APHRODISIAS 2013

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SEASON

The New York University team worked this year for three and a half months on a programme of conservation and archaeological research at Aphrodisias, from 8 May to 26 August 2013 (conservation work continued until 22 September). Our team consisted of ninety-two local workers and fifty-three archaeologists, architects, conservators, numismatists, and photographers, both senior staff and graduate students. The government representatives were Fatih Mehmet Yıldırım from Gaziantep Museum (8 May 2013 to 9 June 2013) and Güzin Karaköy from Marmaris Museum (10 June 2013 to 22 September 2013). We are as ever most grateful to the Ministry of Culture in Ankara for fundamental permissions for our work at Aphrodisias. This year, our main focus was on four large projects (Fig. 1): (1) conservation in the Hadrianic Baths, (2) anastylosis in the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion, (3) excavation of the South Agora Pool, and (4) excavation of the Tetrarpylon Street. Other projects of study, documentation, and publication were also pursued with vigour.

1. CONSERVATION: HADRIANIC BATHS (Figs. 2-9)

The major conservation project in the Hadrianic Baths, begun in 2010, was pursued with work on the main fabric of the complex. The project is funded by the World Monuments Fund and the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust in London. Beside conservation, detailed architectural documentation of the Baths was continued by Arzu Öztürk and her team, and by PhD student Allyson McDavid (Fig. 4). While the collapsed architectural pieces in Room 8 (the *aleipterion*) were moved for study and the room carefully cleaned, conservation work was focused mainly in Rooms 4, 5, and 12, where the floors, hypocausts, and walls were restored (Figs. 2-3).

Room 4 was the central *caldarium* of the baths, and new work was begin here, concentrating on the large pool at the west side of the chamber – stripping back decayed elements, stabilising walls, dowelling stones, mortar-capping walls, repairing brick pillars of hypocausts, and propping up collapsing parts of the floor. In Room 5, work is nearly complete: the brick- and stone-work of the west pool was pointed up and the marble floor at the southeast corner of the chamber was consolidated as it is, in its interesting collapsed state. And in Room 12 the hypocaust supports were strengthened and the marble paving of the floor and the shallow circular pool was fully repaired. Thin steel sheets were placed above and between the hypocaust pillars to support the floor (Figs. 3 and 5-8).

Four large information boards have been prepared for installation in the arched south wall of Room 6. They describe ancient bathing culture, the architecture and decoration of the Hadrianic Baths, and the current programme of conservation work.

2. ANASTYLOSIS: SEBASTEION (Figs. 10-14)

*Sebasteion South Building*. The physical anastylosis of the three-storeyed South Building of the Sebasteion was brought close to completion under the direction of Thomas Kaefer and Gerhard Paul. The copy of the Claudius and Agrippina relief from the Corinthian storey of Room 1, which had been prepared in 2012, was fixed in its position (Fig. 10). Several missing columns, capitals, and architrave-frieze blocks were copied and also installed in the facade. Work now continues on the final cornice layer. Cracks and gaps over the whole restored facade were filled with mortars, and the copied reliefs and architectural parts were toned with a light tan-brown colour by conservator Joanna Skwiercz (Fig. 12). Eight open rooms of the Sebasteion’s South building, located to the west of the restored part, were cleaned and had their floors covered with gravel for the storage and display of the building’s architectural blocks (Fig. 11).

*Sebasteion Propylon*. Physical anastylosis of the Propylon at the Sebasteion’s west end was begun in 2012 and was pursued in 2013. The project is funded by the J.M. Kaplan Fund. The foundation of the whole structure of the Propylon was repaired and properly established. Work then focused on the Ionic order. The blocks of the Ionic order were repaired, and moulds and casts of existing pieces were made to
complete missing parts – bases, column drums for one column, and capitals (Fig. 13). Work started on re-erecting the columns of the first storey, principally in the southern half of the gate (Fig. 14). At the same time, the entire architrave-frieze course of the Ionic order was laid out in the depot for repair and preparation for mounting on the building.

Important findings include the discovery that the internal sides of the architrave-friezes of the two aediculae were set at a slight angle to enhance their projecting effect. A newly placed stylobate block from the single-column north projection carried cuttings for a statue between the pier and the column, and a stylobate block from the Corinthian order shows that the ‘free’ entablatures over the stairways between the aediculae also carried statues, probably two side by side. This helps to solve the problem of how so many statue bases found at the gate might have been displayed on it.

3. EXCAVATION: SOUTH AGORA AND POOL (Figs. 15-25)

Field work was concentrated on two longstanding projects, (a) in the South Agora, directed by Andrew Wilson, and (b) on the Tetrapylon Street, directed by Alexander Sokolicek. These two projects are of great importance for the organisation of Aphrodisias as a modern archaeological experience. They are connected parts of a larger vision for making the centre of Aphrodisias and its major monuments accessible – the major monuments that have been restored by our team in recent years (Tetrapylon, Sebasteion, North Agora colonnades, and Hadrianic Baths). The two projects are designed to create a new, enhanced visitor route through the centre of the site. The work on the Street and in the pool of the South Agora (or ‘Portico of Tiberius’) is also intended to help solve the problem of the rising ground water on the site. Generous sponsorship has been secured for both projects from Mica and Ahmet Ertegün, Baron Lorne Thyssen, the Headley Trust, the Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation, and the Gilbert and Ildiko Butler Family Foundation.

South Agora Pool. Part of the South Agora pool at its east and west ends was excavated by Kenan Erim in the 1980s. After a detailed survey of the water system of the pool in the South Agora in 2011 and test trenches in 2012, a five-year project, funded in the name of Mica and Ahmet Ertegün, to complete the excavation of the pool and its surrounding basin construction was begun. Trenches were dug at the east and west ends of the central part that had been left unexcavated in the 1980s.

Trench SAg. 13.1 (supervised by Ben Russell, Andrew Ward, Gabrielle Thiboutot, and Hazal Avcı) was laid out at the west end of the fill remaining inside the pool (39.17 x 13.64 m) (Figs. 15-17). At the southwest corner of the trench, one of the slabs forming the wall of the pool had been replaced with a reused inscribed slab, preserving the end of a dedication: ὍΕΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΘΡΕΨΑΝΤΟΣ / ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕΝ — ‘he set up [the image?] of the god who nourished/raised [him]’. The newly exposed upper surfaces of the seat-like slabs on top of the pool’s basin wall revealed a variety of gameboards, symbols and graffiti. On the south side, a menorah gameboard and several cross-in-circle and square-in-circle motifs were revealed on the outer seating; on the inner seating were some square-in-circle motifs and two graffiti designs that appear to show hankiyahot, menorah-type symbols with eight candlesticks plus a central stem (Fig. 18). In addition, there were two rectangular areas where the surface of the seats had been prepared for a statue base.

On the north side, there were again a series of cross-in-circle and square-in-circle motifs, and statue settings on the outer seat, and cross-in-square motifs on the inner seats. Also on the inner seat, at the eastern edge of the trench exposed this year, was a faction inscription (Fig. 19): ΝΙΚΑ / Ή ΤΥ/ΧΙΘ / ΤΩΝ / ΡΟΤΕΣΕΩΝ — ‘May the fortune of the Reds win!’ Letter forms, layout, and script are identical to an inscription found earlier, on the south side of the pool (ALA 80, referring to the fortune of the sellophoroi or litter-bearers). A significant discovery was that the late antique deposit fills the gaps left by the removal of some of the stones of the north portico stylobate; this shows that these stones were removed already by the time the fill was laid in the late fifth/early sixth century.

Trench SAg. 13.2 (supervised by John Sigmier and Alison Kidd) was opened across the east end of the fill remaining in the pool (38.33 x 11.44 m) (Fig. 20). Over the lowest silt layers in the pool, a complex of structures was revealed, with at least two phases, all constructed in roughly squared rubble masonry,
including spolia from Roman buildings, bonded with mud mortar, and surviving one or two courses high. It is possible that the surviving walls served as foundation courses for timber or mud brick superstructures. Pottery from the somewhat chalky ground surface within the building dated predominantly to the fourteenth century AD.

**Conclusions.** The two trenches confirmed and added detail to the broad phasing of the pool: construction in the first century AD (probably Tiberian) with surrounding palm grove; major renovation in the fifth century (filling-in the ring drain, raising the inner and outer seat-blocks, and raising the ground-level between the pool and its surrounding colonnade); slow sedimentation of the pool after the seventh century, and subsequent major collapse of the colonnade before the eleventh century; then later medieval and Ottoman walls and structures built on top of the long-forgotten pool.

