

The Prytaneum



"Building 80" and the street to the south-eastern fortification gate

Cover photo 1: The theatre of Gitana

Cover photo 2: Tile antefix from the Prytaneum

Public buildings

Based on the data available so far, the area to the west within the partition wall, stretching over 50.000 sq.m., apparently includes some of the most important public buildings of the settlement. Examples include the so-called "Small Temple" with a vestibule, nave and a paved courtyard and "Building A", identified as the city's prytaneum – archive (register), with symposium rooms decorated with mosaic floors as well as workshop and storage areas built around a central courtyard.

Buildings with potential public nature have also been identified in "Lower City" Gitana, the eastern part of the settlement outside the partition wall: a large building with at least two construction phases adjacent to the fortification in the southeast ("Building 80") and a building with a doric colonnade and architectural parts with a relief decoration that stood at the southern part of the "Lower City" and has not yet been investigated.

The Agora of the settlement is situated on a plateau at the northeast of the partition wall. It is formed as an open square enclosed by an elongated stoa in the north and a complex of shops in the south.

Outside the western part of the fortification the theatre of the settlement is located, with a capacity of 4,000 to 5,000 spectators, meant both for theatrical performances and gatherings of the Thesprotian League. Excavations have revealed part of the koilon, the orchestra and most of the stage building. A large number of the stone seats bear engraved inscriptions of names.

Enhancement works

The enhancement works in the archaeological site of Gitana were carried out in two phases. The first phase was implemented between 2003 ~ 2009 with funding from the Epirus ROP of the Community Support Framework III and a total cost of 1,346,547.41 € and the second phase between 2010 ~ 2013 with funding from the OP "Thessaly – Central Greece – Epirus 2007-2013" of the National Strategic Reference Framework and a budget of 1,000,000€. After the completion of the works almost the entire archaeological site has now become accessible to the public.



Head of a Hellenistic clay figurine

MINISTRY OF CULTURE & SPORTS
32nd EPHORATE OF PREHISTORIC AND CLASSICAL ANTIQUITIES



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF GITANA THESPROTIA



Archaeological site of Gitana. View from the top of Vrysella



Pyxis lid with relief medusa head

The archaeological site of Gitana

The archaeological site of Gitana extends on the southwestern slope of the gypsum-stone mountain of Vrysella, at the confluence of Kalpakiotikos stream with Kalamas river (ancient Thyamis). The existence of a town named Gitana is attested by seals, inscriptions and literary tradition, and the exact type of the name is preserved on a bronze dedicatory inscription from the "Small Temple" of the settlement. Gitana served as the political center and seat of the Thesprotian League from the time of its establishment in the 2nd half of the 4th century BC until its occupation by the Romans in 167 BC.

The site is surrounded on all sides by a strong polygonal wall with a total perimeter of 2,500 m. The fortification is reinforced with rectangular towers on the northern easily accessible side, while on the western and southern sides, where there is natural protection by Kalamas river, it follows the natural terrain forming successive projections (contusions). The wall reaches the top of Vrysella mountain resulting in a strong tower with a semicircular facade. A bailey reinforced the city's defence on the western front and protected the area of the theatre from the North. Access to the ancient settlement was ensured through three main gates and three smaller gateways with the main entrance placed at the northwestern part of the fortification. The partition wall, an inner wall later than the rest of the fortification, traverses the settlement from north to south dividing it in two large residential areas.

Urban design

Gitana had an urban design in zones adapted to the sloppy natural terrain. The streets are straight and mostly unpaved and intersect perpendicularly creating elongated rectangular building blocks or islets, while successive terraces render the steep slopes smoother. Depending on its length, each building islet comprises two or more buildings, separated by a narrow aisle. Larger buildings, public or private, can occupy an entire building islet.



Bronze statuette of a satyr from the Prytaneum

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The visitors' building houses a poster exhibition and is accessible to people with disabilities.

