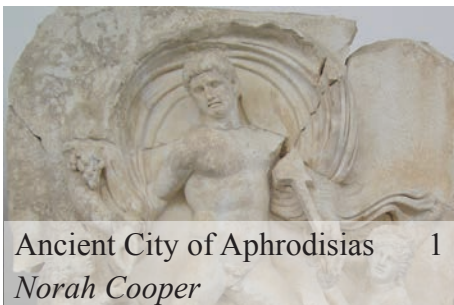


# The RAG

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## The Ancient City of Aphrodisias, Turkey, and the Roman Sebasteion

Norah Cooper

*Caesar to Stephanus.....This one city [= Aphrodisias] I have taken for my own out of all Asia. I wish these people to be protected as my own townsmen.*

From an inscription on the Archive Wall in the Aphrodisias Theatre from Octavianus (later the Emperor Augustus) to Stephanus of Laodicea.

Aphrodisias is one of the loveliest of the many, splendid Graeco-Roman cities in Turkey, and the Roman Sebasteion, with its remaining marbles on display in the Aphrodisias museum, is testament to the power and influence of the Romans in Turkey. More than that it shows how a 'Greek' city of the eastern part of the Roman Empire chose to view the imperial family and the newly established imperial cult.

### Turkey

There is evidence of human presence in the area of modern Turkey from the Palaeolithic period (500,000 to 12,000 BC). From the early Bronze Age (c. 3000 BC) there were small city states like Troy and then from mid 2400BC, the Assyrians left numerous cuneiform records of their trade in gold, silver and iron with the peoples of Anatolia like the Hatti. About 2000 BC, the Hittites arrived in Anatolia and became both the dominant culture and an empire until the Assyrian conquest of 1250 BC. Thracians, Urartians, Phrygians, Lydians, Lycians and Carians were other



The Aphrodite of Aphrodisias.



Above: Map of the ancient cities of Turkey. Aphrodisias can be found to the left in 'Asia'. Image: Murray Jones.

Right: Ara Güler's photograph of two men having coffee on an ancient carved marble seat at Geyre.

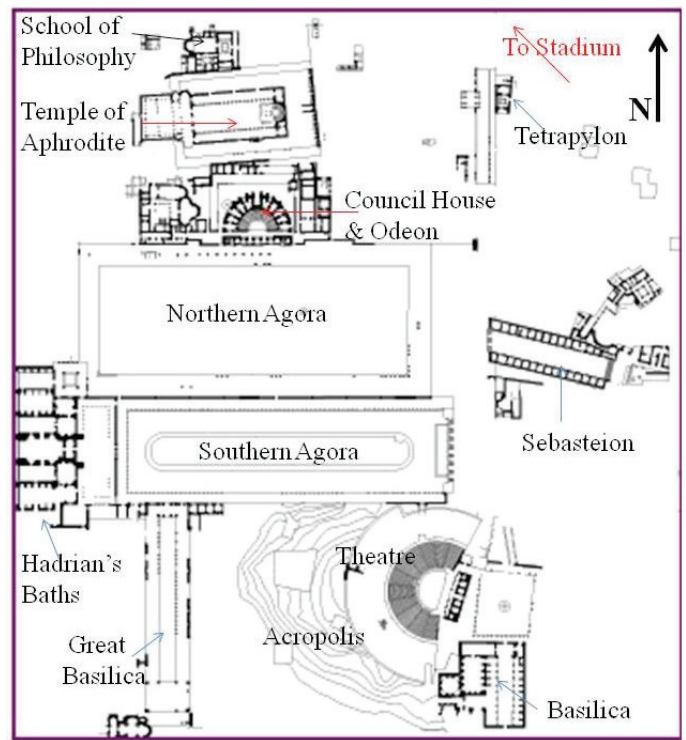
civilisations present from the first two millennia in Turkey. Beginning in the Bronze Age, too, were the settlements of Greek speakers in colonies along the west coast of Turkey – the Aegean coast. By the mid-1st millennium BC there were numerous such cities with Greek-speaking but racially mixed populations and hybrid cultures we call Hellenistic. By that time they had fallen under the control of the great Persian Empire. Alexander's army crossed the Hellespont in 334 BC and became the ruler of all of the west coast cities and then other cities within the rest of Turkey (Asia Minor). From the middle of the third century BC, the successors to Alexander's conquests - the Hellenistic kings of Macedon, 'Syria' and Egypt, were confronted by the emerging power and expansion on Rome.

Attalus, the last king of an independent hellenized state called Pergamum, understood the importance of Rome and bequeathed his kingdom to the Romans in 133 BC and from this period western Anatolia became a Roman province called Asia (see map of Ancient Turkey). Further provinces in Anatolia followed: Cilicia (101 BC), Bithynia and Pontus (25 BC), Galatia (25 BC) and Cappadocia (AD 17). From the reign of Augustus in 31 BC, the existing Greek cities in the region as a whole but especially those in the province of Asia along the Aegean began to expand and develop and take on more of the form of Roman cities.

## *Aphrodisias*

Aphrodisias was a small ancient Greek city in Caria founded in a fertile valley south of the Meander River in west-central Turkey. It is located near the modern village of Geyre (a corruption of the name Caria), about 230 km south-east of İzmir and about 100 km inland from the coast. It was named after Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, and had a cult image, famous throughout the ancient world, the Aphrodite of Aphrodisias.

