

The so-called Building with the Stoa was uncovered on the plateau directly beneath this area to the north-east, and is also a public edifice. In plan, the structure is laid out in the form of a stoa, with two surviving sides in the shape of an L, measuring 25 and 20 m. long, constructed of large stone blocks. The interior of the building lies on top of earlier building phases with storage rooms which probably date from the Iron Age, as can be seen from the pithoi (large storage jars) that were found buried in the earth. Further to the east, the remains of two ellipsoidal buildings can be seen, of which the stone bases survive and which, judging by the pottery found in them, date from the Early Bronze Age. Despite the fact that most of the building material has been plundered, numerous architectural members have survived, such as sections of double half-columns, Ionic capitals and other stone fragments of the superstructure, probably from an upper storey, which indicates the grandeur of the building and its early dating. Various Doric capitals of a softish limestone that were used to 'fill in' the floor of the courtyard can be dated to the second quarter of the 5th century BC. The existence of marble architectural members is indicated by the thick layer of chippings that was left by the final dressing of the stone on site. These chippings were used as a bedding layer for the stone slabs laid in the large internal courtyard; part of this layer is preserved in the inner angle of the stoa's two sides.

These two courses of stone form the stylobate on which the columns of the stoa stood. The greater width of the course running towards the top of the hill is believed to indicate the existence of a ramp providing easier access, for the plateau slopes steeply. At a higher level, behind the wall of the stoa, a row of double rooms was discovered; these were built of rubble masonry and consisted of at least two building phases. The deposits here were very shallow and the surface of the rock was dressed to create both floors and the foundations for walls. The present remains of the buildings in this area provide only a fragmentary and incomplete picture of their ground-plans and this, together with the scarcity of movable finds, does not permit any firm conclusions to be drawn about the functions of these structures. However, the character of the building with the stoa and the double rooms suggests that this area was the agora of the ancient city.

Lower down, towards the N-NE, the plateau was covered with a much thicker filling of earth, and already in antiquity was reinforced with a retaining wall. This wall protected a small, later building with two construction phases, in which older building material had been reused, such as a large fragment of a column. During the cleaning of one of the walls, the handle of a mirror was found, in the form of a bronze peplos kore from the middle of the 5th century BC. We have reinforced the edge of this plateau with dry stone walling. At the same time, the absence of ancient buildings at this point has enabled us to construct an access road to the south and south-eastern sections of the hill. A deep trial trench sunk in this area has revealed Neolithic strata.

**Dr
Georgia
Karamitrou**

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Mentesidi

Photos:

