

## The Prehistoric Settlement under the Heraion of Samos

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### Summary

Heraion of Samos is one of the most glorious sanctuaries of Ionia, dedicated to goddess Hera. Excavations of the German Archaeological Institute since 1911 brought to light impressive buildings and votives from the Early Iron Age through the Late Roman Periods (1050 BC-400 AD). Architecture discovered in the area of the Hera Temple (1953, 1955, 1973) indicate the existence of a big settlement, which in the mature Early Bronze Age (2550-2000 BC) has been, besides Troy, Liman Tepe (Izmir) and the island settlements of Poliochni on Lemnos, Thermi on Lesbos and Emporio on Chios, one of the biggest early urban settlements in the Aegean.

The project has been planned as a 5-years excavation – the first excavation of the University of Cyprus abroad – and has been granted in 2009-2011 as a research programme of the A. G. Leventis Foundation. It included excavations north of the Sacred Road of Heraion and has been conducted within the framework of the excavations of the German Archaeological Institute and thanks to the permit of the Greek Ministry of Culture.

The entirely fulfilled goals of the project can be summarized as follows: a) investigation of the Late Chalcolithic, the early phases of the Early Bronze, the Middle and Late Bronze Age settlement phases (4000-1700 BC), b) examination of the spatial distribution of economic activities through all phases, c) study of the external contacts of these settlements, d) diagnosis of the political and social organization and their changes through time, e) illumination of the early urbanism process in the Early and the Middle Bronze Age, and f) examination of the participation and the specific role of Samos in local and extensive trade networks not only within the Aegean, but also between the Aegean and Western Anatolia, as well as between the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean including Cyprus in Prehistoric Times.