The ancient city was badly damaged by earthquakes in the 4th and 7th centuries AD and was inhabited through the Byzantine and Seljuk periods until nomadic Turks settled and built the village of Geyre around the ruins. Western travellers began visiting the site in the 17th century and the wonderfully named Society of Dilettanti (British architects and illustrators) drew the first plan of the ancient city in 1812. Further research was carried out by Charles Textier (1835), Osman Hamdi Bey (1892), Paul Gaudin and Gustave Mendel (1904-5), Andrew Boulanger (1913) and Giulio Jacopi (1937). Further work was interrupted by the Second World War. The city was rediscovered when Ara Güler, a photographer, lost his way in 1958. He followed a light to the Geyre coffee house where he noticed that ancient stones were used for tables. The next day he photographed the whole area including the photo (above) of two locals sitting on a marble carved seat. These photos were published internationally and Prof. Kenan Erim of New York University saw them and pursued the archaeology of Aphrodisias from 1961 until his death in 1990. The village of Geyre was removed from on top of the ancient ruins and rebuilt two kilometres away. Present excavations are currently directed by



Professors R. R. R. Smith (University of Oxford) and Katharine Welch (NYU Institute of Fine Arts).

Like many other ancient cities in Turkey, Aphrodisias was built originally in the Hellenistic period over an earlier village and then redeveloped in the Roman period. However, unlike other Roman cities, Aphrodisias has a Sebasteion - a temple dedicated to the Julio-Claudian emperors. Aphrodisias remained a city of importance to Romans for many centuries because of the two important temples and also due to the nearby marble quarry. It was home to antiquity's most important sculpture school and the marble sculpture from Aphrodisias was famous throughout the empire.

Aphrodisias is set out on a grid plan like most Roman cities with the usual Theatre, Stadium, Basilica, Baths and Temples. Starting at the eastern side of the city, there is a monumental gateway or **Tetrapylon** built c. AD 200 which leads from the main north-south street of the town into a large forecourt in front of the Temple or Sanctuary of Aphrodite.

Northwest of the Tetrapylon is what is referred to as the **Stadium** but it has the size and structure of a small circus in that it is an oval shaped arena rather than the usual oblong stadium which would have at one end a semicircular section and at the other end a distinctive starting gate known as the *carceres*. It measures approximately 270 x 60 m, with 30 rows of seats all around, (the central track for chariot and horse races measures approximately 225 x 30 m), and

Top left: Google Earth image of Aphrodisias.  
 Top right: Plan of the central structures of Aphrodisias.  
 Plan: New York University.  
 Middle right: The monumental Tetrapylon.  
 Bottom right: The stadium.





Top left: The remains of the Temple of Aphrodite, built by Zoilus in the 1st century BC.

Middle left: The Odeon.

Bottom: This photograph taken from the Theatre looks north over the southern Agora (foreground), North Agora (grassed), towards the Temple of Aphrodite (columns in background).

had a maximum capacity of 30,000 spectators. By comparison, the *Circus Maximus* in Rome measured 621 x 118 m and could accommodate about 150,000 spectators. Here spectators watched chariot races, horse races and track and field events with the most famous games the *Aphrodeisia Isolympia*. As part of the games held for the cult of the emperors, gladiatorial and wild beast combats were held here until the 2nd century, with temporary barriers erected to protect the seating area.

Of the two temples in the city, the **Temple of Aphrodite** was a focal point of the town. The temple whose remains are present today, was built by a citizen – Zoilus, in the first century BC and was extended in AD 130 during the reign of Hadrian. The cult statue of Aphrodite stood in the temple's central room or *naos*.

South of the Temple of Aphrodite and on the north side of the North Agora is the **Odeon** or Bouleuterion (Council House). The Odeon was not only the meeting place of the city council but also used for artistic performances with a capacity of about 1750. There is a semicircular auditorium, a shallow stage about 46 m wide and semicircular orchestra. The nine rows of marble seats in the lower part of the auditorium survive intact but the seating of the upper part, an additional twelve rows, has collapsed together with its supporting vaults. There are numerous entrances at ground level and several stairways and a system of massive parallel buttresses shows that the building was originally vaulted. The auditorium would have had a series of tall, arched windows in the curved outer wall. From the style of both sculptural and architectural ornament and from the presence of inscriptions, it appears that it was





constructed in the 2nd or 3rd centuries, (Antonine or early Severan period) and it replaced a smaller building of the 1st century BC.

The **North Agora** (marketplace) today is a green area with poplar trees occupying the space between the Odeon and the Portico of Tiberius in the **South Agora**, a structure begun in the time of Tiberius (AD 14-37), surrounded by columns with carved friezes on top.

Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138) visited Aphrodisias on one of his journeys through Anatolia and the city council had **baths** constructed in his honour on the western side of the South Agora.

At the most southern part of today's Aphrodisias, is the marble **Theatre**, built over several periods with the stage "constructed on the order of Zoilus, a manumitted slave of the son of Caesar (Octavianus) and dedicated to Aphrodite and the Divine Augusti and the People." On the north wall, known as the Archive Wall, of the stage building are numerous inscriptions including letters from the Roman Senate and private letters, making this very important in Anatolian archaeology.

### ***Sebasteion***

Finally to the Sebasteion (from Greek *sebastos*, venerable one), a building without parallel in the ancient world which was commenced in the first century BC and completed under Claudius (AD 41-54). It was built to celebrate the close relationship of the city with the emperors of the Julio-Claudian



Top: The Hadrianic Baths.