One important finding was that much of the top-soil over the pool, in some places up to 1 m deep, was composed of modern deposits of earth from excavations elsewhere on the site in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. This was shown by abundant finds of modern, mid-twentieth century artefacts: plastic shoes, porcelain teacups, parts of wheel barrows, pharmaceutical glass bottles, rifle bullet-casings, and small pick-heads. In subsequent campaigns it will therefore be desirable to remove this modern over-burden by mechanical means. Except inside the ring-drain, the stratigraphy inside the pool is heavily mixed and disturbed.

**Environmental research.** Samples were analysed from directly over the pool base and from the layers at the base of the ring drain (by archaeo-botanist Erica Rowan). The ring drain samples contained large quantities of charcoal and a residue containing small fragments of bone and glass. There was also surprising evidence of foodstuffs (olive stones, grape stalks, multiple cereal grains and the weed of arable crops).

**Associated sculpture.** Research in the old excavation notebooks and in the museum depots identified some of the fountain sculpture that formed part of the original decoration of the pool. Two frogs in blue-veined marble are likely to have formed the fountains on the arc of the east end of the pool: inv. 71-331 is a near-complete frog except for its head, and inv. 86-75A is the left half of a frog, in poor condition, that was conserved in the museum depot by Val Munday (Figs. 22). A statue of a boy on a dolphin in fine white (Dokimeion?) marble, inv. 90-5, found at the east of the pool, probably flanked the central inlet. The channel block, carved in the form of a ship’s prow, found at the south end of the Civil Basilica in 1962, was drawn. This prow may have formed the main inlet on the axis of the pool at the east end (Fig. 24-25). It has a double lewis hole, showing that it was re-set in antiquity. Several fragments of a group showing one or more scaly elements of tritons(?) carved in blue-grey marble were identified from site records and in the museum depots (inv. 67-198, 73-202, 77-28, 83-142, and 93-7) and seem to be from one group that should be associated with the pool.

4. **EXCAVATION: TETRAPYLON STREET (Figs. 26-37)**

The excavation of the north-south street (Figs. 26-28) that runs from the Tetrapylon to the Propylon of the Sebasteion, designed eventually to open this part of the street for visitors, was continued with four trenches (NAve 13.1-4, from south to north). The project is funded by Baron Lorne Thyssen, the Headley Trust, the Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation, and the Gilbert and Ildiko Butler Family Foundation. The opening of this street and its large ancient drain is also intended to help control the ground water in this area and to bring new information about the history of the Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman history of Aphrodisias.

**NAve 13.1-3.** The three trenches to the south are as follows (Fig. 26): NAve 13.1, 13 x 25m; NAve 13.2, 13 x 7m; and NAve 13.3, 13.2 x 7.5m. Exposed Geyre village walls were dismantled and trees removed. Much modern material was found in the first metre and a half, showing this area had been used in the 1980s as a dump for excavation earth. Modern Geyre, Ottoman, and Byzantine levels were excavated and recorded, including some substantial walls built well above the level of the seventh-century collapse. In NAve 13.1, study of the open pithoi, found in 2011 (NAve 11.5), showed that the workshop to which they belonged dates to early Ottoman times. An ancient door-jamb was found in situ in NAve 13.2 on the line of the western street colonnade, now surrounded by modern Geyre walls. Finds in NAve
13.3 included seventy-five fragments from an important Dokimeion-style sarcophagus built into Geyre walls featuring (unusually) a central couple embracing tenderly (inv. 13.9-29: Fig. 31), a glass intaglio with a female portrait (inv. 13.106), and a statue base for one Myon, a local benefactor who built ‘the first bath-building for the Council of Elders’ (inv. 13-144, Fig. 34). This base was found built into a medieval wall in NAve 13.3, but it was carved for a niche, and probably came originally from the single statue-niche in the centre of the colossal masonry structure that stands on the line of the west colonnade of the street (Figs. 32-33). The lower levels of NAve 13.1-3 will be excavated next year.

NAve 13.4. The northern-most trench (NAve 13.4, 10 x 4.3m) exposed the seventh-century collapse of the east portico of the street colonnade, down to the late Roman levels, and confirmed the basic sequence of archaeological events and destruction from the fourth to the seventh century. Important finds here included fine glass ware, a well-preserved pestle and mortar (inv. 13.116 and 13.130), and a high-quality fragmentary bronze jug of the early Roman period – with a carefully-worked Silenus mask from the attachment point at the lower end of its handle (inv. 13.123-125 and 13.128, Figs. 29-30). The four trenches were supervised by Shannon Ness, Jonathan Cox, Kristin Newby, and Kemal Baran.

