

# Vergina

## Names (also known as)

Ancient Aigai – Greek: Αἰγαί, Latinized as Aegae.

## Location/Description



Vergina is a small town in northern Greece, part of Veroia municipality in Imathia, Central Macedonia. The population of Vergina municipality was 2,464 in 2011.

Modern Vergina is best known as the site of ancient Aigai, the first capital of Macedon and the site of an impressive palace and surrounding suburbs and markets.

Aigai is an UNESCO World Heritage Site – ‘...an exceptional testimony to a significant development in European civilization, at the transition from classical city-state to the imperial structure of the Hellenistic and Roman periods’.

## Scriptural references

None

## Brief history

Aigai was the site of Philip’s royal palace and the capital of Macedonia, although it never became a city and remained as an organised collection of villages around the home of the king.

In 336 BC Philip II, king of Macedon, was assassinated in the theatre at Aigai and his son Alexander the Great was proclaimed king.

At the beginning of the 4th century BC, the capital was transferred to Pella on the central Macedonian plain. Nevertheless, Aigai retained its role as a sacred site due to the remains of the palace and the royal tombs.

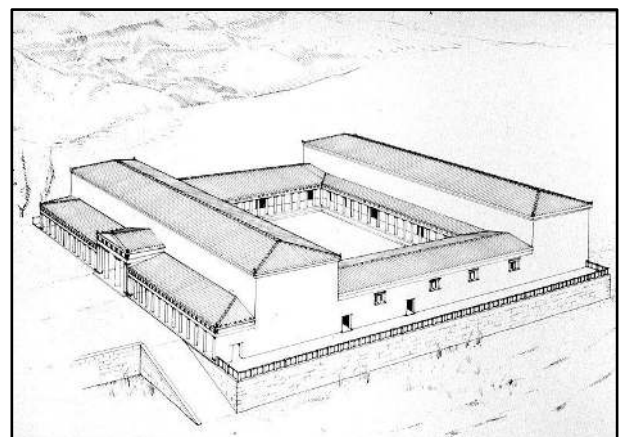
Aigai suffered at the hands of the heirs of Alexander in the 3rd century and in 276 BC Gallic mercenaries plundered many of the tombs.



Huge mosaic floors in the palace

After the overthrow of the Macedonian kingdom by the Romans in 168 BC both old and new capitals were destroyed, the walls pulled down and the palace, theatre and all other buildings burnt down. In the 1st century AD a landslide completely destroyed the city.

In 1977, Greek archaeologists began excavating the Great Tumulus at Aigai near modern Vergina. They found that two of the four tombs were undisturbed. These contained fabulous treasures and objects of great quality and sophistication. One of them is believed to be that of King Philip II.



Reconstruction of Phillip’s palace at Vergina

## Scriptural importance

The Peloponnesian War (431-404 BC) ended the imperial ambitions of Athens and Sparta.

In the aftermath, Macedonia, though not strictly Greek, emerged as the ruler of Greece.

At the time, Persia was the super-power of the day. The Medo-Persian Empire is represented by several symbols in the Prophecy of Daniel – the chest and arms of silver of Dan. 2:32; the bear raised up on one side with 3 ribs in its mouth of Dan. 7:5; and the ram with one horn higher than the other of Dan. 8:3.

The last Persian monarchs, Xerxes and his son Darius, were embarrassingly beaten back pushing westwards **‘against the realm of Grecia’** (Dan. 11:2).

Phillip II of Macedon, united all the Greek city-states under him and had begun planning a retaliatory campaign eastwards into Asia Minor. With his assassination, the execution of the plan fell to his son Alexander, who became known as the Great.

Alexander is the one whom Daniel prophesies as **“...a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those”** (Dan. 11:3,4).

His kingdom is represented in the image of Nebuchadnezzar as **“his belly and his thighs of brass”** (Dan. 2:32)

Aristotle the tutor of Alexander taught him the Greek human-centred, and God-defying philosophy which was represented in the brass portion of the band described in Dan. 4:15.

In Dan. 7:6 Alexander is represented as the **“leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.”** In Dan. 8:5, he is the **“he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.”**

Alexander died in 323 BC, at the age of 32 years and 8 months. At the end of his 11 year campaign of conquests, his Greek army

marched north to the Danube; south to Syene 500km down the Nile and eastwards to the foot of the Himalayas and the banks of the Indus River, the border of India (total land area 5.2 million km<sup>2</sup>).

Alexander’s empire was ultimately divided among four of his generals (the Diadochi). Of these two emerged to dominate the Middle East for centuries until the rise of the Roman Empire in 67 BC – Seleucus the founder of the Seleucid Kingdom (ruling Syria and Persian territory is called “the king of the North”), and Ptolemy founder of the Ptolemaic Kingdom (ruling Egypt and the Holy Land is called “the king of the South”) – Dan. 11:5,6. The latter day counterparts of these two powers play an important part in events leading to Armageddon and the establishment of the Kingdom of God – Dan. 11:40-45. This little place called Vergina in Macedonia which saw the beginning of the rule of Alexander the Great played an important role in shaping the future of the world.

## Sources:

Wikipedia

(Compilers – John and Cyndy Tierney)