

THE BUILDINGS OF EPHEBUS

These notes were compiled from www.kusadasi.biz/ephesus/intro.html

Introduction to Ephesus

Ephesus is considered one of the great outdoor museums of Turkey, in fact perhaps of the world. It is located on the south of Izmir's Selcuk county. The links of Ephesus with the Amazons and the myths had survived throughout history. So, there was a competition for statue of an Amazon for the Temple of Artemis to be made by the famous sculptors in the 5th century B.C.. The town of Apasas under the rule of Ahhiyava Kingdom mentioned in the written records of the Hittites of the 14th and 13th centuries B.C. is Ephesus. The linguists accept that the word Ephesus was derived from Apasas. An important number of the findings revealed by the excavations carried on at southern slopes of Ayasuluk (Selcuk) castle by the Ephesus Museum since 1990 are dated to second millennium B.C.. Therefore, we can surely say that Apasas was founded on the Ayasuluk Hill. The findings from this place are exhibited in the Ephesus Museum.

After the fall of Troy and ensuing looting, the Thracians started migrating south. They joined the other Thracian groups who came from the sea and settled in Western Anatolia, forming colonies. The written Egyptian sources of the 12th century, mention the destruction of cities during these migrations, regions called Aeolis and Ionia appeared on the map. The region of Ionia where Ephesus is located is referred to as "Yavan" in the Bible, "Yavnai" in the Assyrian inscriptions and as "Yauna" in the Persian inscriptions. To Ensure their security, the immigrants preferred to settle on islands near the coast and on peninsulas. The colonization of Ephesus, as in the other Ionian cities, was completed in the 10th century B.C. Strabo and Pausanians tell the story of the settlement: Androklos, son of Kodros (the King of Athens), and his friends who were about to migrate to Anatolia, could not decide on the location of the new city they were going to establish

They consulted the oracle of Apollo, which told them to establish their new city at the location which would be indicated by fish and a boar. Androklos and his friends who came to the region wanted to cook fish, but the fish they were frying jumped off the pan, scattering flames that set the dry bushes on fire. A boar ran out of the burning bushes and Androklos started to chase the boar, caught it and killed it. Convinced that the prophesy of the oracle had come true, Androklos and his friends established their new city in this location. And Ephesus existed here for 400 years and was ruled by Androklos and his descendents. When Androklos died during a war with the Carians he was buried near the Magnesia Gate and heroon (a shrine dedicated to a deified person) was built on the site.

Ephesus was attacked by the Cimmerians in the 7th century BC but got back onto its feet again soon afterwards. The 6th century BC brought a prosperous period for Ephesus. Later, Ephesus came under the rule of the Lydians and then under the Perisans. In 334 BC, Alexander the Great captured Ephesus, which offered no resistance. The death of Alexander brought dark days to Ephesus, which was ruled in 287 BC by Lysimachos. Most of the works of art seen today came into being during this period. Later on Ephesus came under the sovereignty of Rome, and Emperor Augustus declared Ephesus a metropolis. In the year 262 AD Ephesus was attacked and destroyed by the Goths and after this, it never regained its previous importance

Odeion

This semi-circular structure, known also as the Small Theatre. According to an inscription unearthed, it was built as a bouleuterion (council chamber) around 150 A.D. by Publius Vedius

Antonius and his wife Flavia Papiana. They were member of a distinguished family in Ephesus. The original structure was provided with coverings and with a capacity of 1400 seated spectators, alternatively served as bouleuterion and as a small covered theatre. The structure consist of three main sections which are found in all other theatres: the cavea (auditorium), the orchestra (place of action for the actors) and the skene (the stage building). The semi,circular cavea is divided in two by a diazoma (horizontal passage separating the rows of seats) in the center.



The marble seats exhibit quality craftsmanship. Most probably, the skene was two-storeyed. There is a narrow marble podium just in front of the skene where five doors open onto the podium. The door in the middle is taller and wider than the others. The orchestra is semi-circular. The fact that there are no gutters for rain water in the center of the orchestra indicates that the Odeion was roofed.

