

Aiani-Elimiotis – Upper Macedonia: Archeological and Historical Research

The National Hellenic Society PAIDEIA, The Hellenic Society PAIDEIA of New Hampshire and the University of New Hampshire Classics

are proud to present a Lecture by Archaeologists Dr. Georgia Karamitrou-Mentessidi, Mrs. Marina Lykiardopoulou and Mr. Konstantinos Moschakis on

“AIANI - ELIMIOTIS – UPPER MACEDONIA: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH”.

**The lecture is open to the public and will be given at
7:00 PM on Tuesday, November 27th, 2007
at the University of New Hampshire campus in Room G17 of Murkland Hall**



The city of Aiani is located approximately 20 km (12.5 miles) south of the city of Kozani, Kozani (Κοζάνη). Aiani is a city in northern Greece, of the Kozani Prefecture and of the West Macedonia periphery. It is located in the western part of Macedonia, in the northern part of the Aliakmonas river valley (see location map).

Aiani was the capital of the ancient kingdom of Elimeia, which together with the rest of the Greek kingdoms of Tymphaia, Orestis, Lyncestis, Eordaia, Pelagonia, and Derriopos constituted the ancient Upper (i.e. mountainous) Macedonia.

The systematic excavation research, which began in 1983, at Aiani has revealed the architectural remains of both large and small buildings, rich in small finds, and groups of graves and organized cemeteries dating from the Prehistoric to the Late Hellenistic period. The revealing of public and private buildings composes a picture of a well-organized city from the Late Archaic and Classical period. The city had direct cultural relations and exchange with the rest of Greece. At the same time it had its own workshops for ceramics, terracotta, and metals. The funeral gifts found in some of the un-looted pit graves, present an exceptional quality and variety, elements that are evidence for the booming economy and high standard of living, and place the area among the cultural and religious centers of the rest of Hellenism.

The archeological museum of Aiani houses a variety of these findings, golden, silver and bronze jewelry, bronze utensils, weapons, models of carts made of iron with little horses made of clay or bronze, black and red figure vases made of clay, terracotta figurines, tablets made of bone with a perforated decoration all round, masterpieces of miniature art, and vases made of glass and alabaster.

Subsequent lectures will also be given as follows:

Thursday, November 29th, 2007 at the University of Rhode Island

6:00 PM in the Cherry Auditorium, located on the first floor of the Kirk Engineering Bldg., on Upper College Road in Kingston, Rhode Island

Sunday, December 2nd, 2007 at the University of Connecticut

12.30 PM at the PAIDEIA Center, 28 Dog Lane, Storrs, CT.

Monday, December 3rd, 2007 at Trinity College

8:00 PM in the McCook Auditorium, Trinity College, Hartford, CT

Tuesday, December 4th, 2007 at Columbia University, NY, NY.

(Contact PAIDEIA at Paideia@snet.net or (860) 429-8518 for the Exact Time & Place)

Dr. GEORGIA KARAMITROU-MENTESESSI, Ph. D.
DR ARCHAEOLOGIST
Biographical note

Dr. Georgia Karamitrou-Mentessidi was born in Panagitsa in the area of Lokrida and studied archaeology at the University of Thessaloniki. She subsequently did post graduate studies at the Scuola Nazionale di Archaeologia in Rome, Italy with the aid of a scholarship from the Italian Institute. Dr. Karamitrou-Mentessidi holds a doctorate from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

She began her career at the Archaeological Service in 1980. In 1981 she was given responsibility for the Prefecture of Kozani, where research had not yet been organized and only a few rescue excavations had taken place. As a result of the hard-work, self-sacrifice and earnestness which distinguish her, extensive research has taken place and several sites in the Prefecture of Kozani have been excavated.

In addition, on taking up her position, she immediately implemented a program of preservation, protection and promotion of the Prefecture of Kozani by undertaking tens of rescue and systematic excavations while simultaneously undertaking the discovery of new sites; the vast collection of random finds; the legal declaration of archaeological sites; and the protection of such sites with corrugated roofs and fences. Furthermore, she has been responsible for informing the public, developing and promoting the area, cataloging finds, conservation, studies and publicity. Excavations at the important archaeological site of Aiani since 1983 have allowed significant historical evidence to be brought to light exceedingly well through publicity, lectures and documentaries, not only to scientific communities, but also to the general public who can now visit the well-maintained sites of the ancient City and the Necropolis.

Her efforts have culminated in the Institute of the Archaeological Museum of Aiani, 4,500 square meters (42,000 sq. ft.) in area, which has now been completed and provided with show-cases and awaits the installation of air-conditioning. She has guaranteed the financial backing and organized modern conservation laboratories in the new Museum of Aiani, which has in recent years accepted students from the formal school of TEI in Athens for training.

With the sense of responsibility and the rare sensitivity that distinguish her, she preserves the cultural legacy, and she has recognized the significant role of conservation, understanding quickly its scientific data and the potential of using modern technology.

In the context of the social role of archaeology, which she wanted to promote, she has instituted the Horse Rides on the ancient, historic routes. The five such trips which have so far taken place, from Aiani to Vergina, Mieza, Dion, Florina, Grevena and Pindos were both recreational and sporting as well as being aimed at investigating communications between Upper and Lower Macedonia, the latter having been published in a scientific article.

The plethora of studies and articles in Greek and foreign periodicals which have as a subject the recent years of archaeological excavation, include historical inferences which give a new dimension not only to the history of Upper Macedonia but also to the rest of Macedonia.

Furthermore, she authored the book of "Archaeological Guides to Aiani and Kozani", about the educational programs of Aiani's Museum, as well as the two-volume work "Boion- Southern Orestis, Archaeological Research and Historical Topography".