



# DOLIANI THESPROTIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL GUIDE

Ekaterini Kanta - Kitsou  
Vasiliki Lambrou



PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

ISBN 978-960-98656-2-3

MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
32ND EPHORATE OF PREHISTORIC AND CLASSICAL ANTIQUITIES OF THESPROTIA



# **DOLIANI THESPROTIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL GUIDE**

Ekaterini Kanta - Kitsou  
Vasiliki Lambrou

ATHENS 2008

GENERAL SUPERVISION	Ekaterini Kanta - Kitsou, archaeologist, Director of the 32nd E.P.C.A.
TEXTS	Vasiliki Lambrou, archaeologist of the 32nd E.P.C.A. Elpida Saltagianni, archaeologist Eleni Bellou, agriculturalist
TEXT EDITING	Vasiliki Lambrou
PHOTOGRAPHS	32nd E.P.C.A. archive Stefanos Stournaras Petros Konstantopoulos
GROUND PLANS	Kostas Tsitos, topographer of the 32nd E.P.C.A. Charoula Gogolou, designer
RECONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS	Achilleas Tranoulidis, architect Eleni Koulouri, designer
GRAPHIC DESIGN	Miltiadis Gogolos, graphic designer
TRANSLATION	Th. C. Bouchelos, I.E. Saridakis Vasiliki Lambrou (photograph titles)
PRINTING	Vatiras New Media Solutions

We thank Mr George Smyris, Helping Professor of the Faculty of Plastic Studies and Art Sciences of Ioannina University, and Mr Michalis Pasiakos, Centre of Historic Studies of Thesprotia chairman, for their valuable contribution to the drafting of this guide.

*Front cover: Doliani. The ancient southern fortification, the Byzantine terraces and building 5 of the Ottoman period.*

PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

© Ministry of Culture  
32nd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities of Thesprotia  
Kyprou 68, Igoumenitsa  
Tel.: 26650 29177 – 26650 29178  
Fax: 26650 25133  
E-mail: lbepka@culture.gr  
ISBN: 978-960-98656-2-3

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface .....	5
Historical Background .....	7
• Prehistoric - Early historical times .....	7
• Classical - Hellenistic period .....	9
• Roman Period .....	11
• Byzantine period .....	11
• Post-Byzantine/Ottoman period .....	13
The archaeological site of Doliani .....	15
• Evidence .....	15
• Research Background .....	16
• The antiquities of the greater area .....	18
The archaeological site of Doliani. Surviving monuments .....	20
Archaic period. The first evidence of inhabitation .....	23
Classical - Hellenistic period. The fortified settlement .....	25
• The fortification .....	25
• The settlement .....	34
Roman period. The survival of the settlement .....	37
Byzantine period. A new systematic inhabitation .....	39
Ottoman period. The newer settlement .....	45
Doliani today. The value enhancement works .....	52
Doliani as a naturalist path .....	55
• The archaeological site .....	55
• The wall flora .....	56
• The settlement flora .....	57
• Epilogue .....	59
Selected bibliography .....	60



## Preface

The fortified settlement of Doliani, in the municipality of Parapotamos, is one of the most interesting ancient settlements in Thesprotia. Placed in a particularly picturesque location, on a hill next to river Kalamas, it is a unique example of diachronic inhabitation in Thesprotia, since it preserves archaeological remains from the early Antiquity to the late Byzantine period.

The inability to carry out infrastructure projects, even on an elementary level, owing to insufficient funding, had kept the archaeological site literally buried in dense vegetation, inaccessible to the public and researchers. Similar problems were faced also in the remaining large fortified settlements of Thesprotia (Elea, Gitana, Dymokastro), that remained unknown to the scientific community.

The inclusion of the reinstatement and value enhancement works of the main archaeological sites of Thesprotia in the ROP of Epirus, in the framework of the 3rd CSF, has laid the foundation for eliminating their detachment, typical of the previous decades, as well as for protecting and promoting the monuments and their characteristic natural environment. Moreover, with the Igoumenitsa Archaeological Museum as centre and starting point, it has led to the creation of a network of accessible archaeological sites and monuments, thus contributing to the upgrade of the cultural infrastructures of Thesprotia.

The value enhancement works in the archaeological site of Doliani were performed from September, 2002, until December, 2008, in two phases. Phase A of the works (2002-2007) has been a distinct sub-project in the framework of the project entitled «Value enhancement and reinstatement of the archaeological sites of Elea and Doliani in Thesprotia», while the works of Phase B (2006-2008) were carried out as an independent project entitled «Value enhancement of the archaeological site of Doliani - Phase B: Reinstatement - value enhancement of the northern main entrance and of building 11, wall and citadel tower support works, installation of a prefabricated theatrical construction». After the completion of these works, the archaeological site, having ensured the recognisability of its most important monuments and having all the necessarily infrastructures, is now accessible to the citizens.

The successful outcome of the effort to enhance the value of the archaeological site would not have been feasible without the valuable contribution of many individuals, who worked zealously and, often, with self-denial to materialise this aim.

I thank them all warmly.

Ekaterini Kanta - Kitsou  
Director of the 32nd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities



## Historical Background

### **Prehistoric - Early historical times** (2nd millennium BC - 6th century BC).

The first Hellenic tribes are believed to have settled in the area of Thesprotia around 2000 BC. In the 14th century BC, the area was included in the sphere of influence of the Mycenaeans, with the establishment of the settlement of Ephyra on the southernmost coasts of the area. The settlement was the only fortified Mycenaean station in Epirus. The contacts that inevitably developed between the immigrants and the local population would not be strong enough to change their way of life, which remained organised on the basis of an agricultural and stock-breeding economy, with semi-permanent settlements over a very long period of time.

The lack of evidence on the area of Thesprotia, and Epirus in general, for the period between the 11th and 9th century BC, can be justified in the context of a generalised turmoil caused by the movements of the north-western tribes. The Molossians settled east of Dodona, pushing the Thesprotians west of the plain of Ioannina, i.e. roughly in the area they will occupy in Historical times.

In the Archaic period, contacts of the area with the remaining Hellenic world begin to multiply. Elean and Corinthian immigrants settle on coastal locations of Epirus, between the 8th and the 6th century BC. In Thesprotia, Corfiots establish a series of settlements along the northern Thesprotian coastline, referenced by Thucydides as «Corfiot peraia». During the same period, and based on ancient sources (Pseudo-Scylax, Pseudo-Scymnus), the inhabitants of Thesprotia preserved their tribal organisation and lived in unfortified cities, unaffected by the formation of city-states in southern Greece.

*The mycenaean citadel of  
Ephyra in Mesopotamos,  
Preveza.*



*The late classical – Hellenistic settlement of Elea in Veliani, Paramythia.*

*The settlement of Gitana, seat of the Thesprotian Koinon until 167 B.C.*

**Classical - Hellenistic period** (5th century BC - 167 BC). The Thesprotians and the Chaonians are mentioned by Thucydides, at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war in 429 BC as «kingless». Around 400 BC, the strong Epirus tribe of the Molossians limits the territorial integrity of the Thesprotians, who are most probably forced to accede to the Koinon of the Molossians (390-340 BC).

An important milestone in the history of Thesprotia is the coalition of the Thesprotian tribes and the establishment of the Koinon of the Thesprotians in the 4th century BC. Some years later, they will join the Epirote Alliance, which is organised in 333/323 BC.

After 350 BC, the first city-sized settlements are established and the area enters its period of development and prosperity, which will reach its peak during the Hellenistic period. The small unfortified villages, the area's settlement model for centuries, are joined together to form the first organised settlements, that were arranged and fortified based on the standards of the remaining Hellenic world.

The Thesprotians participated actively in the second and the third Macedonian war, as well as to the events that ended up with the conquest of Epirus by the Romans. In 167 BC, one year after the defeat of King Perseus in Pydna, and following a resolution of the Senate, the troops of Aemilius Paulus proceeded to the co-ordinated destruction of the towns of Epirus and to the enslavement of a significant part of its population. Thesprotia seems to follow the common Epirus destiny, and most of the flourishing settlements of the Hellenistic period are driven to desolation.