Temples of the Goddess Rome and of Divine Caesar



In the Augustan era, the spread of Imperial-Roman cults was by then a fact in many provinces of Asia Minor. The cult of the Emperor was alive in Nicomedia and in Pergamum, together with that of the Goddess Rome. The idea for the building of a temple which could celebrate the Goddess Rome, the Roman divinity by antonomasia, together with Julius Caesar, whose divine attributes were venerated, occurred to his adoptive son, Octavius. The later - who was become Emperor with the name of Augustus - authorized the construction of the sanctuary on the occasion of a visit made to the Asiatic province in 29 B.C.

Its erection in the vicinity of the Prytaneion, constituted an aggregation point for the Romans resident in the province and a unquestionable testimony to the important role played by Ephesus within the political and administrative organization of this important part of the Roman Empire.

The architectural conformations of the buildings, usual in Ancient Rome, was in fact very atypical for the territories of Greece and Asia Minor. The remains of these temples have in our day been located in the immediate vicinity of Odeion.

Prytaneion



The prytaneion was constructed in the 3rd century B.C. and attained its final shape during the reign of Emperor Augustus. After it was destroyed for various reasons, its columns and some of its other architectural elements were used in the construction of the Scholastika Baths. In the course of excavations they were brought back to the Prytaneion. On each side of the road which runs between the Prytaneion and Domitian Square, there is a statue base with figures on it.

Its function in antiquity was comparable to that of our town hall: in addition to public functions, it housed important events, receptions and banquets. In the annexed Temple of Hestia Boulaia there burned perennially the sacred fire which the Pritanei -the priests who attended to the citizens' worship and to the sacrificial practice - had to feed.

In the immediate vicinity of this peculiar structure has been set up a triangular-shaped architectural element coming from the Door of Heracles which rises at the start of Kuretes Street. The sculptural figuration which is prominent there represents Winged Nike, the Goddess of Victory, while she holds a plaited crown in her left hand.

The Pollio Fountain

This is located to the east of Domitian Square, next to the western side of the Agora. With its wide and high arch which supports the triangular pediment and its small pool, it is quite an appealing structure. Water fell into the pool through the semi-circular apsidal wall on the side of the Agora. The Polyphemus group statue, which today is exhibited in the Ephesus Museum, was found in the pool on a pedestal built to fit the apsidal wall. These statues were originally on the pediment of the Temple of Isis in the middle of the Agora, but after the collapse of that structure, they were brought here. The theme of the group statue is one of the adventures of Odysseus in the Aegean following the Trojan wars, specifically, his adventure with Polyphemus, son of Poseidon. According to an inscription, the fountain was constructed by Sextilius Pollia in 97 A.D.

Temple of Domitian



Ephesus was granted the temple wardenship for the first time by Emperor Domitian (81-96). The temple dedicated to him was built on a terrace measuring 50 by 100 meters on the south side of Domitian Square. Not much is left of the temple. Our information on the structure comes from remains of its foundation. The podium on which the temple was erected measured 24 by 34 meters, and it was a small prostyle (a temple preceded by a porch with columns) and had eight columns on the short sides and thirteen columns on the long sides. Also, in front of the cella which measured 9 by 17 meters, there were four columns.

There was a row storerooms to the west of the terrace on which the temple was situated and on the side facing the square. There is a parapet consisting of two tiers of columns. There are reliefs on the columns were discovered in another part of the city and brought back to their original location.

The Gate of Heracles



The gate is located at the beginning of Curetes Street. It is a two-storeyed edifice. In the lower storey there is a wide arched passageway, and in the upper storey there are six columns in a row. Reliefs of flying Nikes that are found today in Domitian Square used to be situated at the corners where the arch joins the pillars with Corinthian capitals. One of these reliefs and most of the construction fragments have not yet been found.

The two centrally located columns at the upper level resemble the lintels of the gate. On these two columns, there are two reliefs of Heracles depicted wrapped in a Nemea lion skin. They are like the caryatids supporting Corinthian capitals and exhibit 2nd century craftsmanship. They were moved here in the 5th century from another location.

Curetes Street



In mythology, the Curetes were known as semi-deities. Later "Curetes" referred to a class of priests in Ephesus. Many inscriptions about the Curetes were discovered in different locations in Ephesus, especially at the Prytaneion. First there were six of them, but later their number was increased to nine. The aim of this group was recreate the birth of Artemis Ephesia in Ortygia, near Ephesus. According to mythology, while Leto, impregnated by Zeus, was giving birth to the twins, Artemis and Apollo, Curetes made a lot of noise with their weapons so that Zeus's wife Hera who jealous of Leto, would be confused and not see the birth of the twins.