Middle right: The Theatre.

Bottom right: Frieze of garlands and masks of mythological figures from the portico of Tiberius. The portico in the South Agora comprised of an Ionic colonnade that framed a pool with rounded ends of 175m by 25m. The friezes would have stood upon the Ionic colonnade.



**Southern building 3rd Level: Julio-Claudian reliefs**



Claudius: master of the sea.



Augustus and Victory.



Claudius and Agrippina.

**Southern building 2nd Level: Mythological reliefs**



Aeneas' flight from Troy.



The god Ares with war trophies.  
Photograph: F. Tronchin, Flickr.



The three Graces.

dynasty.

The Sebasteion (*Augusteum* in Latin), or Temple of the Emperors, was decorated with a series of marble reliefs of emperors and Greek and Roman heroes. It is presently being partially reconstructed and the eighty surviving marble reliefs (of about 200 originals) are being conserved and displayed in the new museum hall.

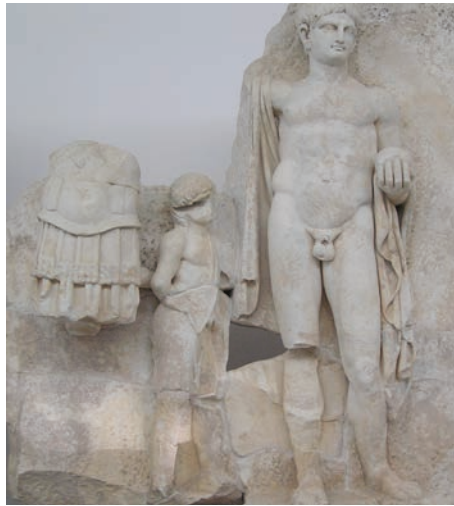
This extraordinary Roman building is not set on the regular grid pattern of the city but in an older section in the east of the city. Gaius Julius Zoilus, slave of Gaius Julius Caesar, and manumitted by Octavian, was a native of Aphrodisias, and he initiated and largely funded the building of the city's civic centre. Zoilus aligned politically with Octavian in his power struggles with Mark Antony and this ensured Octavian's lasting favour and protection for the city named after Aphrodite, an important connection as the *Gens Julia* (the family of Julius Caesar, Octavian Augustus, and their immediate successors) claimed divine descent from Venus/Aphrodite. On Zoilus's death, the Sebasteion completion was paid for by two wealthy local families.

The complex consists essentially of a long processional avenue running from a western entrance to the cult temple at the eastern end. What makes this place so special is the 12 m high, three-storeyed (Doric, Ionic and Corinthian) buildings on both north and south sides of the avenue. Some 200 marble reliefs – many with surviving inscriptions to identify them, decorated the two upper stories of these buildings which were designed simply to house them.

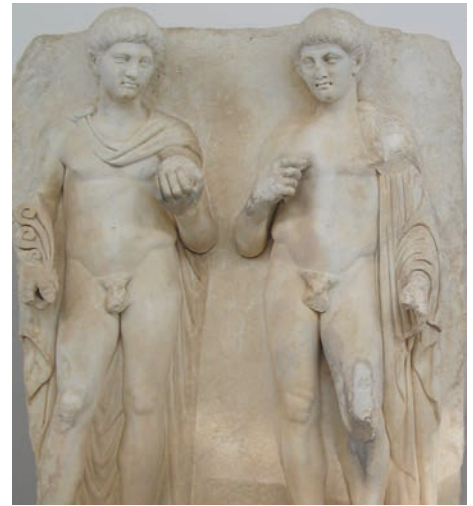
On the southern building, sponsored by Attalos and Diogenes, brothers from a local family, the third storey reliefs were of emperors and gods and the second storey featured scenes from Greek mythology.



Claudius and Britannia.  
Photograph: David Kennedy



Nero and captive.



Two princes (Gaius and Lucius).



Depiction of the myth of Leda and the Swan.



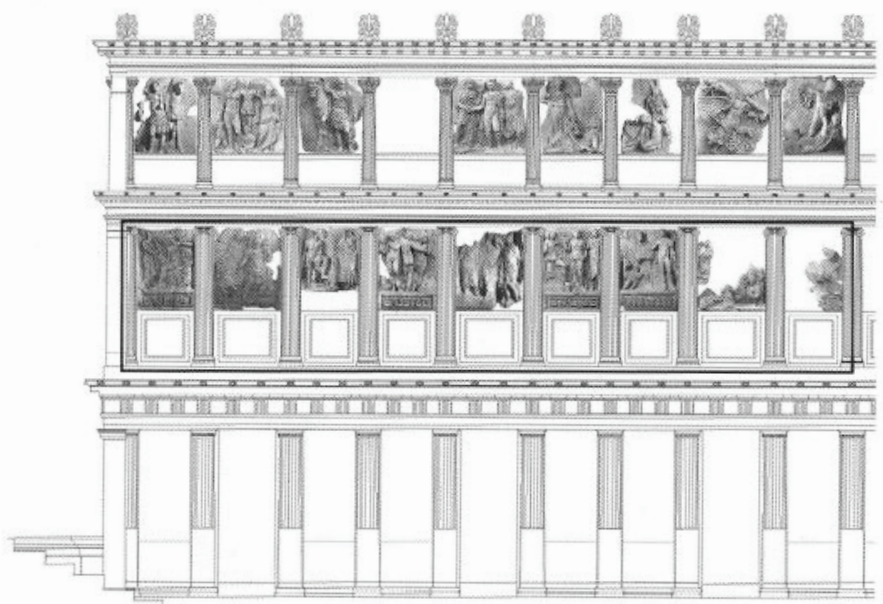
A drunken Dionysos.



