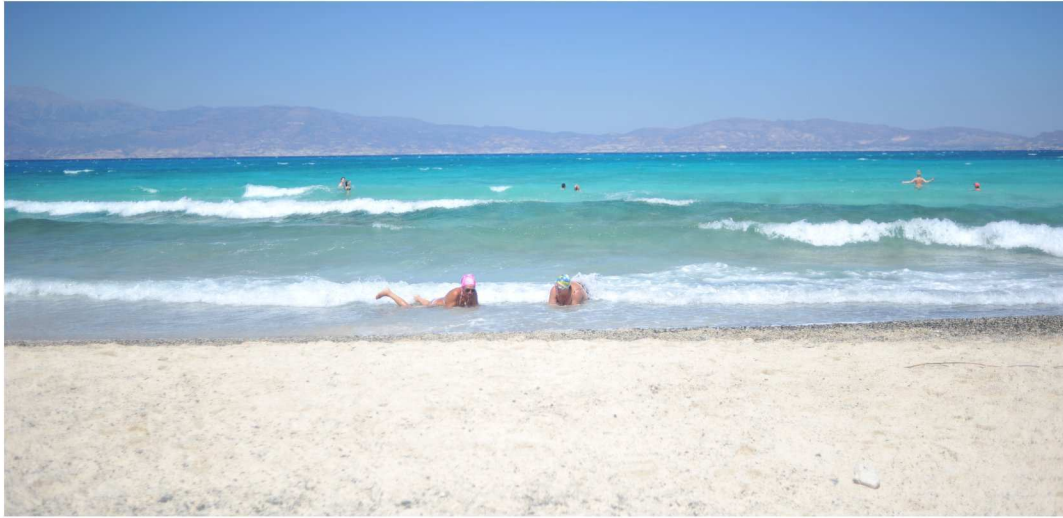
































Μελίτα
Λουκία

Ματάλα
Peace
Love
Dance