In the beginning, the Curetes were affiliated only with the Artemision, but during the Roman Empire they acquire a place in the Prytaneion also. They were chosen every year.

The street named after the Curetes stretches from the Heracles Gate to the Celcus Library and since it is located in the center of the city, there are monumental structures facing the street.

Trajan Fountain

Along the Curetes Street, in a wonderful succession of ancient ruins, sculpted pillars decorated with sculptural figurations, we can see reconstruction on a reduced scale (the original reached a height of 12 meters) of one of the most remarkable Ephesian monuments. The fountain was erected between 102 and 104 A.D. and as the attached inscription reads, was consecrated to the Emperor Trajan. The tympanum which dominates the upper line is supported by Corinthian columns, in the central niche was one located an enormous statue of Trajan, of which only the base with the feet and the globe remain. The many sculptured figurations which once populated this fountain (members of the Imperial Family, Dionysus, Aphrodite, Satry) have been carried to the Museum.

Temple of Hadrian



This is the one of the most attractive edifices on the Curetes Street, and it must have been built at the latest by the year 138. The temple consists of a monumental pronaos (porch in front of cella) and a small, bare cella (main chamber). In front of the facade of the pronaos, there are four columns with Corinthian capitals supporting a triangular pediment. Above the two columns in the middle, there is an arch which curves down from the pediment, and the bust of Tyche, the goddess of the city, which adorns the center of the arch.

The lintel over the doors is richly decorated with classic motifs such as eggs or strands of pearls. On the second semi-circular frontal over the door, the figure of a maiden resembling Medusa is depicted among flowers and acanthus leaves.

In front of the columns there are four bases with inscription, and the statues of the four emperors who shared the throne of the Roman Empire between 293-305. They are Diocletian, Maximian, Constantius Chlorus and Galerius, as indicated by the inscriptions on the bases.

Latrina

The latrina built in the first century A.D. are the public toilets of Ephesus. The toilets were ranged side by side with no partition between them. In the middle was a square pool. The floor was paved with mosaics.



Hillside Houses

From the opposite part of the Temple of Hadrian the interesting complex of the so-called "Houses on the slope" faces out onto Curetes Street. These houses were inhabited by the most qualified and wealthy social class and for this reason they are also known as "houses of the rich" or "palaces on the slopes". Each house had a door which opened onto the side street from a terrace and a peristyle (courtyard) surrounded by rooms.



Most of these houses were three storeyed and the courtyards in the center measured between 25-50 meters. The courtyard was surrounded by a colonnade and paved with marble. The houses had running water. The houses were heated by a system similar to the one used in spas. The inside

rooms had frescoed walls depicting especially mythological subjects, while the floors were usually adorned with refined mosaics.

Ephesus Library



In 92 A.D. , Tiberius Julius Celsus Polemaeanus was a consul in Rome, and was in charge of all public buildings. Between either 105-106 or 106-107 A.D. he was the proconsul (governor) of the Asian province, the capital of which was Ephesus, when he died in 114 A.D. at the age of seventy his son Tiberius Julius Aquila, built the library as a heroon (mausoleum) for his father. It is assumed that the construction of the library was completed in 117.

The building is made of very good marble and decorated with figures of Eros, Nike, rosettes and garlands in relief . The building reflects the characteristics of the age of Emperor Hadrian. The facade is two-storeyed. On the lower storey, the columns with Corinthian capitals are placed on a 21 meters long podium reached by nine steps. The columns are arranged in pairs and between them there are three doors with richly decorated frames. The door in the middle is wider and taller than the other two.

Statues seen in the niches between the doors, are copies of the originals which were taken to Vienna during the years when the library was being excavated. As the inscriptions on the bases indicate, the statues symbolized the WISDOM (SOPHIA), KNOWLEDGE (EPISTEME), INTELLIGENCE (ENNOIA) and VIRTUE (ARETE) of Celsus.