Bellerophon and Pegasus.

The northern building, mostly destroyed in the fourth century AD earthquake, was sponsored by Menandros and Eusebes and family. The third storey featured reliefs of imperial scenes and allegories such as Day and Ocean and the second storey showed subject peoples from the time of Augustus - few of the reliefs in this building survive.

The surviving reliefs show the Roman emperors as powerful, warrior divinities. The main early Roman emperors are depicted: Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius and Nero, also young princes, Gaius and Lucius (grandsons of



Elevation reconstruction of the three-storied Sebasteion. Plan: *Aphrodisias Sebasteion* by Sevgi Gönül Hall 2013 (ed. Mesut Ilgim).



The Sebasteion under restoration.

Augustus) and imperial women like Agrippina. What makes these sculptures so fascinating is that they depict Roman emperors in Hellenistic heroic style rather than more conservative Roman fashion. Claudius, for example, is depicted in heroic nudity kneeling over a cowering female figure. His helmet and cloak are Greek and the cowering figure (named as the personification of his newly conquered province of Britannia) is how Greek tradition showed such defeated figures. Here and elsewhere in the Sebasteion, Roman rulers and princes are depicted as deities or heroic figures but in a manner to suit local taste and understanding. A vivid example of how the Greek East of the Roman Empire came to terms with its new western rulers.

The reliefs of love stories, myths and heroes reinforce the message of the power of Aphrodite and the relationship of the emperors to the heroes who toiled on behalf of mankind. The reliefs of the Trojan story of Aeneas (son of Aphrodite) again reinforce the special relationship of the Julio-Claudian family to Aphrodite (Venus) and between Aphrodisias and Rome.

Turkey is a country that can boast thousands of years of civilisation and today, it is a delight for travellers interested in history, archaeology, geography and culture. Of all of the many marvellous classical cities in Turkey, Aphrodisias is outstanding because it is in a beautiful situation, was built in marble and has the exceptional Roman Sebasteion and its remaining famous marbles.

Further reading:

Erim, Kenan T., *Aphrodisias: City of Venus Aphrodite* (New York: Facts on File, 1986).

There is a Virtual Tour on the official web site: <http://www.muze.gov.tr/aphrodisias#>

The University of Oxford website for the excavation has numerous illustrations: <http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/APH1.html>; and the older New York University expedition website is also worth a look: <https://www.nyu.edu/projects/aphrodisias/home.ti.htm>.

I would like to thank Murray Jones for the *Map of Ancient cities of Turkey*; my fellow travellers, Yvonne and Peter Broome, and my husband, Roger; and also David Kennedy who always corrects and improves my RAG articles.

All images have been taken by the author unless otherwise stated.



## The Trajanic Mint of Rome

*John Melville-Jones*

The mint (or *moneta*) at which coins were struck in Republican times was moved from the Capitol to a point at the bottom of the Caelian Hill at some time after the great fire of A.D. 64, probably during the reign of Domitian.

'Moneta' was a title of Juno. Juno Moneta had a temple on the Capitoline Hill, near which the original mint is said to have been located. Roman writers associated this title with the Latin word *moneo*, meaning 'warn, advise', and explained it as referring to the story of the attack by a force of Gauls in 390 B.C., when their attempt to scale the Capitol at night was foiled by Juno's sacred geese, who warned the Romans of what was about to happen. Modern scholars have rejected this, because Moneta was worshipped in at least two places (Veii and Signia) outside Rome, and it is therefore more likely that she was an Etruscan goddess whose cult was imported to Rome, and who was then equated with Juno. Whatever the truth may be, it is from her name that our word 'money' is derived, after it became for many centuries the Latin name for a mint.

The discovery near the minor basilica of San Clemente, built about 1100, of a number of inscriptions which were placed by the workers at the mint on bases that supported statues of Trajan makes it clear that the mint was in this area, which lies ESE of the Colosseum.

The workers are named. The person in charge (*optio et exactor*) was called Felix. Most of the other workers had Greek names, because slaves were so often non-Roman.

For workers of this kind to set up statues honouring an emperor was most unusual (although later the *argentarii*, or money changers, of Rome set up a monument with two piers and a lintel (it is often incorrectly called an arch) next to the Forum Boarium, to honour the reigning emperor Septimius Severus).

We may guess that Trajan's victories in Dacia, which would have led to some of the resulting booty's being turned into coins, and the emperor's decision to take a great deal of earlier coinage out of circulation and replace it (sometimes with coins that copied the earlier coins to commemorate them), would both have led to an increase in work, and perhaps in benefits, for the staff of the mint, and this may have been why they spent some of their profits in this way.

Beneath San Clemente lie the remains of a fourth century church, and under this, at the lowest level, there is another building that most scholars believe was the mint until the fourth century. This theory is supported by a 16th century drawing which shows a part of the Severan marble plan of Rome, the *Forma Urbis Romae*. The original slab of marble has not



Portrait of Trajan 98-117 AD. Palazzo Nuovo, Albani Collection MC0276.

