

The RAG

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PERTH'S PURPLE PATCH

Bill Leadbetter



Bill Leadbetter: Senior Lecturer in Social Education and History at Edith Cowan University

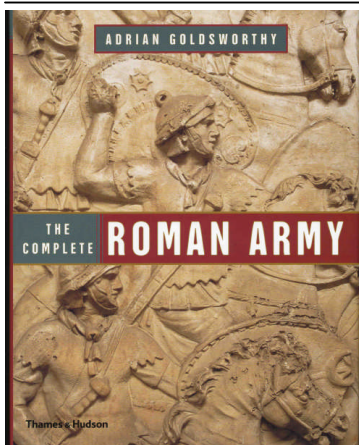
During the seventies and even into the eighties, purple – or its shades – was a terribly fashionable colour. In the ancient world, it was more than the “in thing” – embraced by one decade and despised as a taste disaster by the next – it was the colour of opulence and power. Only the very wealthiest people could afford the purest purple dye – sea purple as it was known. The reason is simple. It was the small product of a small creature – each drop being composed of the pinhead secretions of a sea-snail, the *murex trunculus*. Where colonies of these sea-snails could be found in the Mediterranean, there too could be found communities harvesting them and manufacturing raw dye.

In his account of the *murex* and the production of dye, Pliny the Elder mentions two sources of *murex* outside of Phoenecia: Meninx in Cyrenaica and the Gulf of Gytheion near Sparta. This account omits another known source of purple dye: Lycia. The coast of Lycia, although difficult to travel by land, is deeply indented with coves and inlets. In one of these isolated bays, a colony of *murex trunculus* flourished, and indeed continues to flourish. This is the site

of Aperlae. Aperlae was only inhabited relatively late - in the Hellenistic period. While all around it Lycian magnates lived at small centres like Apollonia, Simena and Teimiussa; Aperlae remained a quiet and uninhabited bay. It was protected by the twin walls of remoteness and lack of a permanent water source. This site was not identified with any certainty until the 1970's, but since then has been the subject of intensive archaeological survey by teams from the University of Maryland (College Park), the University of Colorado (Boulder) and Edith Cowan University.

Aperlae was a town which was built on the harvest and manufacture of purple dye. It is located on the northern shore of a long, narrow bay called, in Turkish, Asar Bay. Asar Bay is not sheltered: rather, it is open to the south west, and the steep sides of the ridges on either side of the bay act as a tunnel for wind and rain in rough weather. While that weather is mostly seasonal, it means that the bay cannot serve as a safe harbour for much of the year, and the weather can be rough. The southwestern headland of the bay, Ulu Burun is the site of the world's oldest excavated shipwreck. If the site is difficult of access by sea, it is even more so by land. It is some kilometres from the nearest modern village, Siçak or (Kinlinçli) and the walk is not easy, over two ridges, and through rocky, brushy terrain.

Aperlae's isolation, together with the lack of a perennial water supply, meant that the settlement of the town occurred much later than elsewhere on the rugged Lycian coast. The earliest datable structures on the site are its walls, the first phase of which belongs to the Hellenistic period (ie: 4th – 3rd BCE). The reason for the settlement of such an unpromising site can only be the exploitation of the *murex* colony. A chance papyrus find makes it probable that Aperlae was being exploited for purple production by the late third cen-

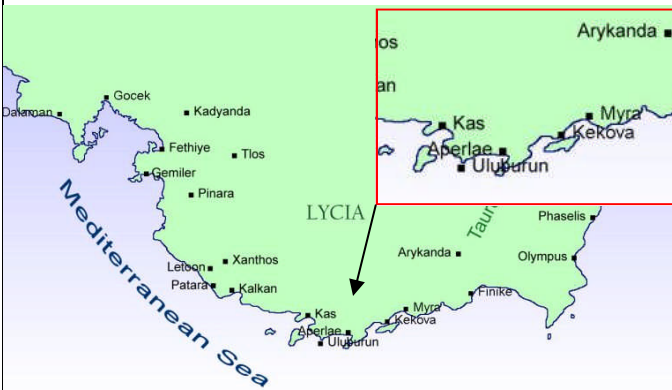


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tury BCE. In the third century BCE, Lycia belonged to Egypt, and a document in an archive refers to the income to the Egyptian treasury which was derived from the contract to manufacture purple dye in Lycia. The annual income to the fisc is a modest one talent, 1800 drachmas, which indicates a small but profitable operation. While murex is known at other sites in Lycia, the only identified centre of purple production is at Aperlae. The strong probability, then, this document refers to the income from the purple manufacturing at

churches had been identified at Aperlae, three on land and two below the waterline. Town life seems to have ceased at Aperlae in the middle of the seventh century. At that time, an Ummayyad fleet based in Egypt destroyed a Byzantine fleet at nearby Finike and rendered the whole coast vulnerable to attacks from the south.

One of the remarkable things about the site of Aperlae is that about a quarter of it is under water. The long line of Asar Bay, Ölüdeniz Bay and the isthmus between them is in fact the line of a geological fault. There is evidence of earthquake activity at Aperlae during its lifetime, with a large section of harbour wall being flung at least thirty metres into the bay. Surveys indicate that the peninsula of Siçak Yarımadaşı is slowly rising from the sea, while the northern shore of the bay is slipping beneath it. The subsidence which we see on the site may have been swift or slow – here there is no way of telling – but the visible underwater remains have also been within our remit to survey and map.



Lycia—Southern Turkey

Aperlae. The Aperlites did moderately well from this. While the supply of shellfish was not on a Tyrian scale, it was sufficient to ensure a good living year after year. They built modest sarcophagi, some of which were inscribed in fine lettering. They even outshone their neighbours. During the Hellenistic period Aperlae was able to bring the neighbouring, but older, towns of Simena, Apollonia and Isinda under its tutelage as the titular had of a local federation (sympolity), and on this basis engage in the affairs of the Lycian League.