Environmental research. A detailed study was made of the environmental samples taken from the down-pipe of a latrine located in the second storey of the street colonnade – that is, in an apartment built over the street colonnade. The upper part of the pipe contained small quantities of mineralized material in the form of fig pips (Ficus carica), grape seeds (Vitis vinifera), and blackberry seeds (Rubus fruticosus agg.) (Figs. 35-37). Material from the bottom of the latrine pipe (below a thick hard blocked layer) contained a large iron blade lying upright at the bottom of the pipe – it is possible the blade contributed to the blocking of the latrine.

The first three stones of the latrine channel were removed and samples from it were analysed. They all contained charcoal, bone, and fine glass-ware. The majority of the samples also contained ceramics, eggshell, and occasional fish scales. The combined assemblage of mineralized material, charcoal, bones, shell, window glass, and glass table ware shows the latrine was used for human waste, cooking waste, and general garbage. The latrine should date from the fourth to sixth centuries, but its waste disposal pattern shows a strong similarity with latrine assemblages in first-century Herculaneum.

5. RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

The program of detailed archaeological, architectural, and site recording begun in 1991 was supervised by Harry Mark, Esen Öğüş, and Roland Smith. The goals remain to record and study the finds and building complexes already uncovered in the excavations directed by Kenan Erim (1961-1990) and to pursue a better understanding of the sculpture, buildings, street plan, and urban development of the ancient city.

Documentation and publication projects were pursued on the following complexes: the Hadrianic Baths (Arzu Öztürk, Allyson McDavid), Bouleuterion (Fig. 40) (Ursula Quatember), the Tetrapylon Street (Alexander Sokolicke), the archaic temenos of Aphrodite (Kenan Eren), the South Agora (Andrew Wilson and Benjamin Russell), and the Stadium (Katherine Welch and Andrew Leung). A new auto-cad map of the site was made by Adil Enis Arslan and Serdar Bilgi.

Gaudin’s Fountain. Detailed archaeological and architectural study of ‘Gaudin’s Fountain’, located to the south-east of the Theatre, was continued by Esen Öğüş. New drawings of the architecture and detailed study of the use and chronology of the building were made. The blocks of the pediment, set up on the ground in the 1980s, had fallen over, face-down, during the winter. The complete pediment and entablature were re-assembled, stone for stone, on a stable new platform, beside the restored facade of the building (Figs. 38-39).

Sculpture documentation and publication. The study of different categories of marble sculpture discovered at the site during earlier excavations was pursued with database recording and photography of the objects in the depots, as well as conservation work in the museum (Fig. 41). Publication projects focused on the following groups of material: Bouleuterion statues (Christopher Hallett), columnar sarcophagi (Esen Öğüş), and late antique statues and inscribed bases (Julia Lenaghan and Roland Smith). A series of drawings of late antique bases and statues in context were made for this last project (Ulrike...
Outschar and Harry Mark), and parts of bases were assembled in west stoa of South Agora (Figs. 42-44). Two volumes in the site monograph series have appeared this year (Figs. 46-47): C. Ratté and P. de Staebler (eds), *The Aphrodisias Regional Survey: Aphrodisias V* (Darmstadt 2012) and R.R.R. Smith, *The marble reliefs from the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion: Aphrodisias VI* (Darmstadt 2013), and a new volume publishing recent work at the site is under advanced preparation: *Aphrodisias Papers V*.

**Coins and ceramics.** A new initiative to catalogue all the excavation coins from recent years was planned and begun by Ahmet Tolga Tek, assisted by Hüseyin Köker. Work on the Roman and Late Roman ceramics was supervised by Ulrike Outschar, assisted by Hüseyin Erpehlivan. A new project on the Seljuk and Ottoman ceramics was begun by Muradiye Öztaşkın, both to examine the contextual material from current and recent excavation and to develop a local typology for the Islamic-period pottery of the site (Fig. 45).

**STAFF 2013** (Fig. 48)

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R.R.R. Smith
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Fig. 1. Aphrodisias. City centre, state plan, with areas of work in 2013.
Fig. 2. Hadrianic Baths, from east. Rooms 5-6 (in background) and 12-13 (in foreground), after conservation in 2013.

Fig. 3. Hadrianic Baths. Room 12, from above: after conservation in 2013 (north is to right).
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