# Negotiating polis identity in Roman Asia: the effect of public space on the urban experience

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# Negotiating *polis* identity in Roman *Asia*:

# the effect of public space on the urban experience

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List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| AJA | American Journal of Archaeology |
| AJPh | American Journal of Philology |
| CIG | Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum |
| CIL | Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum |
| I Eph | Inschriften von Ephesos |
| JRA | Journal of Roman Archaeology |
| JRS | Journal of Roman Studies |
| RPC | Roman Provincial Coinage online |

# I. Introduction

## I.1.Subject of study

Peoples incorporated into the Roman empire faced the necessity to negotiate their status within a new framework defined by the Roman power structure.[1] Interpreting the *status quo* and their relations to the Roman centre of power instigated communities to alter their self-image and create an adapted, imperial identity. My thesis revolves around this process and the question 'How were *polis* identities negotiated in Western Asia Minor under Roman rule?'. It aims to analyse the course of adaptation across time and its effect on the self-perception of urban communities. Belonging to a *polis* was an important facet of the residents' identity, especially that of citizens.[2] Moreover, the lived experience of one's hometown or homeland, *patris,* entailed that a wider circle of inhabitants, regardless of their legal status, were exposed to the impression of the public sphere which bore the manifestations of statements during the negotiation process. Although the experience of the individual might have differed due to their social and financial circumstances, sharing the same public sphere presented the same urban character, most notably architecture, for all inhabitants that, in turn, conditioned their perception of their community's environment. The cities of Western Asia Minor offer an interesting case to study the dynamics of this process for their location and history contributed to the creation of a milieu with traits from multiple cultures and a highly developed, urbanised civilisation anchored in Greek-style political and cultural institutions. These advancements emerged most significantly in privileged settlements and helped to define and safeguard the *polis* identity of the inhabitants. By focusing on the communal image of *poleis*, this research sets out to define the urban experience of inhabitants including the urban masses whose direct traces are usually extremely limited or entirely missing from our sources.

## I.2.Historical background

What became the province *Asia* was previously part of the kingdom of the last, heirless Attalid king, Attalos III, who bequeathed his realm to Rome in 133 BCE. The peaceful takeover was not complete, however, for Eumenes III, the illegitimate son of Attalos's father, opposed the Roman inheritance until his endeavour was crushed through military intervention in 129 BCE. At the time, the region bore cultural marks of the Persian occupation and its classical Greek and Hellenistic past; Ptolemaic, Seleucid and Attalid.[3] During the first century BCE, the province supported parties that lost against triumphant Roman forces. Under the influence of the Pontic king Mithridates VI, many cities

[1] Kai Töpfer, 'Expressing Civic Self-Perception and Constructing Identity – Public Imagery in Roman Asia Minor' in E. Mortensen, B. Poulson (eds.), *Cityscapes and monuments of western Asia Minor: memories and identities*, Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2017, 71

[2] Eckhard Stephan, *Honoratioren, Griechen, Polisbürger: kollektive Identitäten innerhalb der Oberschicht des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasiens*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 2002, 165-166

[3] Günther Hölbl, *Zeugnisse ägyptischer Religionsvorstellungen für Ephesus*, Brill, Leiden, 1978, 18

answered the call of the king and joined the anti-Italian wave of aggression in 88 BCE which modern literature terms as Asiatic Vespers. As a result, an estimated 80000 Romans and Italians were massacred to exact the king's revenge and rid the region from the Romans. The heavy tax burden meted out by the victorious Romans exposed the cities in need for credit to Roman money lenders and then to the whim of profit seeking tax farmers, the *publicani*. From the late 40s onward, the inhabitants suffered during Rome's civil wars for their majority sided with Pompey, then with the assassins of Caesar and finally with Antony due to the fact that the Eastern part of the empire fell under the control of these Romans who levied heavy taxes to finance their armies.[4] While, under the auspices of the Caesarean *clementia, Asia* was freed from the extortionate actions of the *publicani*, the aftermath of the later wars brought retaliation for the cities due to their affiliation to the defeated party.[5] The troubled and fluctuating early relationship gave way to the prosperous times of the *pax Romana* that the region enjoyed continuously until the raids of Germanic people in the 260's CE.[6] Peace allowed uninterrupted administration and trade while the consolidation of the principate established a steady cultural directive radiating from the imperial court. The trading hubs of the highly urbanised province facilitated the development of a bewildering complexity of identities by yielding a fertile soil for cultural exchange stimulated by the presence of motley people and their goods arriving over land and sea.[7]