In the Roman period, Aperlae continued to flourish, even minting some coinage. Most of the inscriptions from Aperlae which can be dated belong to the Roman period. Certainly the great Roman peace which pertained for 250 years until the middle of the third century CE guaranteed prosperity and regular trade for all of the towns of the Roman world.



The bay at Aperlae

Aperlae not only benefited from this but continued to flourish into the Byzantine period. Here the evidence is not so much in the construction of tombs for Aperlae's good and great, but in the construction of those other conduits to heaven, Christian churches. Prior to the 2001 season, some five



View of a submerged vivarium

The dependence of Aperlae upon the harvest and manufacture of purple dye from murex is clear from the archaeological remains. To the west of the city, there is an enormous midden of crushed murex shells and broken pottery. This was fairly obviously the town's rubbish heap, and here can be found pottery from all period's of the town's habitation, with the greatest emphasis being on Late Roman combed ware and Byzantine amphorae. In addition, to this huge rubbish heap, there are also huge waterproof tanks, now below the waterline, but which in antiquity were above it. These tanks can only be *vivaria*, that is, holding tanks in which live shellfish were kept after harvest until there was a sufficient amount for the manufacture of a commercial quantity of dye.

Other finds have borne out our view of Aperlae's past. The only inscription which bears a clear date is a reused milestone, originally from the late third century. Now included in a late fortification wall as a lintel, it originally stood at the head of the road between Aperlae and its main sea outlet at Ölüdeniz Bay. This road was identified and traced by survey teams in 1997 and 2000. Its function is not difficult to establish. The murex shellfish from which the Aperlites drew their living proliferated in Asar Bay. The strong currents of the bay make the navigation of its narrow head quite difficult. Indeed, Ulu Burun, the site of the oldest excavated shipwreck in the world lies at the head of the bay. The



Section of the Roman road between Aperlae and Ölüdeniz Bay

industrial area of the city is in this less favoured western quarter, which means that the town faces east across the isthmus, rather than west to the open sea. The principal city gates of the Hellenistic and Roman period pierced the eastern and southern walls, not that of the west. In that direction lay the noisome industrial area now marked by large dumps of pottery and murex middens. This means that the orientation of the town was towards the east rather than the west, and it is in this direction that the raw dye was transported

over land to the still and sheltered waters of Ölüdeniz Bay. From there, they were onshipped either to the nearby small port at Simena, or sailed in the lee of Kekova island (ancient Dolichiste) to Andriake, the bustling port of Myra.

Roman emperors always prized purple very highly and, at the very least, the Roman milestone marks the clear imposition of the hand of the state upon this small and remote town. But there is still so much more to do. Work will continue at Aperlae at least one more season. While we now know something of its site and economic life, more puzzles lie just beneath the film of rich red dust, crushed murex and old potsherds.



The 2000 ECU survey team: from left, Amanda Dickerson, Bill Leadbetter, Ira Schiff (University of Colorado), Justine Hobbs, Riki Marten

THE AMPHITHEATRE AT CHESTER—*Bill Walker*

On a visit last year to Chester in the northern part of Cheshire (Roman Deva), I was interested to see an extensive excavation of half a Roman amphitheatre. It is a visitor friendly site with walkways, information boards and information desk. The professional archaeologists were from English Heritage, Chester City Council and students from Liverpool University, assisted by volunteers. The work is part of a three-year programme that will be completed this year. The programme, half of the amphitheatre has previously been uncovered, allows for the previous records to be studied and for further excavation work. The other half of the amphitheatre is still relatively untouched as it lies under a Roman Catholic Convent, although I understand this has recently closed, so perhaps there may be an opportunity for the rest of the site to be studied. This series of excavations does appear to encroach on the grounds of the Convent.



The excavation site in the town. Photo Bill Walker

Chester sitting on a ford, crossing the River Dee, is the gateway to North Wales. Gnaeus Julius Agricola went through this gateway to defeat the Ordovices in North Wales and to conquer Anglesey. Legion II Adiutrix built the legionary fortress at Chester (Deva) and probably remained there until withdrawn from Britain for service in Pannonia. Britain was left with three legions, Legion XX Valeria Victrix (with its charging boar emblem) was sent to Deva. By 79 AD, the Twentieth Legion had rebuilt the fortress in stone and used the amphitheatre for training.

If you are intending to visit Britain, I would recommend that you visit Chester to see the excavations, numerous Roman remains and the Grosvenor Museum's displays and artefacts.



A lesson in Roman History, Chester. Photo Bill Walker

Bill Walker is a retired Mechanical Engineer with an MA in Modern History

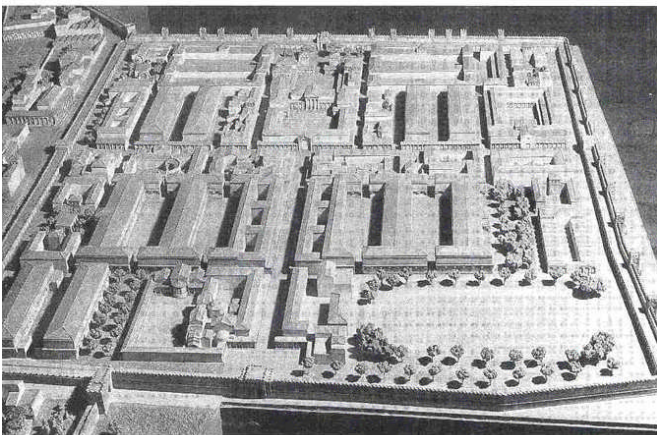
THE *CASTRA PRAETORIA* — Sandra Ottley



Sandra Ottley, a theatre sister by training, recently completed a BA (Hons) in Classics and Ancient History. She is now researching for a PhD at UWA on the subject of The Praetorian Guard.