*The seaside settlement of Dymokasto (ancient Elina).*

*The burial chamber  
of the roman villa in  
Zavali, Igoumenitsa.*

*Part of the late  
roman – early  
Christian settlement  
in Ladochori,  
Igoumenitsa.*

**Roman Period** (167 BC - 3rd century AD). The year 167 BC is considered as the start of Roman rule in Epirus. The picture of that year's destruction is complemented by the raids of Mithridates VI Eupator and his Thracian mercenaries, in 88/87 BC. Also, many of the civil war conflicts among the Roman generals during the 1st century BC take place in Epirus.

After 157 BC, the Koinon of the Epirotes, after having resumed its operation immediately after the Roman conquest, is divided into two independent Koinon, delimited by river Kalamas. The Koinon of the tribes south of river Kalamas, to which belonged also the Thesprotian tribes, operated initially in Pandosia. After 148 BC, when Epirus and Illyria became part of the Province of Macedonia, the seat of the Koinon was transferred to Dodona.

In the early 1st century BC, at the latest, began the settlement of Roman immigrants on the coasts and lowlands of Epirus. Probably, in the context of an organised immigration programme of the Roman state, the colony of Fotiki was established in the area at that time. There are mentions of a boule (parliamentary assembly) operating in Fotiki until the 2nd and the 3rd century AD.

Despite the extensive destruction of 167 BC, it appears that the inhabitation pattern revives rapidly in Thesprotia, in some of the previous period's inhabitation sites. The famous «Pax Romana» that followed during the 1st and the 2nd centuries AD, leads to the dramatic increase of the population and to the creation of new unfortified settlements on the coastline and in the lowlands.

This situation changed dramatically in the 3rd century AD, with the weakening of the central authority and the appearance of the first barbarian raids in the imperial territories. In this context, it must be considered certain that the Gothic raids passed through the territories of Epirus, and particularly Thesprotia, during their course from Athens to Illyria, in 267 AD.

**Byzantine period** (4th century AD - 1430). Already since the late 3rd century AD, Epirus was administratively divided into the Old and New Epirus. The former (Epirus vetus) covered the contemporary Greek Epirus, part of Aetolia-Acarnania and the islands opposite, while the latter covered the area of Northern Epirus. In the 4th century AD, Thesprotia, as part of the province of Old Epirus, becomes the centre of the new Christian religion in the wider area, given that an Episcopal seat was established in the city of Evria, already since the time of Theodosius the Great.



Old Epirus was raided many times during the 5th, and particularly the 6th, century AD by various barbarian tribes. Consequently, it was desolated to a significant extent. The raids continued, with relatively long intervals of peace, also after the 6th century AD, creating serious political, ethnological and administrative upheaval all over Epirus. At the end of the 10th century AD, the area was raided by the Bulgarians and Nicopolis, until then the most important centre of Epirus, was destroyed.

After the conquest of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1204), Thesprotia became part of the independent Epirus hegemony (1204-

*The Byzantine settlement of Osdina,  
in the Kalamas straits.*

*The castle of Kiafa  
in Souli.*

*Church of the mid  
Byzantine period  
in Glyki.*

1246) and, subsequently, of the Despotate of Epirus under the rule of the Komnenos family and, later, various other hegemonic families - Italian, Serb, Albanian and Franc.

The conflicts between the Ottomans and the Venetians are typical of the last decades prior to the Ottoman conquest. In the late 14th and early 15th century AD, Venice conquers the coasts of Thesprotia, establishing a series of fortified bases, both on the coastline and along significant paths in the hinterland.

**Post-Byzantine/Ottoman period** (1430 - 1913). In Epirus, the year 1430 is considered as the conventional start of the Ottoman rule, with the surrender of Ioannina, and ends in 1913, with the collapse of the Ottoman rule during the 1st Balkan War.

Ultimately prevailing, the Ottoman Empire divides Thesprotia into provinces and integrates it into the administrative and taxation system of the Ottoman state. Paramythia, Filiates and Margariti were the principal settlement centres of that time, while Sagiada had a marked significance for the commercial movement of products.

Apart from these settlements and their surrounding areas that enjoyed a regime of privileges, the remaining countryside suffered because of the heavy taxation, lootings and frequent war conflicts. The lowlands were soon abandoned by the agricultural populations, while mountainous settlements developed in the form of villages, e.g. on the slopes of Mt Tsamantas and in Souli. Revolts were frequent, with the most marked being the movements of the residents of Souli against Ali Pasha of Ioannina.

*The Ottoman castle in Margariti.*



## **The archaeological site of Doliani**

The fortified settlement in Doliani, extending over an area of approximately 50,000m<sup>2</sup>, is built on top of a limestone hill, west of the contemporary settlement of Geroplatanos, in the municipality of Parapotamos. The location is particularly privileged in terms of natural protection, given that on the south and the west it is protected by a steep gorge traversed by river Kalamas. Moreover, without being visible from a distance, because of the hillocks surrounding it, the location allowed the control of the entire lowland area, north and south of midstream Kalamas.

Professor S. Dakaris was the first to suggest that the settlement of Doliani corresponds to ancient Fanoti, centre of the Thesprotian tribe of the Fanotians, owing to its crucial location and its strong fortification. The correctness of this suggestion is supported also by archaeological research, given that in the area of midstream Kalamas, i.e. the part of the river extending from Vrosyna, on the prefecture's border with Ioannina, until Skala of Filiates, which is believed to have been controlled by the Fanotians Thesprotians in Antiquity, no other significantly-sized fortified settlement has been discovered to date.

It is a particularly long-lasting settlement location. The establishment of the fortified settlement is believed to date since the late Classical period (4th century BC). Despite the extensive destruction of its fortifications after the Roman conquest, the settlement remains inhabited over a very long period of time. It is probably the only example of a 4th century BC Thesprotian settlement that remains more or less active until the post-Byzantine period.

### **Evidence**

The name of Fanoti is known from ancient literature and is directly connected to the facts that preceded the Roman conquest of Epirus. The Roman historian Livy suggests that General Aulus Hostilius Mancinus, during his course from Illyria to Thessaly, in the spring of 170 BC, was informed by a Fanotian, Nestor Kropios, about the effort of the king of Macedonia Perseus to capture him en route. He thus changed his course and moved to Gitana and, from there, to Antikyra on boat, to end up in Thessaly. During the winter of 170/169 BC, Appius Claudius tried to conquer Fanoti with 6,000 troops, in order to counterbalance his defeat in Illyria. The city resisted the siege, to surrender to the Roman troops during the next year, first among all Epirus



towns, after the defeat of Perseus in Pydna.

Sources of the Byzantine and the early Ottoman period confirm the existence of the settlement, surviving on the location of the ancient city. The passing of Slavic tribes from the area during the 6th and 7th century AD is reflected on the new name of the location. A golden bull (chrysobull) of Despot Symeon Paleologos the Serbian, dating from 1321, mentions the locality of Dolianoï, i.e. a name of Slavic origin that is common in the greater area of Epirus, along with other localities of the greater area of the Theme of Vagenetia (western Epirus). Two centuries later, an Ottoman census catalogue of 1431 confirms the existence of the settlement during the first years of the Ottoman rule and the integration of the area in the Ottoman public administration system. The settlement is one of the smallest communities of the area and appears under the name Dulyani, from which the contemporary name of the location, Doliani, has derived.

Some years before the end of the Ottoman rule, Doliani is mentioned in yet another Ottoman document, the Statistics published in the Sanlame (administrative yearbook) of 1895, enumerating in detail the population of Epirus at the time. The settlement has by now 300 inhabitants and must have moved to the nearby location of the contemporary village of Geroplatanos. The settlement survives and has preserved the name Doliani, until very recently.