The imperial framework defined the room of operation for local communities to construct their identities. Ensuing the conquest, *poleis* experienced political and administrative changes that necessitated the re-definition of the city's self-image. The loss of control over foreign affairs by yielding sovereignty to Rome and administrative developments, like the arrival of Roman governors and their entourage, introduced factors that altered the locally perceived attributes of power and eminence even in free cities that could keep their own laws and administration. Consequently, after warfare became unthinkable under the auspices of the *pax Romana*, a new avenue opened up for inter-city competition as vying for imperial favour became the new yard stick of status.[8] Already existing, elaborate institutions and infrastructure, most importantly, urban administrative hubs facilitating tax collection, served the needs of the Romans so the implemented changes were less profound and allowed for the continuation of many practices already in place. Most notably, this allowed the Greek

[4] see, for example, Joyce M. Reynolds, Kenan T. Erim, *Aphrodisias and Rome: documents from the excavation of the theatre at Aphrodisias*, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, London, 1982, texts 5-6 for Aphrodisias's heavy taxation under Brutus and Cassius and see Appian, *Mithridateios*, §62

[5] Guy Maclean Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesos: foundation myths of a Roman city*, Routledge, London, 1991, 7

[6] Christof Berns, Lutgarde Vandeput '"Denn darüber zu trauen, dass man geboren war, hatte ein Ende". Überlegungen zum Lebensgefühl in der kleinasiatischen Städten der frühen Kaiserzeit' in C. Berns (ed.), *Patris und Imperium: kulturelle und politische Indentität in den Städten der römischen Provinzen Kleinasiens in der frühen Kaiserzeit: Kolloquium Köln, November 1998*, Peeters, Leuven, 2002, 2

[7] Lisa Nevett, Phil Perkins, 'Urbanism and urbanization in the Roman world' in J. Huskinson, *Experiencing Rome: culture, identity and power in the Roman Empire*, Routledge, London, 2000, 218

[8] Onno van Nijf, 'Local heroes: athletics, festivals, and elite self-fashioning in the Roman East' in S. Goldhill (ed.) *Being Greek under Rome: cultural identity, the second sophistic and the development of empire*, Cambridge, 2001, 311-312

language to remain in use in the official sphere in the eastern half of the empire leaving a cornerstone of the Greek identity untouched or even promoted.[9] The ideological stance of the conqueror towards the conquered showed a similar state. In the east, Romans could not claim all-encompassing superiority over their subjects not even by their own standards for they considered some of their own markers of civilisation, such as agriculture and art, to have been obtained from Greeks.[10] Consequently, Romans could only draw on their military and political excellence. Nevertheless, the Augustan program of *mos maiorum* tried to establish supremacy on an ideological level too by proclaiming the Romans heirs of classical Greeks on account of their correct behaviour which they positioned in stark contrast to the supposed laxity of contemporary Greeks. [11] In turn, the expectations for correct Greekness modelled on classical, mainland Greek protagonists of the Persian Wars, primarily Athenians and Spartans, prompted the Asians to negotiate their Greekness not only vis-à-vis Rome but also in relation to the Greekness promoted by the centre. Therefore, the high esteem of their history and their civilisation earned the Greeks not only a higher level of parity with Romans when compared to other inhabitants of the empire but also the stereotype of debauched, unworthy shadows of their ancestors. They were forced to draw on connections to the above role models in terms of ethnicity or to mimic them in order to better their position in the eyes of the Roman. The centrality of Athens grew even further when it became the capital of Hadrian's Greek league, the Panhellenion, that bound membership to impeccable Greek origin, preferably Athenian.[12] On the other hand, the inclusivity of Rome provided an opportunity to join the Roman army and, for the elite, to run for imperial offices that opened the door for provincials to participate not only in the management of the empire but also exposed them to a more intensive contact with Romans and the current imperial fashion.