Traditionally, Roman armies were disbanded before crossing the city boundary (the pomerium) to re-enter the capital as civilians. Army commanders in the field in the Republican period were surrounded by a “praetorian cohort” and when Augustus was given control of some two thirds of the new long-service legions after the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra in 31-30 BC, he used that as a precedent to form a Praetorian Guard. The imperial praetorian cohorts were intended as a bodyguard against Roman enemies in everyday life rather than foreign foes on the battlefield. Within a short time they were billeted together in a purpose-built camp on the outskirts of the city and in the coming centuries gained a reputation as emperor-makers. Yet they were the only significant military force in Rome (or even Italy till c. AD 200) and their presence and immense “camp” was a force to be reckoned with in politics.

Lying on the outskirts of Rome, beyond the *pomerium*, in the



Model of the Castra Praetoria in the Museo dell Civiltà Romana in Rome

extreme northeast of the city, is the *Castra Praetoria* or the Praetorian Camp. It lies on the Viminal Hill, between the *Via Tiburtina* and the *Via Nomentana*, on a site that was one of the highest in Rome some 60 m. Its position gave it commanding views over the city and the roads leading to the east and north-east. Between the camp and old Servian Wall, in the direction of the city-centre, was a substantial space – the parade ground or the *campus praetorianus*.



Frieze of the Praetorians (Louvre, Paris)

The *castra praetoria* was constructed during the reign of Tiberius (AD14–37) to house the nine cohorts of the Emperor’s personal guard, a force which originated with Augustus but with antecedents in the Republican era, when a cohort of “praetorian” soldiers protected the consul or praetor on campaign. Initially, the Praetorian Guard had been billeted not only in Rome, but across several Italian towns. However, during the reign of Augustus (27 BC-AD 14) gradually they began to be moved into Rome. Consequently, by early in the reign of Tiberius, the cohorts were in the capital but dispersed. In c.AD 23, during the tenure of the infamous Praetorian Prefect Lucius Aelius Sejanus, the Guard was housed together in this specially constructed camp. The three *cohortes urbanae* (Urban Cohorts) were also given a home in the new Praetorian camp. Later, other military forces acquired their “camps” in and around Rome but that of the Praetorians remained by far the biggest and best-known.

The ancient historian Tacitus records that Tiberius constructed

the *Castra Praetoria* at the insistence of Sejanus, who wanted the guard together so that their visible numbers and strength would intimidate the population. Throughout the ages, historians have continued to follow Tacitus in assigning ulterior motives to Sejanus. However, the reasons given by Sejanus himself, that the concentration of the Praetorian Guard into a single location would help to solve the problems of discipline and be more efficient, seem reasonable and probably provide the real motive for the construction of the *castra*. Although to describe this building as a 'camp' understates its size and permanence.

The *Castra Praetoria* was 440 x 380 m (16.72 hectares), making it a little smaller than the approximately 20 ha legionary fortresses of the early Empire. Like so much of the high-density housing of the capital and nearby Ostia, the original walls were made of concrete and faced with dark red or pink bricks. They were 4.73m high and had battlements and four turreted gates, one in each of the walls. Built against the inside of the walls were rows of vaulted chambers (*contubernia*), which were occupied by small units of soldiers. These rooms were three metres high, and paved with *opus spicatum* and faced with stucco. A walkway for the guards ran above these chambers.

Such a combination of walls and rooms is a feature not found in contemporaneous legionary fortresses but found only in legionary fortresses in the Late Empire, centuries later.

Internally, there is no evidence for the buildings we would expect from the analogy of legionary fortresses, such as the *praetorium* (headquarters), hospital, baths or a granary. Unsurprising when such facilities abounded in the great city at the gates. Being able to do away with so many sizeable buildings obviously increased the numbers who could be housed in the fortress. Then, in 1873, archaeological evidence emerged that barracks were two-storied. Modern historians have estimated that the *Castra Praetoria*, though smaller than legionary fortresses designed for some 5000 men and some animals, could house up to 15,000 soldiers.

But there were more than just barracks and included an *armamentarium* (armoury), a *sacellum* (shrine for the standards), a tribunal, a shrine of Mars, and an altar of *Fortuna Restitutrix* (the remains of which were found in 1888 in a room paved with black and white mosaics). Three other features should be mentioned.

First, testimony that the Guard, though an elite and well paid, was as victim to the high mortality rates of the ancient world and especially those of Rome where malaria was deadly not least for adults who had not acquired an immunity from surviving it in childhood. Several dozen tombstones from cemeteries on adjacent roads, are surely just a tiny part of the thousands of praetorians who died in service during the 300+ years of its existence.

Secondly, the abundance of inscriptions found on lead waterpipes indicate that a succession of Emperors took very seriously the need to provide the *castra* with a reliable supply of drinking

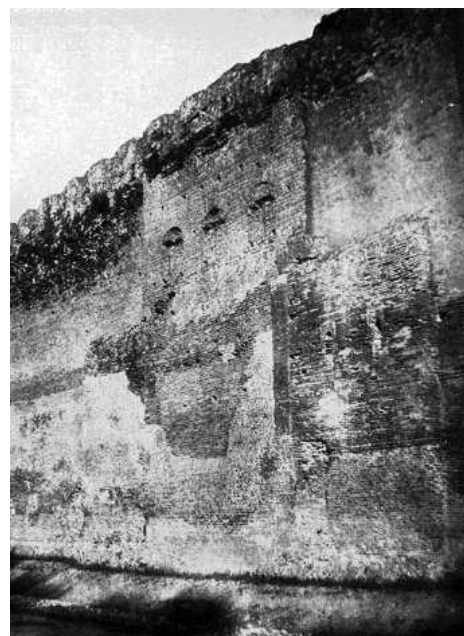
water.

As would be expected from the importance of the Guard, the *Castra Praetoria* is mentioned quite frequently by ancient historians, including Tacitus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio, and in the *Historia Augusta*. It is referred to in inscriptions on stone and on lead waterpipes. It is also represented on a gold aureus of Claudius of 41-2, apparently struck in gratitude for acclaiming him emperor following the assassination of the Emperor Gaius (Caligula). This particular reverse gives us quite an accurate view of the *Castra Praetoria*. Reality has been bent somewhat to the die makers needs, but all the important features are in their proper places, including Claudius himself. The inscription on the obverse reads *IMPER(atore) RECEPT(o)* referring to the acceptance of Claudius, by the army, as the Roman Emperor.