### **Research Background**

The visible remains of the impressive fortifications of the ancient settlement have long attracted the interest of researchers. N. G. Hammond, in 1967, gave an outline description of the settlements and of the main gate, in his publication *Epirus*. A more detailed reference to the archaeological remains of the location is given by S. Dakaris in *Thesprotia*, a work dating since the early 1970s. The same author suggests that the location of the ancient settlement cemetery was on the foot of a nearby hill, where pillaged cist graves were also found.

The first archaeological excavations of the ancient settlement were undertaken in 1989, in the area of the cemetery, after road construction works had destroyed numerous graves, probably Hellenistic ones, and revealed the remains of a paved path. In 1995, a small-scale excavation was undertaken, on the NE part of the citadel, with the aim to partially survey an ancient building (Building 1), i.e. probably a large house of the Hellenistic period.

The diachronic use of the ancient cemetery was confirmed in the year 2000,

*The archaeological site of Doliani in the 1980's.*

*The Hellenistic building 1 in the acropolis of Doliani.*

when, during a rescue excavation, eleven cist graves of the mid Byzantine period were discovered and excavated. One year later, a partially destroyed Hellenistic cist grave, located north of this location, was also excavated.

The excavation of the ancient necropolis was pursued with a rescue excavation during the summer of 2005, revealing 10 cist graves of the Hellenistic period. Finally, in the autumn of 2006, an isolated pillaged Hellenistic cist grave was discovered, on the slope of a low hill, north of the archaeological site.

The contemporary picture of the archaeological site was formed after the implementation of the value enhancement and restoration project, carried out from 2002 through 2008. The works carried out, have largely substituted the archaeological research, bringing to light a wealth of new evidence on the form of the fortifications and the staging of the settlement's inhabitation.

### **The antiquities of the greater area**

The fortified settlement of Doliani overlooks a riverside valley to the north, that ends up in the entrance of the straits of Kalamas and, to the east and south, a rather spacious lowland, that is part of the contemporary settlements of Riziani and Korytiani. In Antiquity, these areas were part of the territory of the ancient city, which extended even more to the north, along the midstream of Kalamas.

The longevity of the settlement of Doliani matches the diachronic inhabitation that is confirmed in its greater area. Early archaeological evidence is derived from a rescue excavation performed during the last years in Skala Aetou (Filiates), next to the entrance of the straits of Kalamas and only a few kilometres north of the ancient city. The remains of an agricultural settlement have been revealed, evidencing its use from the Geometrical period until the 4th century BC.

The entrance of the straits is prevailed by the impressive remains of a late Byzantine tower, strategically placed to control the passage through the straits. The location is known

*Pelike, skyphos with relief decoration and burial stamnos from Hellenistic graves in the Doliani area.*

as «Skala tou Zorianou» and was obviously used as an anchorage point for the vessels used in Kalamas, a navigable river at that time.

A more systematic diachronic inhabitance is observed at the area south and east of Doliani. In the plain of Riziani and at a distance of a few hundred metres from the ancient settlement, the remains of a Hellenistic burial monument have been revealed, with a monumental isodomic fortification. Further to the east, north of the old motorway connecting Igoumenitsa and Ioannina, the remains of a 1st century AD Roman bath have been discovered, at the location of a pre-existing Hellenistic period building -probably a farmhouse.

South of the motorway, in the same area, an Early Christian basilica has been excavated, on the remains of which a Byzantine cemetery temple, with an extended graveyard, was later erected.

*The Hellenistic burial monument in Riziani.*

*Mid Byzantine burial site  
in Korytiani.*



*The late Byzantine tower in Skala Zoriannou.*

Archaeological evidence has also been found in the area of Korytiani. At the construction site of the hygienic waste disposal of Igoumenitsa, a cemetery of the mid Byzantine period was discovered, including 175 graves. In yet another location of the same area, a partially surviving Hellenistic period building was surveyed.

SW of Doliani, at the so-called «Tsifliki» (Parapotamos) location, a tumulus has been discovered, evidencing successive burial use at least from the 4th century BC to the mid Byzantine period.

### **The archaeological site of Doliani** **Surviving monuments**

The hill of Doliani is abundant with archaeological remains that cover a wide chronological spectrum and witness the continuity of the area's inhabitation, from Antiquity to the post-Byzantine period.

The most impressive monuments of the archaeological site are the successive isodomic fortification walls that surround the area. The internal fortification of the citadel, on the hill top, is excellently preserved, along most of its part. The exterior precinct protected the smooth slopes of the hill and is more fragmentarily preserved. On the west, it is reinforced by a bailey, the remains of which are also visible.

On the northern part of the external fortification, the monumental main gate of the ancient fortification (Π1) is still preserved, the contemporary form of which is the result of restoration works carried out in 2008. The gate is protected by two rectangular towers and its wide opening is crowned by an impressively large arch.

Four secondary gates (Π2-Π5) have been revealed on the citadel wall, while on the eastern part of the external fortification, there is evidence of yet another gate (Π6).

The continuous inhabitation of the site resulted in the frequent restoration and addition works of the fortification

*Glass mid Byzantine ugentaria from Riziani.*

*Clay plate from the Hellenistic building in Korytiani.*

walls, most of which were implemented towards the late Byzantine period. Reconstruction works are visible mainly on the citadel wall. Addition of a new wall has been confirmed on the western part of the internal and the eastern part of the external fortification. The successive artificial terraces on the southern fortification are also an addition to the original construction.

The fortification line seems to have determined, diachronically, the boundaries of the inhabited area. It surrounds almost all of the visible archaeological remains. The significant density of the remains of various construction phases on the citadel shows that this part of the settlement has always been the centre of inhabitation, while the pattern of inhabitation of the area between the internal and the external fortification must have been less systematic.

The surviving monuments of the citadel prove the evolution of the settlement, from the late Classical period (4th century BC), when the location was fortified, until the post-Byzantine years, when it was gradually abandoned.

*The Doliani acropolis from the east.*

At the area neighbouring the NE internal wall, part of the urban web of the ancient city during the late Classical and the Hellenistic periods has been revealed (buildings 1, 2 and 17). Over its remaining surface area, the citadel is abundant with residential remains of the later phases of inhabitation, during the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period.

The tower (building 4) on top of the hill, with its particularly tall walls overlooking the greater area, date most probably from the mid Byzantine period (12th century AD). In the remaining parts of the citadel, as well as sporadically on the slopes of the hill, there are the remains of a small agricultural post-Byzantine settlement, the commencement of which dates in the late Byzantine period.

On the southernmost edge of the citadel, there are the remains of an Ottoman building complex of public use (building 12). Part of this complex was also the building with the arched openings that is preserved at a prominent location on the SE tower of the ancient fortification (building 5).

Archaeological remains witnessing the diachronic character of the area's inhabitation are preserved also in the area of the ancient fortification main gate. On top of the western tower of the gate, the remains of a small Byzantine temple are visible. Its extended cemetery was located in the surrounding area of the gate. Only a small number of the graves surveyed remain currently in situ.

A few metres south of the gate, a small ceramic kiln of the Byzantine period survives, while next to its eastern tower, the remains of a limekiln of modern times are preserved.

*Buildings of the  
Byzantine and Ottoman  
periods on the Doliani  
acropolis.*

## Archaic period

### The first evidence of inhabitation

Up until the commencement of the value enhancement works in the archaeological site, there was no archaeological evidence on the inhabitation of the location before the erection of the fortification in the 4th century BC. This was reversed, when at the area of the citadel sporadic potsherds dating from the late Archaic period were found, from vessels made in workshops of Corinth and Attica. It was not possible to survey older layers of inhabitation in the area within the context of the archaeological site value enhancement works, resulting in the non-discovery of residential remains of the same period thus far.

However, the discovery of ceramic potsherds, though fragmentary, constitutes major archaeological evidence on the existence of an organised settlement on the hill of Doliani, at least since the late 6th century BC -or even earlier. This conclusion is also confirmed by the discovery of 7th century BC handmade vessels, in one of the settlement cemetery graves, excavated in 2005. Indicative of the financial prosperity of the residents during this early period, is the presence of handmade, locally manufactured vessels characterised by their high quality along with pottery introduced in the area from the most important production centres of the 6th century BC, Corinth and Attica.