The interior of the library measures 10,92 by 16,72 meters and is covered with decorative marble. The section of the western wall above the tomb of Celsus is apsidal. It is agreed that the statue discovered during the excavations either to Celsus or to his son and it must have been located in this semi-circular niche. It is now exhibited in Istanbul Archaeological Museum. On the side walls, there are rows of niches where the scrolls were kept. The same type of niches is seen the upper sections of the walls too. The remains indicate that the interior of the library was not two-storeyed and that there was a balcony with railing in front of the niches, located where the second storey should have been.

In 262, during the Gothic attacks, the interior of the library was burnt completely but the facade was not affected much.

Marble Street

This street, which practically constitutes the entrance to the theatre for anyone coming from the Library of Celsus, goes along the western slopes of Mount Panayir, in a zone of considerable architectural interest. Its origins date from the 1st century A.D. but a rebuilding which took place in the 5th century is definite, when a certain Eutropius provided for its paving, using uneven marble blocks which won for it its name.



This street served the carriage traffic: the deep grooves of the wheels are still visible in the parts that were subject to restoration during the High Medieval period.

On the sides of the street are visible the ruins of a Roman columned portico and a podium on which a covered stoa stood, built during the reign of Nero and used mostly for Pedestrian traffic.

Ephesus Theatre

The theatre built on the slopes of Mount Panayir was constructed during the reign of Lysimachos and later it was altered many times. Like all the other ancient theatres, the theatre consisted of three main section: the skene (stage building) , the orchestra (place of action for the actors) and the cavea (auditorium) where the audience sat. The skene which was approximately 18 meters high, was the most imposing section of the Theatre. The facade of the structure which faced audience was three-tiered and had columns. There were statues in niches behind the columns and niches had either triangular or semi-circular frontals.

The auditorium still used today for seating the public during the performances in the theatre, is arranged in three large semi-circles broken-up by eleven wedges of steps separated by entrance staircases. The original theatre could seat about 24.000; the auditorium originally rose for at least 30 meters over the orchestra and was crowned at the summit by a porticoed structure which had the function of further improving the acoustics in the complex.



The theatrical productions in the classical period were performed by male actors who wore masks on their faces. These and other elements related to the social life in Ephesus during its period of greatest splendour have been inferred from the frescoes decorating several walls of the so-called Houses on the slope

Harbour Street

Harbour street is 500 meters long and 11 metres wide. On both side of the street there were covered particos. These particos, which were reserved for pedestrians, had the function of protecting them from the bad weather and hosted shops in the inner part. The roadway completely covered with marble, was enriched - towards the middle part - by four columns culminating in Corinthian capitals which upheld statues of the Four Evangelists.

The shafts of the columns, still in existence, denote ornamental patterns of clearly Christian imprints. There is reason to believe that this latter decorative elements is the result of an addition made under Justinian (6th century), shortly before the inexorable decline of the city.

Ephesus Indoor Museum

The Museum of Ephesus is in the district of Selcuk, and displays works of art found in the excavations in Ephesus since 1964. The museum was enlarged in 1976 with new buildings and thus reached its present state. The reconstruction of the tympanum of the Temple of Augustus (or of Isis), is set out in the Gardens of the Museum with display of the sculptures which used to decorate the frieze, then located near the Fountain of Pollio. The marble sundial with epigraph is from the 3rd century A.D. . In this setting are also located interesting sarcophagi of various periods.

The Room of Findings from Houses holds materials come to light during excavations in Ephesian residences. For the most part, these are small statues, furnishings, busts, frescoes and fragments of mosaic. Remarkable are the frescoes depicting the philosopher Socrates (2nd century).

The Room of Findings from Fountains is almost entirely dedicated to the sculptural fittings and ornamentations which decorated the city's fountains. Among the outstanding elements in this room we can recall several sculptures discovered near the Pollio Fountain, namely; the marble depicting the Warrior's Rest (2nd century) and head of Zeus. In the Room of Funeral Findings are set out the contents of tombs discovered during archaeological excavations. In the Room of the Ephesian Artemis are kept the most illustrious representations of the goddess and findings brought to light in the Artemision and near the Altar of Artemis. The so-called Great Artemis is a marble of the 1st century A.D. , upholding two lions on her shoulders and bearing a large quantity of sculptural ornaments.

Over all, however, stand out the delightful sculptured figurations which used to decorate the friezes of the Temple of Hadrian (2nd century A.D.) and which were removed from their original location in order to preserve them from bad weather.