Excavations have also revealed that the Camp changed little in its 300-year history. However, in AD 271, the Emperor Aurelian incorporated it into his new walls around Rome. The Aurelian Wall joined the *Castra* at the northwest corner and again near the middle of the south side. Its original walls were heightened by a further by 2.5-3 m. The original Tiberian wall can be distinguished from the addition by the difference in brickwork and by the outline of the bricked-up battlements.

When Constantine was victorious at the battle of Milvian Bridge, he disbanded the Praetorian Guard for supporting his rival Maxentius

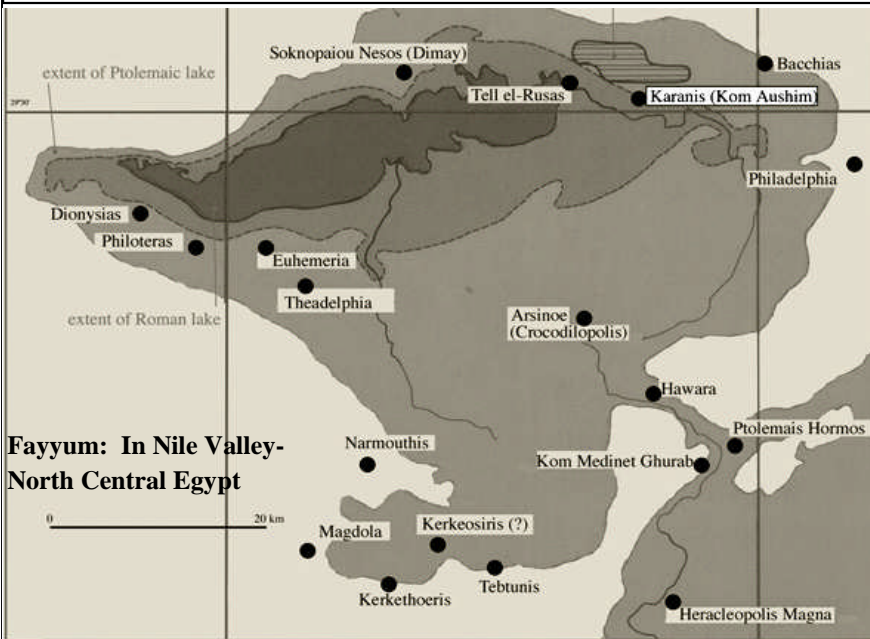
By this time the Guard had become a rather outdated institution anyway, particularly as the Emperor was seldom resident in Rome. To prevent the barracks being used in the future, Constantine demolished the inner walls that had not been incorporated into the Aurelian Walls and the barracks (although a part of the west wall is reported as standing in the 16th century).



Castra Praetoria: North Gate

THE ROMANIZATION OF EGYPT – THE FAYYUM PORTRAITS

Catherine Arends *



The 'Fayyum' portraits first came to light in the late 1880s in Egypt's largest inhabited oasis west of the Nile River. Petrie's efforts to excavate the pharaonic structures at Lahun and Hawara revealed surprisingly in addition, the striking faces of what appeared to be the Fayyum's Romanised elite. They appeared on both wooden panels and linen shrouds in one of two different painting media – either tempera or encaustic, and were attached to the mummified remains of the deceased.

Over the next few decades, excavations in this region uncovered several cemeteries and mummies that represented the ancient village settlements of the Fayyum. The 1st and 2nd century AD remains reflect well-established communities that had profited from the agricultural abundance of the cultivable area extended significantly during the Ptolemaic period thanks to an irrigation system of canals.

The system was maintained until the early 4th century when it seems that increasingly inadequate water supplies led to the final abandonment of the Fayyum villages.

Quite apart from the painted portraits, the Fayyum has yielded a vast amount of Ptolemaic and Roman terracotta figurines and thousands of papyri. It was in the search for the latter that at the turn of the century, papyrologists Bernard Grenfell and Arthur Hunt uncovered more spectacular portrait finds from the cemeteries of Kom Aushim (Karanis), Umm el-Breigat (Tebtunis), er-Rubayat and Fagg el-Gamus – all in the Fayyum.



Portrait of a woman ("Isidora") c. AD 100-110 (held at John Paul Getty Museum Los Angeles)

Portraits have also been discovered outside of the Fayyum, at el-Hibeh, Thebes and Sakkara – the latter surfacing as early as the 17th century according to the Italian traveler Pietro della Valle (1586-1652). Along with discoveries more recently at Marina el-Alamein on the western edge of the Delta (1991), it appears that rather than being distinctly regional, painted portraits on wooden panels and linen shrouds represent a geographically broader funerary practice, and perhaps pattern of social structure and its representation. The significance of the Fayyum portraits rests not only in the realms of art history. Certainly, as the only surviving examples of the Mediterranean traditions of coloured portraiture that originated with the Greeks, the Fayyum portraits no doubt owe much to a sophisticated art school in Alexandria. They are also, however, remarkable illustrations, quite literally, of social change within the context of Egypt's experience as a province of the Roman empire.



Mummy with an inserted panel portrait of a youth c. AD 80–100: Gifted to the Metropolitan Museum of Art by the Egyptian Research Account and the British School of Archaeology 1912. See http://www.metmuseum.org/special/ancientfaces/faces_images.html

Interpretative responses to the Fayyum portraits reflect the changing perceptions of Romanisation in the provinces over the last century or so. The initial discoveries failed to raise more than an antiquarian interest, and towards the early 20th century were left un-



Portrait of a woman with added gold leaf of about AD 160-170 (held at British Museum)

identity and related social status were important elements within Romanized provincial society. The highly competitive village elites no doubt jostled with those of the cities of Middle and Lower Egypt and Alexandria for imperial attention. Identifying oneself in life and in death with the Romanized elite reinforced social position and local power relations within provincial society.