Mint issues at about the same time as the statues set up by the mint workers were created.

All images sourced from wildwinds.com. Sizes are not actual.



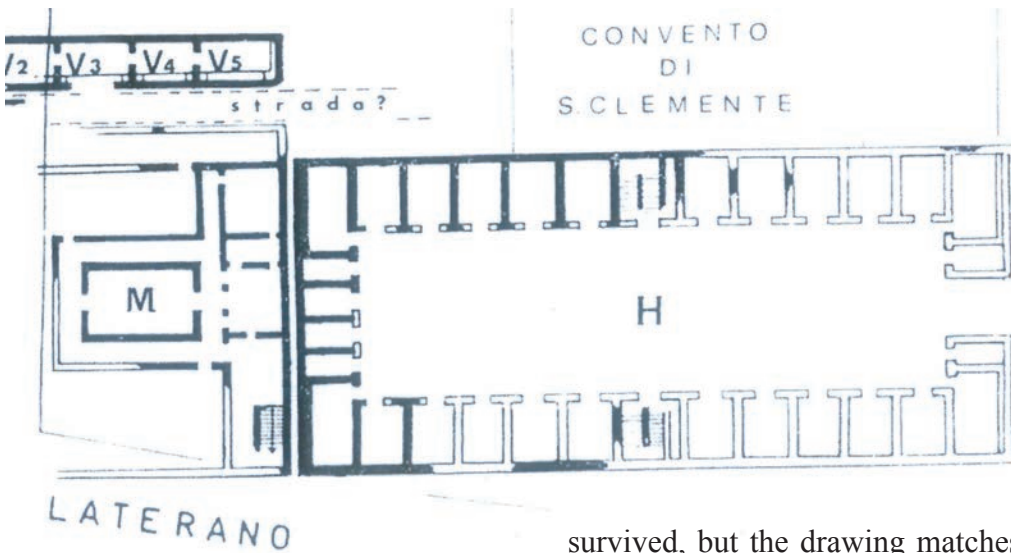
Trajan AE Dupondius. 114-117 AD. RIC 674; Cohen 353.



Trajan AE Sestertius. 114-117 AD. RIC 671.



Trajan Denarius. 114-117 AD. RIC 338.



Left: The probable mint building beneath San Clemente (H) and the adjoining Mithraeum (M). A drawing of a lost fragment of the *Forma Urbis Romae* marked MON... shows a very similar building.

Below left: Base of a statue of Trajan as Hercules, set up by Felix, the chief mint master.



survived, but the drawing matches very closely the plan of the building beneath San Clemente. This building was constructed with external walls of tufa blocks, which in the later first century A.D. were no longer commonly used, but might have been chosen because of the high level of security that this material would give.

The identification has been challenged for several reasons. First, it is clear that by the end of the second century the building was beginning to suffer problems from rising damp. These were treated by raising the floor, and lining the walls with *opus signinum*, a kind of mortar which included large quantities of crushed baked bricks or tiles, and was regularly used in building structures that held water. Secondly, the fact that the building had an upper story (proved by the existence of a staircase, although the upper story was removed when the fourth century church was built) makes it seem much larger than would have been necessary for a mint. Also, the *Reginary Catalogues of Rome* list the mint before the Flavian Amphitheatre and the *Ludus* where gladiators

trained, and if this reproduces the path of a tourist, the mint should have been on the opposite side of the Colosseum, rather than to the east of it. None of these objections is conclusive, although it is good that they have been raised.

However, if this identification is correct, the combined information provided by this building and the inscriptions is very useful in determining how the production of coins was managed. There seem to have been three persons involved in each striking, one (*a suppostor*) who carried a heated flan of metal to the place where the striking would take place, and placed it on the anvil that contained the obverse die one (*a signator*) who held the upper die in place and supervised the operation, and a third (*a malliator*) who actually swung the hammer to strike the coin. The *malliatores* were more numerous than the others, perhaps because the work was physically demanding.

Other inscriptions, not so closely connected with the church of San Clemente, tell us of the *scalptores* who carved the dies, the *flaturarii* who melted metal as required into ingots or blanks for striking coins, and the *nummularii* and others who checked coins, bagged them in the correct quantities and kept records. There must also have been cleaners, charcoal porters, guards, and many others, so that we can estimate the number of persons who were active around the mint when it was working at full capacity as being up to two hundred.

Slaves in the Roman world might find themselves in very different circumstances. Those who worked in mines or in brothels had the shortest and most miserable lives. On the other hand, those who worked for an emperor in an administrative position could expect to be elevated after a while to the higher status of freedman. It is clear that the workers at the mint, who were imperial slaves and freedmen, lived in relatively comfortable circumstances, had considerable social status, and could afford to pay for these statues.

**‘There is a history in all men’s lives...’**  
*Guy de la Bédoyère*

This title quote from Shakespeare, Henry IV Part II, III.1 continues,

*... figuring the nature of the times  
 deceas’d, the which observ’d, a  
 man may prophesy with a near aim  
 of the main chance of things who in  
 their seeds and weak beginnings lie  
 intreasur’d.*

This photograph, now badly ripped (I have repaired it digitally), was taken more than half a century ago, which is the first time I have been able to say that about something in my life that I can remember. My mother pressed the shutter on her ancient Kodak box camera some time in the summer of 1963 while standing in the live excavations of the Roman palace at Fishbourne, near Chichester, in West Sussex and inadvertently recorded one of the most important early experiences of my life. I was about 5 and a half years old and am sitting on the right. My brother Raoul who was shortly to be 4 is sitting to the left.