Archaeological evidence of this early period is found also in the greater area of Doliani. The agricultural settlement revealed in Skala Aetou (Filiates) was used from the 9th to -at least- the 4th century BC. Here, too, the ceramic finds confirm the existence of commercial relations with the remaining Greek world. The lack of fortification and the construction of houses using stone-built foundations and superstructure of perishable materials give a picture of the probable form of the inhabited area at the location of Doliani, before the construction of the fortified settlement.

*Handmade kantharoi from the main cemetery (8th – 7th cent. B.C.).*

*Late Archaic ceramic shards from the settlement.*

*The Doliani acropolis.  
Building remains of the Classical – Hellenistic periods.*

## **Classical - Hellenistic period**

### **The fortified settlement**

**The fortification.** The establishment of the fortified settlement is placed at the second half of the 4th century BC, during the late Classical period, when the remaining cities of the Epirus area are also joined and fortified. The extremely steep and non-accessible slopes on the West, imposed the construction of an artificial fortification, with a width of up to 4.50m, only along the smooth sides on the north and the east. These sides are surrounded by two successive fortification walls, of which the internal one forms a kind of citadel on the hilltop. The passable locations, on the southern and south-western part of the citadel, were also reinforced with a wall.

The internal fortification has a total length of approximately 360 metres and is very well preserved. The preservation condition of the external fortification is not quite as good. It is noted that the ancient part of the fortification has been discovered on the west, the north and the northeast, along 320 metres in total.

*Part of the northern inner fortification with the tower-like protrusion.*

*Part of the northern inner fortification with the later semi-circular tower.*

The fortification walls of Doliani were built using local limestone, found underground at schist layers of varying width. Generally speaking, the isodomic wall construction system has been adopted, with certain variations. Differences in the construction pattern could be attributable to different construction phases or different contractors working simultaneously.

The construction method was dry, without the use of joints or pegs. The blocks are usually of a rectangular shape, changing to square at the locations of the towers, with vertical or slanted seams. They have a marked protrusion on their outer surface and are usually placed on unequally levelled courses.

The construction of the double fortification is reinforced with rectangular towers and frontal retrenchments, an element introduced in fortification architecture during the 4th century BC (serrated arrangement). Two large towers were built on the eastern part and the southern edge of the citadel wall, and a third tower was placed on the northern part of the wall, on its inside front. Two strong towers protected the main gate of the fortification.



*Frontal retrenchment on the  
northern fortification.*

*The defensive depression near  
the southeastern tower.*

The frontal retrenchments on the fortifications of Doliani are tower-like protrusions, one of which is located in the internal and one in the external entrenchment precinct. Moreover, on the interior wall an angle-shaped retrenchment is formed on the northern part, together with a defensive depression, adjacent to the south-eastern tower.

*The northern tower of the inner  
fortification northwestern protrusion.*

*The southeastern tower.*

The fortification of the citadel extends to the northwest, creating a form of branch with two flanks that ended in river Kalamas and ensured the unimpeded access of the citizens in the river. The edges of the branch flanks were protected by two strong towers. On the eastern flank of the protrusion, one of the outside communication gates of the settlement (Π2) was located.

The southern internal wall is preserved excellently, with a height extending over 4 metres, at places. On its outside front, the boundaries of a gate (Π4) are preserved. This gate had been abandoned at a later period and was roughly closed using ancient construction materials. The protection of the gate was enhanced by the existence of the strong south-eastern tower and a bailey extending to the south, in the trench, and isolating the area of the gate.

The construction of the southern part of the fortification is meticulous, using large stones and vertical or slanted seams. The south-western fortification has a corresponding wall construction pattern, consisting of two successive walls. The better preserved internal wall presents signs of a gate (Π5), as well as later additions along its eastern part. The external wall has almost entirely collapsed.

*The northern flank of the inner fortification protrusion and gate Π2.*

*The southwestern fortification. The two successive walls are visible.*

*The eastern tower.*

The same construction method has been adopted also on the part of the wall preserved between the south-eastern and the eastern tower, as well as further to the north, up until a few metres before the north-eastern tower-like projection. On this part of the fortification, the wall has not been preserved so well. Along most of its part, it has been subjected to subsequent reconstructions. It is in the framework of such a reconstruction that the NE gate (Π3) must have been modified. It was through this gate that the citadel communicated with the remaining part of the settlement on the slopes of the hill.

*Tower-like protrusion on the inner fortification.*

*The outer fortification west of  
the main gate Π1.*

*The outer fortification east of  
the main gate Π1.*

*The western bailey.*

Excellent is also the preservation level of the fortification along its extension to the north, up until the projection - branch on the northwest. Impressive is also its preserved height, which ranges between 4 and 6 metres, along most of the wall. Smaller stones have been used for the construction of the wall, placed in dense and generally level courses, i.e. a pattern that favoured construction speed and wall stability. On this part of the fortification, interventions subsequent to the construction of the wall are sporadically visible as well.

The external fortification extended to the east and west of the ancient settlement's central gate (Π1), which was located on its northern part. West of the gate, the fortification is doubled, in other words reinforced by an external parallel wall, probably some sort of a bailey. Along this part, the wall follows the construction pattern of the northern internal fortification and is preserved up to a height of only 2.5m. The construction quality of the western bailey, probably built at a later time, is lower - nowadays, it is destroyed along most of its part.

East of the main entrance, the destruction of the fortification is more extended. Only a part of the wall (128m) is preserved in a somewhat better condition, characterised by a construction pattern that corresponds to that of the northern internal fortification. This part includes also a second probable entrance (Π6) and a tower-like projection. Subsequently, southbound, the path of the ancient wall has not been verified and the fortifications surviving to date are the products of a later period.

*The outer fortification east  
of the main gate Π1.*

*The main gate III of Doliani after the restoration of the arched lintel.*

The centre of interest on the external fortification of Doliani is the main gate of the ancient settlement (II1). The monumental character of the gate is attributable to its arched lintel and the two strong rectangular towers that surrounded it, forming a 5m-wide passage in between, used for accessing the gate.

The wall construction pattern of the western tower follows the isodomic system, in the form that is also present on the northern internal fortification and the surviving parts of the external fortification. The wall of the eastern tower consists of large stones, built according to the irregular trapezoidal system.

The opening of the aedicule decreases gradually on its bottom-up development and ranges from 2.80 to 2.50 metres. The arched lintel was based on two posts, with simplified Lesbian cymatia on the capital ridges. On the ridge edges, the formation of the recess for the door panels is visible, while inside the ridges the holes through which the safety bar extended are still preserved. The arch consists of five stones, four of which were discovered almost superficially, at the location of their collapse. A fifth artificial stone currently complements the arch on its western base.

The area of entrance behind the arched opening was probably covered by a wooden floor. It is the point where the stone stairs , inside the fortification, west of the aedicule opening, would lead.

*Hypothetical restoration of the main gate.*



*The Hellenistic buildings 1 and 2 on the northeastern part of the acropolis.*

**The settlement.** In Antiquity, the city extended both on the top and on the smooth slopes of the hill, as suggests the extent of the fortification. According to S. Dakaris, its population probably amounted to 1,500 inhabitants. The principal cemetery was located on the foot of a nearby hill, while burial was frequent in clusters of cist graves, at other locations of the wider area around the ancient city.

The diachronic inhabitation of the citadel, up until the post-Byzantine period, has allowed the surveying, at this stage, of the older phases of the settlement only in its north-eastern part, which was preserved without buildings during the modern years. At this point, part of the ancient city was discovered, with visible arrangement of the buildings along roads with the intervention of alleyways.