But the central problem with these portraits, is that they lack archaeological context and many are in fact without firm provenance. Haphazard excavation and recording, not only by Grenfell and Hunt, illustrate the prejudices favoring texts and large structures over the artefacts of everyday life (and of death) at this time. We therefore cannot draw firm links between these portrayals of the deceased and what is known from the papyri about individuals, their families, and the social structures and power networks in place in the Fayyum villages. Rather, we may well be looking at the replication of Alexandrian expressions of cultural identity, and indeed of funerary practice. We should be cautious, therefore, in projecting an image of village life from these portraits alone.

We can be reasonably certain, however, that more broadly, the portraits reflect the active participation of officials and elites in the constant creation of imperial culture in the Roman provinces. The unity of the Roman empire was defined and recreated in Egypt as in other provinces, through local attempts to draw on what has been expressed as a Roman cultural package of art, architecture, language, urban space and dress.

At the very least, the Fayyum portraits suggest a sense of imperial power and influence in this region.

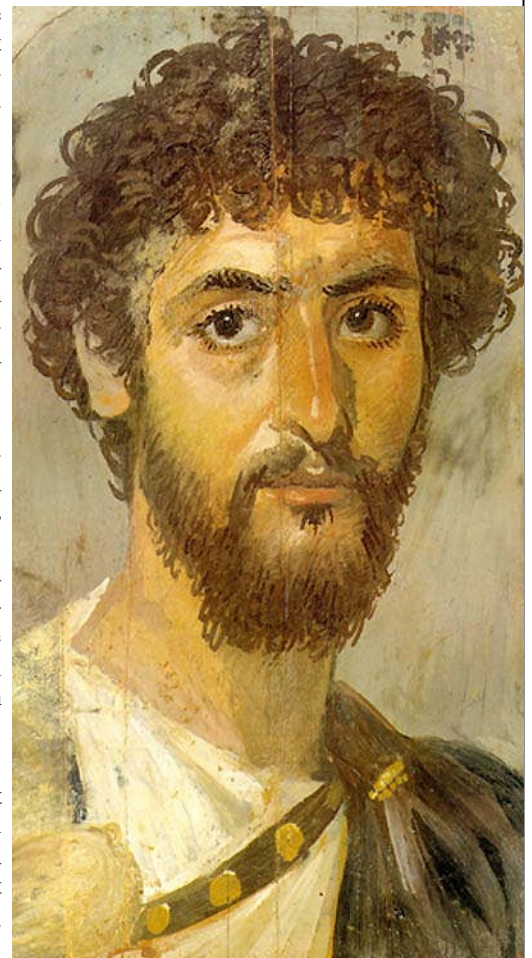
studied as they were considered to be failures in meeting Graeco-Roman ideals. R.G. Collingwood who expressed his utter contempt for Romano-British material culture was more forgiving of other provincial achievements, and one wonders if he might have viewed the Fayyum portraits in this light:

...there is perhaps no province where local attempts to reproduce them [Roman models] failed so dismally as they failed in Britain. Elsewhere the provincials threw themselves with a certain degree of confidence or even enthusiasm into the production of Romanized works of art, and if they produced nothing great, at least they produced something competent: something that was no disgrace either to the Roman tradition or to their own skill.

Recent understandings of Roman provincial material culture argue for a more measured response – one that emphasizes a relatively easy fusion of two time-honored traditions. The Roman practice of commemorating the dead with a life-like bust and the Egyptian funerary rituals associated with mummification found expression in the display of these mummy portraits. The mummies themselves are likely to have been kept in easily accessible tombs, where they were the focus of banquets held by the deceased's relatives. Such Romanizing elements are not distinct to Egypt, and in Cyrenaica and Palmyra for instance, Roman ideas of commemorating the dead were similarly translated to suit local customs.

The portrayal of the deceased as Roman is particularly interesting. Cultural indicators such as dress and appearance (including hairstyles and jewelry) reflect more than the current fashion at the imperial court – Claudian or Antonine for instance, and the desire to show local connections (observable in some styles of undertunics). They clearly reflect a need to project cultural identity, and Roman portraiture gave local elites the medium for that display.

To what end, however, is a difficult question to answer. Quite obviously cultural



Portrait of a military officer c. AD 160-170 (held at Eton College)

* Catherine Arends obtained her PhD (With Distinction) from UWA in 2004 with a thesis entitled *The Roman Military in Egypt: Landscape, Community and Culture*. She now teaches Ancient History at Santa Sabina College in Sydney.

EAST and WEST— *Kevin O’Toole*

It is something of a cliché to contrast the victory at Actium in 31BC of Octavian and Agrippa over Antony and Cleopatra, and the adoption of Christianity by Constantine in AD312, in terms, in the case of Actium, of a victory of West over East and, in the case of Constantine, the East having the final say.

Obviously the words “East” and “West” in the present context are references to culture. The question is: what cultures do they refer to?

In significant respects Rome by the 31BC was Hellenic. By as early the 5th century BC the incipient empire was under the spell of the Hellenic spirit. To give just one indication of this I refer to the sack of Etruscan Veii in c. 430 BC after which the at least partly historical Roman general Camillus was moved to dedicate a golden bowl to Apollo at Delphi. And whilst it is quite untrue to say that the Roman pantheon was of Greek gods with Roman names (Jupiter was not Zeus by another name thunderbolts notwithstanding) the fact is that by 31BC Roman mythology was saturated with Greek ideas, and Greek ideas were reflected in almost all aspects of Roman life, from architecture to the stage, the practical to the imaginative.

So the word “East” in relation to Actium cannot mean a Greek East as if it were somehow distinguishable from a Roman West. In fact, it may seriously be asked whether in 31BC there was a truly Greek East at all. Thus, for all his desire to Hellenize the Orient, Alexander in the end merely facilitated the orientalization of the Greeks. As early as 303/304 BC even the Athenians were prepared to accommodate oriental presumption, shamefully permitting their new Hellenistic ruler Demetrios nicknamed Poliorketes (the “Besieger”) to take up residence in the opisthodomus of the Parthenon, there to engage in orgies behind the back of Athena Parthenos. The Athenians even deified the scoundrel.