Oddly, I can remember the occasion very clearly. My parents, who were 29 that year, were very excited by the news of Barry Cunliffe’s excavations and that, I suppose, was quite a decisive factor in my upbringing in its own right. We lived in Wimbledon, in southwest London, so we were not so far away though back then it was much more of a hike than it is now. I rather think this was the summer that my parents borrowed a cousin’s house at Selsey for our first summer holiday and that would have facilitated the visit to Fishbourne. I recall that the car had to struggle over mud to get into the excavation site. There was no concern for ‘health and safety’ then and we wandered around freely.

I distinctly remember telling some Americans that the hypocaust *pilae* ‘were where the senators sat’. How on Earth I had even heard of senators by that age I have no idea, but clearly I already had the skill to make up speculative waffle by the side of a trench that would stand me in such good stead by a *Time Team* trench 35-45 years later!

Looking back now it seems to have been a far more decisive experience than I appreciated at the time or for a long while after. Other Roman visits followed, like our trip to the Wall in 1968 but it escaped photographic preservation. I was lucky enough to go on two school cruises in 1970 and 1971 on a ship called the *Nevasa*, an old British India ex-troopship which carted British school children around





the Mediterranean. That was when I first made it to Ephesus, Perge and Aspendus in Turkey, Delphi and Syracuse, acquiring a Kodak Instamatic on the first voyage, which I remember cost 47/6 (£2.37 in today's currency) and nearly wiped out my spending money for the trip. Worth it though as the pictures have survived. By 1974 I had saved up from a paper round to go to Pompeii for the first time and in 1975 accompanied some family friends to Rome which I thought was truly epic. The photo shows me standing in the Baths of Caracalla. I was 17.

University followed, then marriage and kids. We didn't travel much for a long time as a result though I made a brief foray to Egypt in 1983 – the picture shows me outside the Graeco-Roman-era temple of Hathor at Dendara. We mostly travelled in the UK which included the memorable moment which took place at 3.05pm on 17 August 1984, which I had the presence of mind to record and photograph, when I found a sestertius of Hadrian sitting in a field while we were out walking.

But in 1986 my first book was published and I spent the money on a return visit to Pompeii. The penultimate picture here was taken at Easter 1987 in the forum at Pompeii. I am with my wife Rosemary and our second son Thomas who was then about six months old. He is now 27 and lives in Colombia and we are well advanced into our fifties. I often think about that trip on our frequent visits to Naples – Pompeii always seems much the same, while we have grown older. The Roman world has been a backdrop in my life and I suppose it always will be. It had a curious impact on the children who became used to being dragged to Roman sites – I then noticed that they employed the adjective 'Roman' to describe anything decrepit or broken, which could include scrapped cars or rubbish in the street! The last picture is my favourite. It was taken near Housesteads fort on Hadrian's Wall in or around 1993. Our sons, William, Thomas, Hugh, and Robert, are illegally standing on the curtain. I thought little of it at the time but when I pressed the shutter button I ended up taking the most memorable image of our children. They are now all grown up but they will stare out of that image at us for the rest of our lives as the children they once were. Nothing shows me more how right my own parents were when they said we should enjoy things when we can.

## Recent Developments in the Roman World

### *A School of Gladiators at Carnuntum, Austria*



3D digital reconstruction of the gladiator school complex. Image: © M. Klein, 2011.

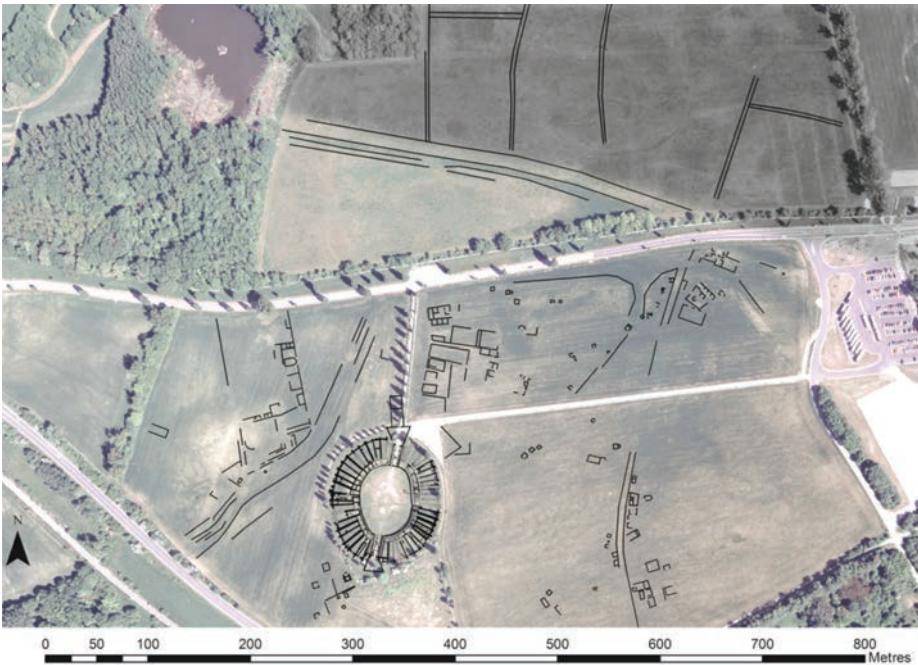
A multi-disciplinary team have discovered the remains of a Roman gladiatorial school at the site of Carnuntum, Austria without lifting a trowel. A GIS-based archaeological interpretation and spatial analysis of structures using data collected through remote sensing and geo-physical survey techniques has revealed in high-resolution a most comprehensive argument for the structure still located entirely underneath the ground in an area of the site previously thought undeveloped.