Research has focused -without having been completed to date- on two successive residences of the late Classical - Hellenistic period (4th - 2nd century BC), that occupied the area between an ancient road and the north-eastern internal fortification (buildings 1 and 2). Immediately southbound, beneath one of the post-Byzantine buildings of the citadel (building 13), yet another building of the same period was partially revealed (building 17). A triangular open area is formed between buildings 1 and 17, leading to the nearby gate of the entrenchment (II3). The part of the ancient settlement that has been excavated, is marked by the presence of successive construction phases, even in Antiquity. Apparently, the buildings were in use during the Roman period, and even afterwards.

Building 1 is rectangular, of a meticulous construction, consisting of large external blocks. Two parallel walls divide the interior into three elongate spaces, traversed by mid-walls to form smaller rooms. Two principal parts are visible in the building, i.e. the eastern part, comprising two rooms without any visible opening between them, and the western part, communicating with the former through an opening. The main entrance is located on the southern part of the building, preceded by a small hall.

Based on the fragmentary picture of the first excavation elements, it is probably a large residence, that seems to adopt one of the usual forms of the private houses during the Classical and the Hellenistic period in NW Greece (Cassope, Ammotopos) and in cities of the Thesprotian area (Elea, Gitana).

West of this residence, a second, smaller rectangular building has been revealed (building 2). A narrow alleyway extends between the two buildings. Owing to the many alterations and additions to the construction during its long-term use, the initial ground plan of the building is barely distinguishable.

The southernmost of the excavated buildings (building 17) is characterised by the meticulous isodomic construction of its external walls. Four rectangular walls constituted its northern part, the excavation of which was impossible, because of a later-built, overlying building.

*The excavated Hellenistic buildings on the acropolis: buildings 1 and 2 at the back, building 17 at the front.*

*Hellenistic horse and bird  
clay figurines.*

A wealth of potsherds, representing most of the known forms of the Hellenistic period, confirm the peak period of the settlement of Doliani. Vessels manufactured in foreign workshops and a series of coins from other areas, including Amvrakia, Macedonia, Sicyon and Corinth, witness the development of trade relations, both with the remaining Epirus towns, and with the Hellenistic world and attribute to Doliani the role of economic centre of the wider area.

*Bronze coins of the Epirotic Koinon (234/33-168 B.C.).*

*Silver Corinthian drachmas (4th cent. B.C.).*

*Silver coin from Sikyon  
(2nd half of the 4th cent. B.C.).*

*Bronze Hellenistic coin  
from Corfu.*

## Roman period

### The survival of the settlement

The case of the ancient settlement of Doliani differs from the remaining fortified settlements of Thesprotia, given the abundance of archaeological evidence proving that the Roman conquest did not suspend the systematic inhabitation of the area. On the contrary, life in the settlement continued throughout the Roman period, thus undoubtedly contributing to the inhabitation of the greater area during the corresponding period. Indicative is the longevity of the Roman period bath facility, in neighbouring Riziani. The facility had been used from the 1st to the 5th century AD. To the survival of the city contributed undeniably its strategic location close to the important Roman road connecting Apollonia with Nicopolis, via Avlona (Vlore) – Bouthroton (Butrint).

*Oinochoe of the Roman period.*

The city seems to have initially followed the common fate of the remaining hinterland towns and did not prevent plundering by the troops of Aemilius Paulus in 167 BC. The largest destruction is observed in parts of the eastern and the northern wall of the citadel and, particularly, on the external fortification wall which was levelled over large parts of its surface area. The fortifications were left in ruins for many centuries, to be rebuilt later, during the Byzantine period.

*Silver Roman coin of the emperor Nerva (1st cent. A.D.).*

All the archaeological evidence to date, witness the fact that inhabitation on the hill of Doliani following the Roman conquest was limited within the confines of the citadel. Excavation research has confirmed the reuse of the Hellenistic residences during the Roman period, indeed for a very long period of time.

*Bronze coin of the Epirotic Koinon after 148 B.C.*

The two nearby buildings (buildings 1 and 2) that were excavated more thoroughly witness the continuity of their usage, even after the destruction of 167 BC. The inhabitation is continuous, from the second half of the 2nd century BC, until the first post-Christian centuries, a fact confirmed by a series of finds from that period, throughout the area of the citadel.

*Bronze Roman coin of the early imperial period.*

*The Doliari acropolis.  
Building remains of the Byzantine period.*

Important is also the presence of ceramic artefacts of the Late Hellenistic period (second half of the 2nd century - 30 BC), both local and imported. This proves the preservation of contacts with the remaining Hellenistic world, despite the new political and social conditions that prevail. Moreover, a series of objects derived from the Italian peninsula, including among others fragments of amphorae with Latin sealings or special-type vessels (*terra sigilata*), witness the early development of active trade relations with the new conqueror.

The continuation of inhabitation throughout the Roman period is confirmed also by the coins recovered. These include coins of the Koinon of the Epirotes from the period after 148 BC, as well as a series of Imperial period coins, from the time of Augustus (1st century BC) up to the time of Constantius II (4th century AD).

### **Byzantine period** **A new systematic inhabitation**

Life on the hill of Doliani continued without interruption, throughout the Byzantine period. A wealth of archaeological remains witness the historical continuity of the settlement, from the Early Christian period to the Ottoman conquest.

During the 5th and 6th century AD, the citadel must have been inhabited systematically. The Hellenistic city urban web is preserved and the ancient buildings used anew, after implementing a series of changes and additions. More in particular, in building 2 the interventions were so extended, as to change its ground plan completely: new rooms were created inside the building, two additional spaces were added externally and the main entrance was transferred to the side of the narrow passage. 6th century AD pottery and coins witness the use of the building during this period.

The small cist grave found on the ancient road most probably dates from the same period. It contained a child burial and translation of relics, among which a glass cup had been placed.

The existence of a flourishing settlement at the location of the ancient city, during the first centuries of Christianity has undoubtedly contributed to the establishment of an impressive Early Christian basilica on the plain of neighbouring Riziani, which must have been the religious centre of the greater area at that time.

*Clay glazed plate with griffin decoration.*

*Early Christian glass cup.*

*Byzantine bronze  
rings.*

*Coin of the Frankish  
period (14th cent. A.D.).*

*Bronze coin  
(6th cent. A.D.).*

During the period that followed, and until the 11th century AD, no residential activity is observed on the hill of Doliani, comparable to that of previous centuries. In situ surveys, to date, have not revealed remains of inhabitation that could be linked, beyond reasonable doubt, with these centuries. However, the continuation of human presence during the 10th and 11th century AD is indirectly confirmed by the use, anew, and the extension of the ancient cemetery. The graves are of simple construction, and of the cist type. Frequent is also the reuse of some of the pre-existing ancient graves. In many cases, the dead had been buried with their bronze or -more rarely- silver jewellery.

The small church, the remains of which survive on the western tower of the ancient fortification main entrance (building 3) must be linked precisely with this phase of the cemetery's usage. It is a single-spaced small cemetery church, with walls made of small-sized stones, sporadic potsherds and mortar, as joining material. Even though the walls survive at a height of some centimetres, they had preserved, at certain locations, samples of the coloured mortar covering their interior surface. At some later period, the church was extended on the southern and western side with the addition of a unified narthex, constructed less meticulously. A small ceramic kiln preserved south of the area, probably dates from



the same period.

The inability to locate traces of inhabitation from this period, combined with the existence of cemeteries, usually extensive ones, is typical not only of Doliani, but also of its greater area. In Riziani, after the destruction of the Early Christian basilica complex, the area was used for burials. On top of the remains of the earlier building, a smaller single-spaced cemetery church was built. On its perimeter, extended a cemetery, presenting a particularly long use, from the 7th, up to at least the 12th century AD. A large 10th - 11th century AD cemetery was also revealed in Korytiani, while burials

*Iron agricultural tools of the  
Byzantine period.*

*Reconstructions of the  
Byzantine period on the  
inner wall.*

*Northeastern wall.*

*Western wall.*

were held, at that time, also in the ancient tumulus of Parapotamos.