Alexander, himself the product of palace culture, went about Hellenizing what we call the Middle East (if we include Turkey and Afghanistan), even (but with perhaps less cynicism than Darius I who had done the same thing) setting up or re-establishing democracies (at Troy, Ephesus, and Miletus, for example). However, Persian palace culture, more deeply rooted than Macedonian, proved to be much more resilient than Alexander could have appreciated. The Persians had been making holy war since at least Darius I in the early 5th century BC. Darius I and his son Xerxes had mounted their campaigns against the Greek city states not, at least ostensibly, as mere imperialists but as followers of the Truth. They were conducting a holy war against infidel temple culture, a harbinger of the Lie. Iranian palace culture, with foundations in Zoroastrianism and the divine right of kings had an ideological basis that anticipated by two millennia the presumptive ingenuity of medieval Europe.

Persia was politically fragmented after Alexander making it easier prey. Alexander had prepared the Orient for Rome. However, Persian mysticism and dualism and the philosophical underpinnings of the Iranian palace persisted in the Hellenistic kingdoms that were, much presumably as he would not have wished it, the legacy of Alexander.

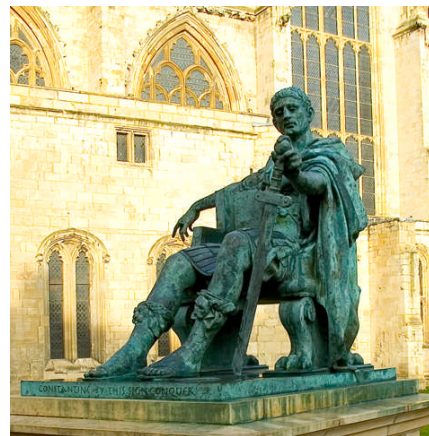
Thus, Actium in 31BC was the victory of a Graeco/Roman West over an oriental East. But it was a poison chalice that Rome had been given. It is exquisitely ironical that Octavian had barely

defeated (in geopolitical terms) the Orient when he himself began to openly manifest the same contempt that is the basis of all palace cultures for the idea of the moral equivalence of human beings albeit that hitherto it had only been the moral equivalence of citizens. The Hellenic in Rome had of course started to bleed from the body politic before the advent of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, but proof that it was on the wane was clear enough when Octavian became Augustus.

In Christianity there is of course much which is “Greek”. There is however much more therein that is not Greek. I refer not only to the Judaic antecedents of Christianity but also to its broader oriental influences. When Rome consumed the Hellenistic world it swallowed a Trojan Horse. Just as Christ was about to provide a basis for opportunists to invent a new version of Iranian Truth the Orient was preparing Rome for its reception.

When one such opportunist, the murderous Constantine, ‘discovered’ Christianity, he simply brought to fruition a process that had begun centuries before when republican Rome began to lose its nerve and abandon its belief in the powers of a reasoning collective citizenry. Christianity gave Constantine a divine right to rule much more potent than a declaration of his own divinity. The Persian kings had appreciated the difference the better part of a millennium before, and the Occidental kings would be exploiting the idea for the better part of two millennia after.

Hence, with Constantine, it was the Orient, not a Greek East, that had the final say. Graeco/Roman culture passed from history until its revival in the Enlightenment. At Milvian Bridge Rome’s dream was finally extinguished by Constantine’s.



The Emperor Constantine (c. AD 272—337) celebrated in bronze outside the Minster, the Cathedral at York (Roman ‘Eboracum’). His father the Roman emperor Constantius I died at York in 306 resulting in the usual contest for the ‘crown’, this one culminating in a battle with Maxentius and the Praetorian Guard. Constantine won what is commonly referred to as ‘the Battle at Milvian Bridge’ amid stories of visions and dreams he had relating to Christian symbolism. He was victorious against the odds and attributed his victory to intervention by the god of the Christians. Christianity, then still a minority sect, was thereafter destined in differing forms to take hold of East and West alike.

It is nearly half a millennium since the Enlightenment, and the renewed Graeco/Roman West to which it gave rise looks decidedly indecisive, indeed inept, in face of that yet even newer version of Iranian Truth originating in the 7th century in what the West named after another obscure Roman province, Arabia.

Don Boyer Travel Scholarship

Don and Ann Boyer members of RAG have now very generously sponsored the "**Don Boyer Roman Archaeology Travel Scholarship**" for five years. Rebecca Banks is the first recipient and will be using the \$2500 to enable her to participate in a Roman period excavation in Spain.



Rebecca Banks and Don Boyer.

Gladiatorial Contests in the Sunken Gardens at UWA



Photo: David Kennedy

Gladiatorial contests in the sunken gardens at UWA on Sunday May, 14; a RAG breakfast function.

The victors seek a ruling.



Photo: David Kennedy



Fraser Wallace and Hugh Edwards playing emperors and giving a ruling.
Photo: David Kennedy



Professor David Kennedy seeking some tips on gladiatorial technique.
Photo: Anne Boyer

Book Reviews—David Kennedy

The Roman world continues to generate – literally – hundreds of new books annually. It is hard to keep up with the mere listing much less try and read those in one's particular research area. A few that crossed my path recently might be of interest to readers. (Prices below are the official price in the country of publication. Books can often be bought much cheaper on Amazon and the saving will cover the mailing cost. The year cited is for the hardback (hb) edition).