Roman Carnuntum (*Colonia Septimia Aurelia Antoniniana Karnuntum*) was the capital of the Roman province of Pannonia Superior and an important post on the frontier of the Roman Empire. Today, you can find the site a short journey south-east of Vienna on the River Danube. The Roman town developed in two sections: to the east a legionary fortress with amphitheatre and auxiliary camps, and an extensive associated settlement; to the west the civilian settlement and the *municipium Aelium Karnuntum* established by Emperor Hadrian in AD 124. Limited excavation between 1877 and 1913 had revealed the layout of the major aspects of the site. The amphitheatre, excavated during the 1920s, is located outside the town and remains one of the most prominent ruins visible in the landscape.

A large-scale archaeological prospection project of the site began over 15 years ago. Carnuntum was once referred to as



Aerial photograph of the amphitheatre. The gladiatorial school is located where the brown crop marks can be seen at the top of the photo.  
Photograph: Michael Doneus.



‘Pompeii at the gates of Vienna’ in the 19th century due to the extent of its preservation - but like many archaeological sites, 20th century development has left its mark. Farming, civilian development, infrastructure and illegal activity have all impacted on the site to cause irreversible damage. The main objective of the project is to map the Roman landscape through non-invasive techniques.

In 2011, an intensive non-invasive survey began between the municipal town and the southern amphitheatre. Techniques that were to be utilised to locate and reveal buried structures were analysis of remote sensing data including aerial imagery, and state of the art geophysical survey methods including magnetic survey and ground penetrating radar (GPR). Despite the excavation of the amphitheatre its surroundings were relatively unknown. The first indication of development near the amphitheatre was found on aerial photographs where a road from the town with structures along its eastern side were evident, and crop marks indicating buried remains of buildings to the west of the amphitheatre.

The true extent of the buildings to the west of the amphitheatre was revealed through the project’s utilisation and bringing together of several different near-surface geophysical investigation techniques to create a three dimensional understanding of the buildings’ remains. What it revealed was one major complex. This was followed up by field survey - the assemblages (primarily pottery) of which indicate a date of the 2nd-3rd centuries AD, which coincided well with what was known from

Top: The Amphitheatre at ground level. Photo: David Kennedy.  
Middle: Satellite image with plan of Amphitheatre and interpretation of remote sensing overlaid. Image: Wolfgang Neubauer.  
Bottom: 3D digital reconstruction of the gladiator school complex. Image: © M. Klein, 2011.

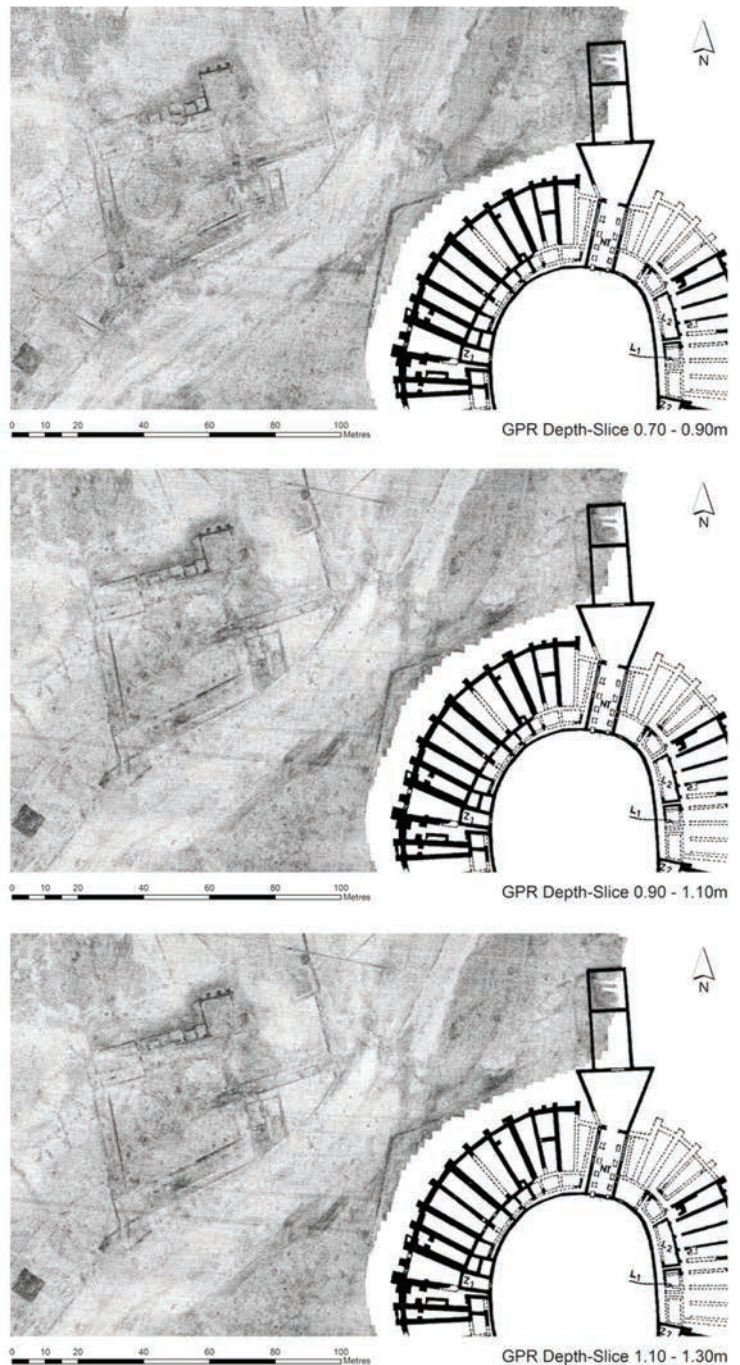
the excavation of the amphitheatre.