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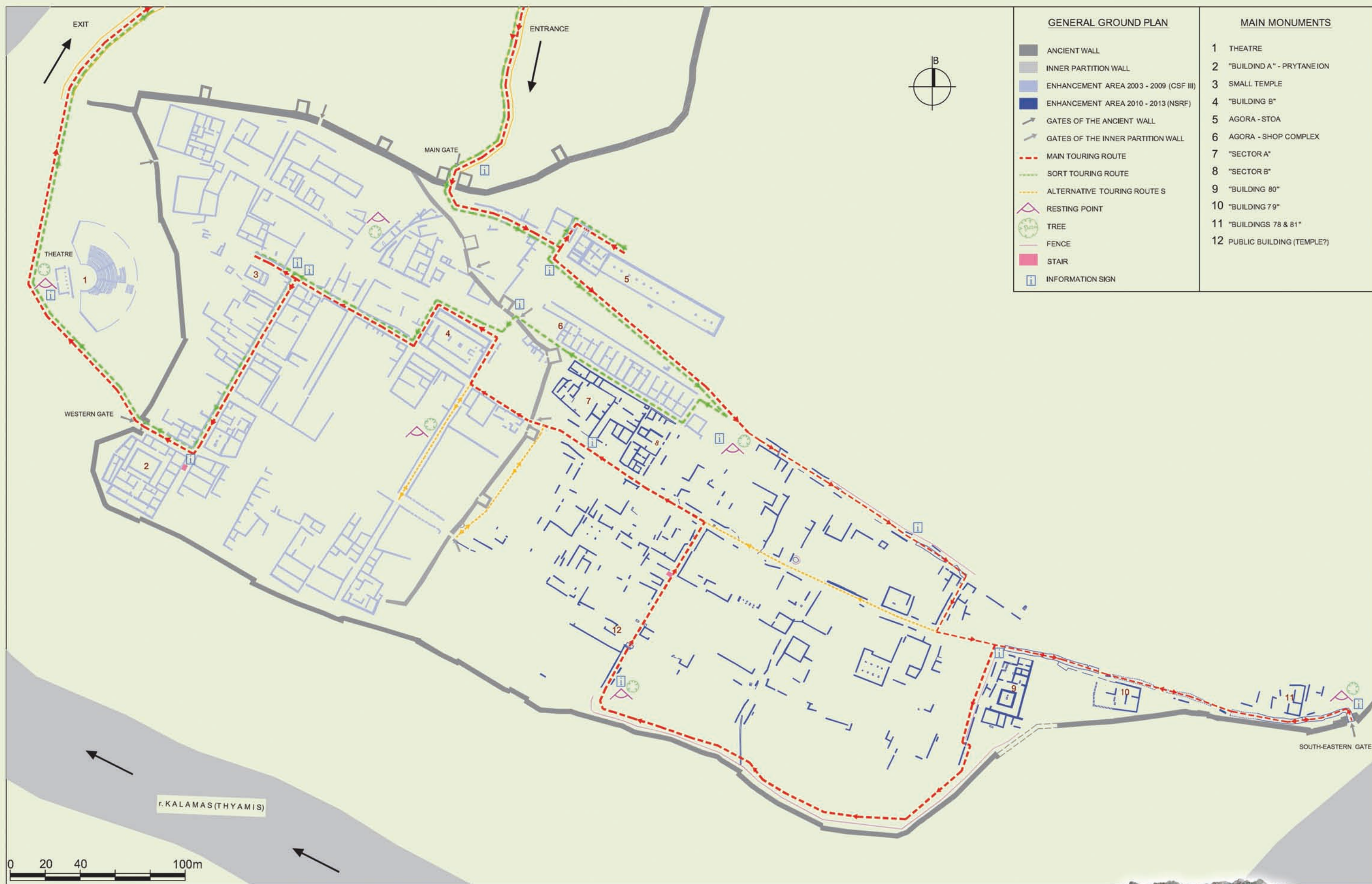
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Clay document sealing from the Prytaneum (inscription BOYΛΑΣ, i.e. of the Assembly)



Silver coin of the Roman Republic (2nd cent. BC)



Bronze inscription from the "Small Temple" with the name of the city of Gitana