There is a new general history of Rome. It seems designed as a textbook for American undergraduates taking a survey course in "Roman History". The first and third authors are leading historians. The book seems well-organized and attractively and relevantly illustrated including with lots of good maps. **M. T. Boatwright, D. J. Gargola and R. J. A. Talbert, *The Romans From Village to Empire. A History of Ancient Rome from Earliest Times to Constantine*, Oxford (OUP), 2004, pb (US\$39.95).**

Biographies of emperors continue to proliferate. One might have thought Nero had been "done" enough but now a new study by Ted Champlin is getting glowing reviews for trying to explain Nero's seemingly bizarre conduct and why he was widely popular and remained so for long after his suicide. **E. Champlin, *Nero*, Cambridge, Mass (Harvard UP), 2003, pb (US\$18.95).**

As always, the Roman army and warfare are popular. Peter Wells long ago established his credentials as an anthropologist researching the Iron Age peoples of northwest Europe on the eve of the Roman conquest. Now, armed (so to speak) with the evidence to emerge from the battlefield itself and the lessons learnt in the USA from excavating the site of Custer's Last Stand, he has written a book about a battle he describes as a catastrophe with "profound effects" for European history. The army of the Emperor Augustus' kinsman, Quinctilius Varus, was annihilated in the Teutoberg Forest in AD 9. Now, to the account in the ancient literary sources – not least Tacitus – we have the discovery of the battlefield. **P. S. Wells, *The Battle that Stopped Rome*, New York (Norton 2003), pb (US\$14.95).**

Finally, **Adrian Goldsworthy** has moved on from books on *The Roman Army at War, 100 BC – AD 200* (1996), *Roman Warfare* (2000), *Cannae* (2002), *Caesar* (2006) etc, etc, to a well-illustrated survey called ***The Complete Roman Army*, London (Thames & Hudson), hb (US\$39.95).**

EPHESUS — *Natalie Cullity*



Natalie Cullity: a speech and drama teacher by profession—completed a BA, with majors in Ancient History, Italian, and Anthropology.

On a clear summers day in June this year, I visited the ancient city of Ephesus, beloved of the Turks, as part of a small tour group. During the Roman period (30BC – AD395) Ephesus became the largest metropolis in, and the capital of, the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire for more than two centuries, with a population of approximately 250,000. The best-preserved classical city on the Aegean, today Ephesus is one of the best places in the world to get the feeling of what life was like in Roman times.



The historian Strabo writes that the city was named after an Amazon queen, Apasas. In the Anatolian language, spoken then in the Hittite New Kingdom (c.1475 – 1200 BC) which had its power base in the Anatolian plateau in modern Turkey, apasas meant 'bee', hence its name 'the city of the bee'. In its early days the city had a well-protected harbour entrance and an agora for trade. Produce from Anatolia was shipped out from Ephesus and similarly, goods from the islands in the Aegean were brought into Anatolia through Ephesus. This trade brought great wealth to the city and a temple was built, 'larger and more beautiful than any other temple ever built' and . Our tour guide, a passionate young Turk, told us that for nearly eight hundred years, from the time the first coinage was minted in the fifth century BC until the coins were no longer minted in the name of Ephesus, the coins of the city showed a bee in relief on one side. Ephesus is a

breath taking spectacle, a synthesis of cultures and history. Many historical sites have been fully restored, while others appear to be untouched, as the Turkish government struggles to finance restoration projects.

Of the many historical sites, I found the Odeon, Grand Theatre, House of the Virgin Mary, the Celsus Library and Domitian's Square and Temple the most interesting. The vast semi-circular Grand Theatre, built c. AD 150, seated c. 24,000. The smaller Odeon, seating c. 1450, was used as a concert hall but doubled as the city's council Chamber (*bouleuterion*).

Our guide pointed out that as there were no drainage holes in the orchestra, there must have been a roof over the entire area, and windows to let in the light. The stage building would have been faced with marble and decorated with statues. Lions' paws, a symbol of power and aristocracy in Roman times, still decorate the stairways. Remains of Doric columns lie everywhere around the site, many restored to their original height, but most exposed to the sun and wind, waiting for grants from the Government for restoration work to continue.



The House of the Virgin—subject of a tradition that John took Mary with him to Ephesus where she remained in her house until her death.

A hill overlooks the Grand Theatre, from where we could almost hear the voices of the Ephesians echoing in praise of Artemis. Built in the second century BC and restored several times, the theatre has withstood Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman dynasties, a period of 2,200 years, and looks to be in nearly perfect condition.

During the first century AD Christianity gained in popularity. St Paul visited Ephesus twice and St John was said to have lived in the city. It is recorded that Paul was to speak to thirty-five thousand people squeezed into the Theatre, about his God, Jesus whom they new little of. A riot broke out, fomented by one Demetrius who warned those gathered there that if they believed in the words of Paul's God they would be denying the existence of their man-made gods, and their income from those coming to worship the goddess Artemis would cease. Paul was therefore seen as a threat and shipped off to Alexan-

dria. The messages which St Paul wanted to give in the Theatre were then written in his Epistle to the Ephesians.

The most important relic of Christianity is the House of the Virgin Mary, discovered in 1891 and now venerated as a shrine. The original stonework of the small building is dated to the first century AD, and restorations were made in the sixth century by the Byzantines. Pope Paul VI visited the house, and later Pope John Paul II, who held a mass and declared the House a place of worship.

Both confirmed its importance to all religions: on our visit I knelt alongside a Moslem deep in his ritual of prayer. Outside I sipped the dank water, believed to have therapeutic powers, which flows from a spring under the house. Although there is no archaeological evidence to prove that the Virgin Mary ever spent the last years of her life here, a passage in St John, (19:25-27), speaks of Jesus on the cross, who seeing his mother, and his disciple standing near her, says to his mother "Woman, this is your son" and to John, "'This is your mother'". After this, tradition has it that John took Mary with him to Ephesus where she remained in her house until her death. The area around the house is very peaceful and resembles a sanctuary; coloured ribbons tied to the branches of olive trees by pilgrims flutter in the breeze.

Our guide described the Celsus Library as an 'architectural masterpiece', named after Senator Julius Celsus Polemeanus (AD60–114) an Ephesian magistrate. The sarcophagus of the senator was housed in the library along with the Library's large collection of books. The façade is colossal: tall marble columns frame the windows and a colonnaded gallery stands in front of the main entrance, where the goddess Pallas Athena stands in the central niche, leading the way to enlightenment. Four statues of women still stand between the columns representing the virtues admired most by the Ephesians: knowledge, friendship, understanding and wisdom.