Towards the end of the mid Byzantine period, in the 12th century AD, the tower (building 4) was probably built. It is preserved at a prominent location at the highest point of the citadel, aimed at controlling the greater area. The building, in addition to the ground floor, had at least two more wooden-floor storeys, the wooden beam recesses being still visible on the interior walls. Based on similar military buildings located in Thesprotia during the subsequent Ottoman period and apparently following the same construction tradition (Pyrgos Ragiou, Koulia Paramythias), the entrance was built on one of the highest storeys and probably accessible by means of a wooden staircase. The building had a water cistern, providing even more autonomy and defence sufficiency.

The construction of the tower marked the start of a new phase of intensified inhabitation in the citadel area, which will become clearer during the subsequent late Byzantine period and will reach its peak during the centuries following the Ottoman conquest. A wealth of mobile finds, ranging from everyday use tools to potsherds and coins from the Franc and the Venetian rule witness the residential use of the citadel during the period after the 12th century AD, until the end of the Byzantine period in the 15th century AD.

During the late Byzantine period, the cemetery of the small church of the gate was transferred from the foot of the opposite hill, to the surrounding area of the gate. It included a significant number of graves, densely arranged, of which more than a hundred have been excavated. They were mostly simple cist graves and, more rarely, tile-roofed graves or pit graves. Interments follow

*Reconstruction of the  
Byzantine period on the  
northern inner wall.*

*The Byzantine church on the western tower of the main gate ΠΙ.*

a very characteristic ritual, with minimal deviations and there seems to be no element of social differentiation. In their vast majority, the graves did not include burial offerings. An exception was the discovery, in one of the graves, of a late Byzantine bronze fibula, while another burial was accompanied by eight Franc rule period bronze coins. These finds, along with two pectoral crosses from the greater area of the cemetery witness its use during the 14th century AD.

The extent and density of the cemetery prove, beyond doubt, the existence of a flourishing community at the location of the ancient settlement during the last centuries before the Ottoman conquest. Besides, the settlement is

*The ceramic kiln south of  
the main gate ΠΙ.*

*The late Byzantine tower of the acropolis with the water tank.*

mentioned also in sources of that era and, more particularly, on the 14th century AD golden bull (chrysobull) of Despot Symeon Paleologos the Serbian, on which its name, Doliani [ΔΟΛΙΑΝΟΙ], is also preserved.

During the same period, the successive conflicts and political instability seem to have led to extensive interventions and reconstructions in the ancient fortifications, mainly on the citadel wall, where the inhabitants are concentrated. The wall construction system that had been followed during these interventions is characterised by the use of small rectangular carven stones and mortar and is easily distinguishable from the ancient construction. On the NE part of the internal fortification, the wall was complemented vertically at the locations of collapse. Moreover, the destroyed external surface of the fortification, at the location of the northern tower, was rebuilt from its foundations, assuming the shape of a cyclical tower-like projection. On the western part of the internal fortification, 50 metres of a new wall were erected, with a width not exceeding 1.50m. The wall closes the gap between the two flanks of the north-western projection of the ancient fortification.

The defensive capacity of the citadel wall was enhanced even further by a series of interventions using a different construction pattern, which were

probably implemented during the Byzantine period, at a time that cannot be determined precisely. They are characterised by the lack of mortar and the use of rectangular stones or schist slabs, in a large variety of sizes, placed without particular attention in elementary successive series. In this manner, a collapsed part of the northern fortification was reconstructed at a length of 10 metres approximately, the south-western wall is complemented, the southern gate is closed up and abandoned and three successive terraces are built in order to reinforce the southern fortification.

The interventions observed on the eastern part of the external fortification wall are a particular case. Past the eastern tower-like projection, the ancient wall is succeeded by a later construction that follows a southbound course along a completely new path. It is a very roughly built wall, revealed at a length of 134 metres and used apparently as a kind of bailey on the internal fortification.

Its wall consists of rectangular stones of varying sizes, many of which were derived from the collapse of the older fortification. The stones were placed on unequally levelled series, without joining the seals or using binding material. Almost over its entire length, the wall had only an external surface, and, overall, is more like a retaining wall, rather than a fortification project. As pertains to its construction method, the wall is similar to the reconstruction interventions on the internal fortification without the use of mortar mentioned above. It is probable that the wall dates from the same period as these constructions. The finds of the discovery are not considered posterior to the mid Byzantine period, something which proves that the use of this part of the fortifications had already been abandoned, before the end of the Byzantine period.

### **Ottoman period** **The newer settlement**

The location of the ancient settlement, the strong fortifications and the abundance of construction material, all seem to have contributed to the preservation of the inhabitation on the hill of Doliani, also during the post-Byzantine period. Already at the beginning of the Ottoman rule, a small settlement had been established on the ruins of the ancient city, which is mentioned in a 1431 Ottoman census catalogue as Dulyani.

This new settlement develops mainly within the limits of the citadel wall and is formed by the pre-existing tower, which continues to function as a core

*The Doliani acropolis.  
Building remains of the Ottoman period.*

*Aerial view of the Doliani acropolis.*

of concentration of inhabitants, as was also the case during the preceding late Byzantine period. The settlement comprises a small number of independent residences, without any particular cohesion, something suggesting that inhabitation was periodical, rather than continuous, from the Byzantine period to modern years.

Ruins of residences and their compounds that are nowadays visible throughout the citadel, as well as sporadically on the slopes of the hill outside the fortification, represent the form of the settlement during the late Ottoman rule. The walls, as well as the arrangement of the buildings, clearly show the multiple interventions during their long use.

The settlement was traversed by a network of paths, while large parts of the area, such as the north-eastern part of the citadel, were free of use. A central path started off at the tower, on the hilltop, and extended to the east. This path adjusts both to the terrain and to the gaps created in-between the buildings. Other paths, less visible nowadays, use at times parts of the natural rock and at times the existing compounds, leading to the northern and the southern parts of the settlement.

The residences were connected with one another through compounds made of dry stone walls, often as extensions of building walls. Their function



*View of the post Byzantine settlement on the Doliani acropolis.*

must not have been limited to setting the boundaries of individual houses, but would also determine and unify greater construction insulae or complexes.

The agricultural and stock-farming activities of the residents are witnessed by the large fenced areas housing the animals, next to or around the houses, and by the large circular threshing floor in the centre of the settlement, which could also have been used as a gathering area.

The residences were stone-built, using loose mortar, which has been washed off on practically all of the walls, and looks like dry stone masonry. As witnessed by the limekiln next to the eastern tower of the main gate, the abundant construction material, used also to extract lime, was reused for the construction of the houses.

*Hypothetical reconstruction of  
the post Byzantine building 10  
of the acropolis.*

*Building 5 and part of its building complex (building 16).*

The architectural type of the buildings is a combination of the two-room house type, with the type of prostyle houses. In their majority, the buildings are two-storey constructions, simultaneously serving residential and stock-farming uses. Depending on the terrain, the two storeys were arranged either successively or gradually and communicated with an external stone-built staircase.

The first floor comprised one or two rooms, serving the residential needs of its inhabitants, as well as a small indoor bathroom. The rooms on the ground floor were used as stables or storage areas and were complemented by external auxiliary areas around a spacious court, aimed to serve the needs of the agricultural and stock-farming population.

*Clay smoking pipes.*

*Silver Ottoman coin.*

*Bronze Venetian coin (1710).*

*Coin of the Ionic state (1834).*

*Building 5 and part of its building complex (building 16).*

On the southern part of the settlement, where the soil is adequately level, a spacious triangular open space/square was formed and paved meticulously. Around this area, are the remains of a building complex (buildings 12 and 16), as well as of an uncommonly shaped construction, that is preserved on the south-eastern tower of the internal fortification wall (building 5).

Building 5 is a four-sided construction, and its shape is fully subjected to the dimensions of the ancient tower, on which it has been erected. Its sides are formed by rectangular lime-built piers, supporting arched openings. Based on the current condition of the building, the piers were probably sixteen in total, eleven of which are still fully or partially in place. They supported four arcs on each side. Only two arcs are currently preserved on the southern side. Small plate-like stones and mortar were used for their construction, while the use of ancient construction material is sporadic.