Goddess Artemis

Known as a fierce hunter as well as protector, Artemis is one of the major Greek goddesses. Artemis is known as the goddess of the night, the huntress, the goddess of fruitfulness, the goddess of childbirth, Lady of the Beasts, the woodland goddess, the bull goddess, the personification of the moon, and the eternal virgin. Artemis was one of the few goddesses immune to the enchantments of Aphrodite. In some instances Artemis is linked closely to the Roman and Italian goddess, Diana. There is some controversy as to the goddess that deserves the first rights, but it appears that Artemis was a later goddess. There is no doubt that the similarities are striking. Some people go as far as to call them one, the goddess Artemis Diana. As a huntress, she happily traveled in woods in the company of dogs, wild beasts, and mountain nymphs. She brought about Orion's death, the unfortunate hunter, who either defied the goddess, or else tried to seduce one of her companions, the virgin Opis, or perhaps attempted to personally ravish her. Artemis sent a scorpion to sting his heel, and thus killed him. But when Orion was subsequently changed into a constellation, Artemis made sure the scorpion received the same honor.

The Greek goddess, Artemis, is said to be the daughter of Zeus and Leto. She is the supposed twin sister of Apollo in most accounts. However, in more ancient traditions it was recounted that Artemis was the mid-wife for the birth of Apollo and his twin sister. Artemis is one of the prominent goddesses, and the lore that surrounds her is as colorful as she was proclaimed to

be. Another hunter, Actaeon, met his death because of a curse by the goddess. Actaeon was the son of Aristaeus, and on his father's side, the grandson of Apollo. One day, when hunting with his dogs in the mountains, he came across the goddess bathing naked in a stream. The goddess turned him into a stag; his dogs no longer recognizing him, tore him to pieces. In an older version a hunter in a stag's pelt approached the goddess.

Like Athena, Artemis sometimes wore the frightful mask of Gorgon on her neck, for with Athena and Hestia, the mild guardian of the household, she was one of the goddesses over whom Aphrodite had no power. Oeneus, the king of Calydon, once forgot to sacrifice his first crops to Artemis, as custom dictated. This provoked her wrath, and she sent a monstrous bore to ravage his fields; a great hunt was organized and during the hero Meleager was killed. The identical theme appears in the legend of Agamemnon. One day, while waiting at Aulis with the entire Achaean army for favorable winds in order to set sail for Troy, he happened to kill a stag so expertly that he cried, "Artemis could have done it no better." Artemis resented his boastful claim, and prolonged the still winds so the entire fleet could not sail. Teiresias, the soothsayer, discovered the cause of this setback, and told Agamemnon that the goddess required him to sacrifice Iphigeneia, his own daughter, and in return she would remove the difficulties in his way. But at the last minute, on the sacrificial altar, she substituted a hind in place of Iphigeneia, and took the girl to the country of the Tauri (Crimea); where she made her a priestess in a cult that practiced in her honor. A legend says that the giant Tityos attacked Leto on her way to Delphi, he was slain either by a shaft of Artemis or by a blow by Apollo. Odysseus reported seeing the offender in Hades where he was chained and two vultures picked ceaselessly at his liver.

Another story describes how Artemis took revenge on the children of Niobe. Niobe was the daughter of Tantalus, and she had borne Amphion of Thebes, seven sons of seven daughters. In her happiness and pride she said one day that she was better than Leto, who had but one son and one daughter. Leto took offense and asked her children to punish this insolent mother. Apollo killed the seven boys with his arrows, and Artemis likewise slew the seven girls. Niobe, who in despair fled to her father on Mount Siplyon in Asia Minor, was turned into a rock; and from this rock issued a stream formed by her ceaseless tears. In Asia Minor Artemis was the object of a cult very different from that on the mainland. A sanctuary was dedicated to her at Ephesus, where her temple was regarded as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. This work, as frequently said, was thought to have been built by the Amazons, a race of warlike women, according to some, living by the river Thermodon. There are several stories concerning the life led by the Amazons, of whom Artemis, the virgin huntress, appeared to be their protectress. However, the legends of Artemis of Ephesus seem to relate to her pre-Grecian origins. She was a fertility goddess; called Mistress of Wild Beasts, who was said to have suckled the young of every creature that roamed the forest. Artemis' Roman counterpart was Diana.