The Library of Celsus (upper left of picture) was built astride the agora (market place) in Ephesus. The agora was surrounded by porticoes



The Library of Celsus

The structure of the building was ingenious: double walls erected around the building allowed air to flow between the walls so that deterioration to valuable scrolls of parchment - of which there were around 12,000, and papyrus, caused by humidity and insects, would be reduced. The vast interior of the library was divided into three floors and daylight would have poured in through large windows. The face of Medusa still looks out from the very top, warding off the evil eye.

Strolling through the 2,000 year old marble streets our guide pointed out a backgammon board, still clearly visible, carved into a block of stone. Further along we came across two statue bases facing each other, and this proved to be the Roman medical or health centre, an Asklepiion.

The left hand side base displayed the medical symbol, with a tripod and a snake around the legs of a table, the other, a tripod and mortar and pestle, the symbol of pharmacy. Over these two symbols there stood two signs: one, "Death cannot enter" and the other, "No wills will be read here". Our guide pointed out a large space outside the Asklepiion, designated as the 'waiting area'. Here the doctor performed a type of 'triage' to determine admittance: if the patient seemed fatally ill he was refused entry, as death would be bad for business! Our guide said that the custom was to sacrifice an animal before treatment, and apply herbs.

The Domitian Square is the largest square in Ephesus, surrounded by fountains, monuments and colonnaded sidewalks. The massive Temple of the Emperor Domitian (AD81-91) was built here and could be seen from every point in the city. The temple also was colonnaded, with thirteen columns on the sides and eight in the front and rear. An altar decorated with soldiers and fighting scenes stood in front of the temple. Of the huge statue of Domitian, only the head and an arm remain. The arm piece from the knuckles to the elbow, measures nearly 180 centimetres, which is compatible with a 6-7 metres tall statue. Much later, the temple became a good source of marble for the construction of other buildings.

The tour spent only two hours at Ephesus, nowhere near long enough; but time enough to give me a glimpse of extraordinary beauty, architecture and history and to ensure my return.

Roman Archaeology at UWA

RAG Events

It has been a busy year for RAG already.

In April there was a Saturday afternoon session of a video of Time Team (the Hadrian's Wall fort of Birdoswald), another on the bridge Julius Caesar built over the Rhine in 55 BC and a lecture by one of the UWA research students, Anne Poepjes, on her 15 months in Jordan.

On 14 May, 75 people gathered on a sunny Sunday morning in the Sunken Gardens at UWA. After a breakfast of croissants and fresh fruit, 13 "gladiators" put on an entertaining and informative display in surroundings reminiscent of an amphitheatre. Now we are looking forward to the Winter and early Summer programme.

The Winter Programme will be three Saturday afternoons (see below) in June, July and August. Each will be a "double bill" of lectures and/or a video. Tea and cakes in between. You don't have to be a member to participate.

Saturday 24 June 2006

Roman Athens

(Powerpoint Presentation)

Kevin O'Toole, Barrister and Solicitor

Saturday 29 July 2006

Constantine the Great "How 'Great' was Constantine"

Dr Bill Leadbetter, Edith Cowan University

and

The Archaeological Evidence for a New Age: York, Trier, Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem (Illustrated Lecture)

Professor David Kennedy, University of Western Australia

Saturday 26 August 2006

British Emperors and the Forts of the Saxon Shore

The Emperor Carausius: Pirate King of Roman Britain (Illustrated Lecture)

Dr Bill Leadbetter, Edith Cowan University

Richborough

(Video of work at the Roman "Saxon Shore Fort" in Kent, UK)

UWA Extension Courses

The Summer Programme will begin with a course run by University Extension of 4 two-hour sessions on *The Roman Army*. It is hoped to run subsequent courses on such subjects as *The Roman Army at War*, *The Logistical Basis of the Roman Army* and the *Troops in Imperial Italy: The Praetorian Guard, Urban Cohorts, Vigiles, Equites Singulares and the Fleets at Ravenna and Misenum*. RAG Members qualify for a discount on this course - tell Extension when booking. Watch the RAG website for updates and further details:

www.romarchgroup.humanities.uwa.edu.au/

If you have ideas for topics you would like to have made the subject of a lecture or a course, let us know. We may be able to help.

Tour of Roman Britain 2007

Professor Kennedy is planning a third tour of Roman Britain in July 2007. As before the tour will run for three weeks, starting at Canterbury and ending in London. Although a few alterations will be required, the programme from the 2004 tour shows the probable itinerary and can be viewed online by going to the RAG website and following the link. It is likely the cost will again be \$A5,500 per head including almost all the costs of the tour, meals, site entrance fees etc. Flights and insurance are not included. If you are SERIOUSLY interested please contact David Kennedy at the numbers or e-mail opposite.

Membership of The RAG

Membership of the RAG is open to anyone interested in Roman Archaeology or classical studies generally. There is an annual membership fee of \$25 (inclusive of GST), students \$15.

To apply, complete and post the form with this edition of the RAG or contact the committee members at the addresses below.

The RAG Inc

www.romarchgroup.humanities.uwa.edu.au/

Chairman

Professor David Kennedy
M205 Classics and Ancient History
University of Western Australia
Stirling Highway
CRAWLEY WA 6009

Tel: 08 64882150 Fax: 08 64881182

E-mail: dkennedy@cyllene.uwa.au

Deputy Chairman

Rodney Greaves

Secretary

Michael Manley
M209 Reid Library UWA
Tel: (08) 64882330

E-mail: mmanley@library.uwa.edu.au

Treasurer

Maire Gomes
M205 Classics and Ancient History UWA
E-mail: gomescm@bigpond.com

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Correspondence to the Editor:

Kevin J. O'Toole
c/o M205 Classics and Ancient History
The University of Western Australia
35 Stirling Highway
CRAWLEY WA 6009

Tel: (08) 92214748 Fax: (08) 92213595

E-mail: kjotoole@otooleoprandi.com.au