*Hypothetical reconstruction  
of building 5.*

Owing to its particular architectural form, its orientation and privileged location on the ancient tower, rendering it visible from the entire greater area of the Riziani - Korytiani plain, the building had once been considered by S. Dakaris as an Ottoman mosque. Regardless of the exact use of the building, its religious character must be taken for granted. Similar buildings dating from the Ottoman period have been found also at other locations of Thesprotia (Karvounari, Kotsika).

West of the building and in direct connection with it, a complex of semi-open or roofed areas was formed, obviously for public use (building 12). Apparently, the areas of this complex have been used for long during the Ottoman period and were frequently maintained and modified.

The building on the southern edge of the complex was a two-storey construction built on top of some sort of heightened tile-paved balcony and, contrary to the remaining buildings of the settlement, it had a bathroom on the ground floor, accessible from the outside. Following this, there was a housed, semi-open construction with an array of piers on the east. To date, this is the only known sample of post-Byzantine stoa from Thesprotia and has been walled during some subsequent stage. The array of piers has a wall construction similar to that of building 5, and would have been part of the same building complex, from the onset. The complex was complemented, to the north, by a series of buildings erected during various stages on top of a slab-paved surface. On their northern edge, an additional bathroom was built, with access from without the buildings.

Building 5, of a religious use, along with its nearby building complex, are monuments of particular importance for Thesprotia during the Ottoman period. The fact that they had been erected within the limits of a small and, apparently, agricultural and stock-farming settlement, is indeed peculiar. It is however possible that, at that time, Doliani was some sort of a religious centre, probably regional.

However, the finds that survived from the last phase of inhabitation are indicative of the inhabitants' agricultural activity. The discovery of a 1710 Venetian and an 1834 Ionian State coin, confirms the survival of the settlement until very recently indeed.

## **Doliani today**

### **The value enhancement works**

In September 2002, when the archaeological site value enhancement works started, Doliani was only ending a period of many decades of isolation, with the construction of the bridge over river Kalamas, a project greatly enhancing the archaeological site accessibility.

The main object of the works, from 2002 through 2007, was to develop the necessary infrastructures, so that the archaeological site, until then an area hardly accessible and unprotected against any human intervention or natural phenomena, would become accessible to the public and ensure the protection

*The archaeological site of  
Doliani before and after the  
value enhancement works.*

2002

2008

of the antiquities and their surrounding environment.

Special emphasis was placed on limiting and controlling the dense virgin vegetation, which had substantially dominated the antiquities. The systematic clearing of the ground contributed to the fortification walls being revealed, as well as the other visible monuments of the settlement, the identification of new architectural remains and the design of the visitors' path.

The removal of the huge volume of the newer construction material, derived from the collapse of the buildings of the last stage of inhabitation in the citadel has revealed the buildings, the precincts and the paths of the post-Byzantine settlement. Moreover, the walls were partially reconstructed, along with other architectural elements of the buildings, with the partial reuse of the collapsed material, something that led to the determination of their forms. Support or completion works were also carried out on fragile parts of the later fortifications.

Extended earth removal also took place, with the aim to facilitate the construction of the visitors' path, and to enhance the visibility of the monuments along that path. The course of the path itself is through smaller pathways that were built using the abundant newer construction material, so that they would be harmonised with the natural and archaeological surroundings. Visitors are guided through ancient gates, ancient roads and newer paths, and, aided by information plates, are provided with an overview of the successive stages of the settlement.

Immediately after the entrance to the archaeological site, a visitors' building has been erected, housing information material on the ancient settlement and the antiquities of the greater area. This building is also used for availing information material to aid and guide visitors throughout the site.

The necessary infrastructures of the archaeological site are complemented by the installation of a safety fence in order to protect the public, to delimit a vehicle parking area and to allow the installation of public utility networks (power, water, irrigation and fire-fighting infrastructures).

*Restoration works on the main gate III.*

Moreover, in the context of the second phase of the value enhancement works, that started in the summer of 2006 and was completed at the end of 2008, a series of complementary works was implemented in the area, the necessity of which had become obvious during the implementation of the works preceding them.

The most important of these interventions were the re-erection works carried out at the ancient fortification main gate (Π1). The works included the partial restoration of the derelict northern and the western sides of the eastern tower and the replacement of the arched lintel.

Special emphasis was placed on identifying and revealing the continuity of the eastern part of the external fortification wall. The bad condition of the fortification parts that were revealed, necessitated the execution of extensive short-scale support works.

Caulking and short-scale support works were also executed on the citadel tower wall (building 4), in order to reinforce the decayed mortar and to stabilise the stone masonry. The wall surfaces of one of the largest and most important buildings of the post-Byzantine settlement of the citadel were also partially restored (building 15).

The interventions were completed with the installation of a small theatrical construct next to the threshing floor of the citadel, so as to host cultural and educational events.

After the completion of the restoration and value enhancement works, the archaeological site has literally changed face and has become accessible to the public, by means of a visitor-friendly path, presenting archaeological, as well as naturalist, interest.

*The touring route along the western fortification.*

## **Doliani as a naturalist path**

### **The archaeological site**

How many different aspects can an archaeological site have?

Usually, the preservation of monuments relies mainly on their antiqueness, their symbolic value and their connection with a historical event. Apart from all these, the natural scenery is almost always ignored, in other words the particular natural beauty of an area.

Doliani was built on top of a small hill washed by river Kalamas and is an area presenting particular environmental and ecological interest. It is the only archaeological site in Thesprotia, that has been inhabited continuously, since the Archaic times, to the Ottoman period. This might mean that the selection of the location was not random and that the natural environment has been a basic criterion. The climatic conditions (high humidity values throughout the year, because of river Kalamas, smooth and cool summer with short periods of drought) and the variety of the terrain (high concentrations of limestone and schist stones, steep and sunless recesses in rocks) create favourable conditions for the development of plants with different ecological requirements. And, despite the fact that these plants do not belong to rare and valuable species, they do constitute a significant capital for our country's biodiversity. Each year, new plant species appear and spread their leaves and roots into the recesses of the steep rocks and the fortification walls, as well as into the flat, sunward parts of the area.



### The wall flora

*Equisetum sp.*

What really attracts the interest of the visitor of the archaeological site in Doliani is the successive series of fortification walls and the steep gorges on the southern and the western sides of the settlement, in other words its natural fortification. However, apart from their undisputed usefulness, the fortifications, both natural and artificial, have, over time, become a particular habitat for plants. Given that after the value enhancement works, the guided tour path reveals most part of these fortifications, the particular plant society they host is conspicuous even to the simple visitor of the site.

*Rusty back fern*  
(*Ceterach officinarum*).

In the small quantities of soil and the strong alkaline substrate that develops between the stone blocks, some of the most important species of Greece's flora develop. In this sense, it is easy to identify the pharmaceutical Rusty back fern (*Ceterach officinarum*) and *Cymbalaria microcalyx*, with its beautiful small purple flowers, a plant that is extremely rare for the area of Thesprotia. In-between the stone blocks, various types of *Sedum* are present, such as the *Sedum rupestre* and the *Sedum sediforme*, as well as the *Equisetum sp.*, which is locally named «alepoooura» (foxtail) or «polykombi» (multiple knots). A typical species that has found favourable conditions of growth is the *Umbilicus rupestris* and the *Umbilicus horizontalis*, with the characteristic local name «tou papa t'alti» (the priest's ear). Probably, the most impressive plant that extends its roots on top of the western wall, is undoubtedly the red Valerian (*Centranthus ruber*), with the long, lance-shaped leaves and the long stems, on the peak of which grow the impressive purple flowers in umbels. This, too, is a rare species in the area.

*Umpilucus rupestris.*

These plants are but a small sample of the important flora that grows on the wall of Doliani. They are not the only ones, though. Other frequent species are mustard (*Sinapis sp.*), which during springtime covers almost all of the steep slopes with its yellow flowers, *Senecio vulgaris*, the chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*), the wild clover (*Trifolium repens*), etc.

