



Friday, November 14, 2025

Presentation of the recent volume

***The Sanctuary of Ayia Irini Reconsidered.
A Quest for Gods and Territories***

(Åström Editions, Nicosia 2025)

by Prof. **Nota Kourou**, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens,
Prof. **Giorgos Vavouranakis**, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, &
Dr **Anna Lekka**, Hellenic Ministry of Culture,
in dialogue with the author Dr **Giorgos Bourogiannis**.

ABSTRACT

This volume re-examines one of the most exceptional archaeological discoveries of the 1927-1931 Swedish Cyprus Expedition, the sanctuary of Ayia Irini. Celebrated for its corpus of terracotta votive sculpture, Ayia Irini was excavated and published almost 100 years ago and has played a key part in our understanding of the island's material and votive culture since then. However, in spite of its importance, significant aspects of Ayia Irini's biography remained poorly understood and were in need of revision.

Based on the exceptional progress of Cypriot archaeological scholarship during the last decades, the volume explores two pivotal questions that are embedded in the study of Ayia Irini. On one hand, it reconsiders the special symbolism, ideological connotations and political affiliation of Ayia Irini during the Archaic period, a time when the political landscape of Cyprus underwent significant transformations. On the other hand, it thoroughly examines the sanctuary's cultic and religious features and, through them, it attempts a more precise definition of the deity worshipped at Ayia Irini.

The volume begins with a presentation of the site and the history of its archaeological exploration, while also presenting the main scope of the study. It moves on to a thorough discussion of Ayia Irini in association with the political and religious landscape of Cyprus during the early first millennium BC, with due consideration also of epigraphic and textual evidence dating to subsequent periods. It concludes with a detailed discussion of the sanctuary's chief votive features and definition of its worshipped deity.

The presentation takes place **Friday, November 14, 2025, at 19.00 (Athens)**
with live presence at the Swedish Institute and online via Zoom.

To participate (in-person or via Zoom), please register at:
<https://www.sia.gr/en/events.php?eid=522#ParticipationForm>