The project's conclusion was that they had found a *ludus*, a school of gladiators - possibly the best preserved. The primary support for this theory is the site's proximity to the amphitheatre, its isolation from the town, and its security - the entire complex is walled with only one entrance. However, the detailed plan of the structure that was created has also allowed a thorough spatial analysis that further supports the argument. The complex is split into two primary sections - the southern an administrative block and living quarters for the owner of the gladiatorial school, the northern courtyard and buildings were the school. Small cells in the southern and western wings of the courtyard buildings, similar in design to those found in the barracks at the *ludus magnus* in Rome, suggest the accommodation for gladiators. A large freestanding circular structure in the courtyard itself surrounded by wooden spectator stands would have been a training arena. A feature resembling a large post-hole in another section of the courtyard suggests the location of a *palus* - a wooden pole for practicing blows upon. Another building at the northeast alongside the courtyard is likely to have been a bath.

The highly detailed information that this non-invasive investigation was able to acquire is truly remarkable and well worth a read in the full article published in the latest edition of *Antiquity* (Vol. 88: 173-190). The benefits of this approach over traditional excavation techniques have indeed been demonstrated and the large scale prospection area will be expanded to study the central area of Carnuntum. The results should be something to look forward to.

We may add that the 'remotely-sensed' data is largely the work of one of the few aerial archaeologists in Europe - Dr Michael Doneus. David Kennedy was generously conducted around Carnuntum in 2009 by Dr Doneus - a site (with replicas of several buildings) well worth the visit (not to mention the deep-fried black pudding in the local inn).

*This article is a very basic summary of Neubauer et al. 2014 'The discovery of the school of gladiators at Carnuntum, Austria', Antiquity 88: 173-190: <http://antiquity.ac.uk/ant/088/ant0880173.htm>.*



Above: Depth slices of the GPR readings. Graphics:

Wolfgang Neubauer and Alois Hinterleitner.

Below: Replica site of Carnuntum. Photo: David Kennedy.



## Roman Archaeology at UWA

### Roman Archaeology Travel Scholarship

On 22 March we had the pleasure of hearing from Rebecca Norman about the wonderful summer school she was able to attend in Rome last year thanks to an award of one of these scholarships.

Thanks to RAG members and the particular generosity of several individuals who routinely donate their time, baking, the wine we raffle, and 'rounding up' their membership fee, we now offer two of these awards annually. To mark that, we have renamed them the Don Boyer RAG Roman Archaeology Travel Scholarships.

In fact, this present year we may offer up to four of these – superb opportunities for students taking archaeology units at UWA and keen to gain some practical experience in the Roman world itself.

### RAG Summer Sessions

Already this year we have had lectures on Justinian's Empire, 19th Century Travellers to Petra, the Baths of Caracalla in Rome and Rebecca Norman's lecture on the heritage of ancient Rome. Our last session for the summer included:

'The Mint of Ancient Rome and its workers in the time of Trajan' – John Melville-Jones

'Propaganda in the Age of Augustus' – Sandra Ottley

We can look forward now to a pair of Saturday sessions in our Winter Season – perhaps August and October. We are always on the lookout for suggested topics ... and suggested speakers.

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### Roman Archaeology at Oxford

As befits a university ranked fourth in the world this year (behind Harvard, MIT and Stanford ... and ahead of Cambridge in fifth place), archaeology at Oxford is a large and thriving discipline. Indeed, it is established as a Sub-Faculty in its own right. Roman Archaeology has always been prominent not least because there is a Chair of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire as well as other chairs and lectureships in Roman Archaeology and outstanding Roman historians. Andrew Wilson is the current Professor of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire and is tireless in his research and fieldwork (current projects in Turkey and Tunisia and those in Syria and Libya suspended for the moment). In Turkey he works with Prof Bert Smith – also of Oxford, who has been running the hugely important excavations at Aphrodisias for many years. Roman Britain is not forgotten – most notably in the person of Prof. Alan Bowman, currently Principal of Brasenose College, who has been engaged in the reading of the Vindolanda Tablets since the 1970s.

Oxford inevitably attracts large numbers of students, many from overseas to benefit from the incomparable range of potential supervisors, the superb research facilities and the stimulus of many others with similar interests.

You can read about the current historical and classical archaeology projects on their website: <http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/historical-and-classical.html>.

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## The RAG Newsletter

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