*Sedum rupestre.*

### The settlement flora

It is apparent that human presence played an important role in the establishment of a particular plant society within the archaeological site as well. The various land uses, depending on the period, resulted in the partial degradation of its natural environment, mainly due to the area's significant grazing capacity, of the farming capability of the greater lowland area, as well as due to seasonal fires aimed to increase the forage. However, at the same time, the natural erosive processes of the soil over the centuries and the particular climatic conditions, owing to the neighbouring of the area with river Kalamas, resulted in the preservation, to a significant extent, of the landscape's naturalness. This is the reason why the area is considered a small ark of animal and plant species.

Starting with the area's value enhancement works, the main focus was on removing the dense self-growing vegetation. Species that are typical of degraded grasslands, such as Jerusalem sage (*Phlomis fruticosa*), asphodel (*Asphodelus aestivus*), sea onion (*Urginea maritima*) and many chaste tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*) covered most of its surface. Combined with tree vegetation, which consists mainly of Kermes oaks (*Quercus coccifera*), olive trees (*Olea europaea*) and wild pears (*Pyrus amygdaliformis*), it was the usual cause of damage inside the walls and the ancient buildings, as well

*Butter cup*  
(*Ranunculus sp.*)

*Bellflower*  
(*Campanoula spatulata*).

*Red Valerian*  
(*Centranthus ruber*).

*Olive tree*  
(*Olea europaea*).

as the structural integrity of the fortifications. Their removal using mild interventions (in addition to clearing the area of annual graminaceous and herbaceous plants), was considered necessary already from the first year of the site's value enhancement works.

*Valeriana officinalis.*

A significant part of the flora has been preserved in the area, without damaging the antiquities. Removal of the dense vegetation and the change of the landscape, after the completion of the remaining works undertaken in the context of the project in question, resulted in the annual renewal of the flora, with new and interesting plant species. A typical example are the few plants of valeriana (*Valeriana officinalis*), i.e. probably the only ones that are present in the archaeological sites of Thesprotia. These plants found favourable conditions within the archaeological site, on the steep slope west of the settlement, after three years of systematic clearing of the ground. Also, the autumn humidity that falls on the paved parts of residences, favours the growth of the impressive Winter daffodil (*Sternbergia lutea*) and of the saffron (*Colchicum* sp.).

*Winter daffodil  
(Sternbergia lutea).*

Generally speaking, the plant species have increased inside the settlement, despite the ongoing necessary clearings. In springtime, the area is covered by a multi-coloured layer of flowers. The dominant species is the mallow (*Malva sylvestris*), chamomile daisies (*Anthemis chia*), small hartworts (*Tordylium officinale*), dandelion (*Crepis rubra*) and common poppies (*Papaver rhoeas*). On the slope, outside the north-western fortification wall that was covered by Kermes oaks and Jerusalem sages, now grow bellflowers (*Campanula spatulata*), butter cups (*Ranunculus* sp.) and sowthistles (*Sonchus oleraceus*), while on the western, sunless part, there are figworts (*Scrophularia peregrina*), fennels (*Foeniculum vulgare*) and bee balms (*Melissa officinalis*), as well as various types of mushrooms.

*Anemone coronaria.*

In addition to the dominant species, easily distinguishable are also Cuckoo Pint (*Arum italicum*), spurges (*Euphorbia*

*Orchid  
(Serapias sp.).*

characias), anemones (*Anemone coronaria*) and Dovesfoot Cranesbill (*Geranium molle*). Typical is also a type of orchid, *Serapias* sp., which appeared after four years of clearings, east of the citadel tower, as well as the broom-rape (*Orobancha* sp.), which is found in the cooler areas of the settlement. Finally, throughout the area outside the fortification wall, asparagus (*Asparagus aphyllus*), mulleins (*Verbascum sinuatum*) and various types of graminaceous plants are found. The dominant species is the wild oat (*Avena sterilis*)

### Epilogue

Linking the cultural particularities of an area with the natural scenery of its surroundings, does change the point of our observation. Every year and every season brings a small surprise, both for the lover of Antiquity and the naturalists and environmentalists. Better management of the vegetation in an archaeological site, such as Doliani, must rely on an ideal combination and interconnection of cultural and natural values, within the same area. The archaeological sites are classified among the last protected areas of flora and fauna in Greece and, therefore, safeguarding them is an absolute necessity.

*Figwort*  
(*Scrofularia peregrina*).

*Cuckoo Pint*  
(*Arum italicum*).

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Ancient literature

1. Polivius, *Historiae*, 30. 15
2. Livius, 43.21.4 και 45.26.3

### General bibliography

1. Aravantinos S., Χρονογραφία της Ηπείρου των τε όμορων Ελληνικών και Ιλλυρικών χωρών, Athens 1856.
2. Βαλκανική παραδοσιακή αρχιτεκτονική, Athens 1993.
3. Vlachopoulou-Ekonomou A., Επισκόπηση της τοπογραφίας της αρχαίας Ηπείρου, Ioannina 2003.
4. Vokotopoulou I., Βίτσα, Athens 1986.
5. Dakaris S.I., Θεσπρωτία, Athens 1972.
6. Ενετοί και Ιωαννίτες ιππότες. Δίκτυα οχυρωματικής αρχιτεκτονικής, Experimental action Archi-med, Athens 2001 (συλλογικό έργο).
7. Hammond N.G.L., Epirus. The geography, the ancient remains, the history and the topography of Epirus and adjacent areas, Oxford 1967.
8. Epirus 4.000 years of Greek history and civilisation, Athens 1997.
9. Inalcik Halic, Hicri 835 Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid, Ankara 1954.
10. Kokolakis M., Η τουρκική στατιστική της Ηπείρου στο Σαλναμέ του 1895, Athens 2003.
11. Κοσμική Μεσαιωνική Αρχιτεκτονική στα Βαλκάνια 1300 – 1500 και Διατήρησή της, Thessaloniki 1999 (Conference Proceedings).
12. Lawrennce A. W., Greek aims in fortification, Oxford 1979.
13. Lambrou V., Φανοτή-Ντόλιανη: Έρευνα και ανάδειξη του αρχαιολογικού χώρου, Epirotika Chronika 40, Ioannina 2006.
14. Lambrou V. – Drosou D., Κεραμική της ελληνιστικής περιόδου από τον οικισμό, τη νεκρόπολη και την ευρύτερη περιοχή της αρχαίας Φανοτής, 7th Scientific Meeting for the Hellenistic Pottery (Conference Proceedings).
15. Lambrou V. – Saltagianni E., Αρχαιολογικός χώρος Ντόλιανης. Οι εργασίες ανάδειξης και τα νέα αρχαιολογικά δεδομένα, Athens 2007 (Conference Proceedings).
16. Mouselimis S. G., Αρχαιότητες της Θεσπρωτίας, Ioannina 1980.
17. Nicol, D. Το Δεσποτάτο της Ηπείρου 1267 – 1479. Μια συνεισφορά στην ελληνική Ιστορία κατά το Μεσαίωνα, Athens 1991.

18. Preka-Alexandri K., *Archaeologikon Deltion* 50 (1995),  
Chronika B2, 442 – 444.
19. Riginos G., *Archaeologikon Deltion* 54 (1999)  
Chronika B1, 503 – 505.
20. Riginos G., *Archaeologikon Deltion* 55 (2000) – 61 (2006),  
Chronika (in press).
21. Sarras G., *Η Θεσπρωτία δια μέσου των αιώνων 40.000 π.Χ. μέχρι  
σήμερα*, Athens 1998.
22. Tranoulidis A., *Μελέτη συντήρησης & αποκατάστασης της κύριας  
πύλης της αρχαίας Φανοτής*, Igoumenitsa 2006  
(32nd Ephorate archive).
23. Psimouli V., *Σούλι και Σουλιώτες*, Athens 2005.