### I.3.Theoretical frame

There is still ongoing debate about the way identity was shaped in the provinces of the Roman Empire. In the past few decades, post-colonial approaches and inspiration gained from other fields of study, such as linguistics or cultural anthropology, brought an influx of applicable models, conceptual and heuristic tools to the study of ancient history. These new approaches focused extensively on the provincials' point of view. They shed light on the mechanics of identity construction and devoted more attention to the agency of the individual throughout this process.[13] Many scholars voiced their

[9] Greg Woolf, 'Becoming Roman Staying Greek: Culture, Identity and the Civilizing Process in the Roman East' in *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, Vol.40, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, 128

[10] Antony J.S. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan Cultural Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, 243, Woolf, 'Becoming Roman Staying Greek', 119

[11] *ibid.* 121

[12] Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan Cultural Revolution*, 253

[13] see, for example, Jane Webster, 'Creolizing the Roman provinces', American Journal of Archaeology, Vol.105 (2001), 210-217 and Tim Whitmarsh, '"Greece is the World". Exile and identity in the Second Sophistic' in S. Goldhill (ed.) *Being Greek under Rome*, 274

concerns about ascribing the ability of excessive self-determination to the individual without considering the power structure that designated the channels of upward social mobility and attributes of power.[14] David Mattingly struck the most constructive chord with his programmatic note about the necessity of studying identity 'in terms of both culture and power'.[15] While power received enough attention above, culture necessitates some elaboration to forge a useful tool from a buzzword with multiple meanings and use. It is key to this research to approach culture as a dynamic system of constructing and expressing ideas that are common to a group.[16] These ideas can be negotiated only by insiders of the group who express their identity by performative means, such as, fashion, stylistic, linguistic and behavioural choices. [17] As Greg Woolf noted, the 'performative nature of identity means context is all'.[18] The environment influences the choice of the appropriate cultural register. Following a linguistic model, Andrew Wallace-Hadrill highlighted the ability of the individual to adapt to the environment by switching between cultural registers, codes, according to the requirements of the surrounding and, thus, fit into multiple cultural settings while retaining membership in various groups.[19] Thereby, the importance of insiders to multiple groups increased for they could introduce new cultural features, ideas and other containers of culture, to their local communities as they already possessed various identities, fractured identities, consisting in a plurality of affiliations; ethnic, cultural, cultic, occupational, political and civic. As for the role of forces outside the group, for example, the agenda of conquerors, their impact on the culture of the group could have been significant, especially when their actions targeted institutions crucial to the group's culture, but changes could only be implemented by insiders through re-negotiating the self-definition of their group.

In some groups, membership was not subject to the choice of the individual but was assigned at birth, for example, ethnicity, mother tongue or native city. Polis identity, what it meant for inhabitants to belong to the urban community, certainly diverged among group members as did their personal reconciliation with the alterations and adjustments instigated by their incorporation into the Roman empire. However, the lived experience of their surroundings, the city, was defined to a significant degree by visual factors, most importantly, architecture and activities associated with spaces. These were common perceptions and, thus, contributed to a shared mental image of the everyday environment. The visual perception of objects influences behaviour through the use

[14] see, for example, Patrick Le Roux, 'La romanization en question', *Annales*, Vol. 59 (2004), 295-298 and for a more balanced approach focusing on power see Ando, Clifford, 'Imperial Identities' in T. Whitmarsh (ed.), *Local knowledge and microidentities in the Imperial Greek world*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, 17-45

[15] David J Mattingly, *Imperialism, power, and identity experiencing the Roman Empire*, Princeton University Press, Princeton:NJ, 2013, 214

[16] Jonathan M. Hall, 'Culture, cultures and acculturation' in R. Rollinger, C. Ulf (eds.), *Griechische Archaik. Interne Entwicklungen – Externe Impulse*, Berlin, 2004, 46

[17] Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul*, Cambridge, 1998, 11

[18] Greg Woolf, 'Afterword: the local and the global in the Graeco-Roman east' Identities' in T. Whitmarsh (ed.), *Local knowledge and microidentities,* 135

[19] Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, 63-64

suggested by the perceived qualities which can be seen as an enabling of affording quality of the object.[20] James Gibson coined the phrase *affordance* that hallmarked his psychological theory about the complementarity of environment and animal.[21] The potential of his ecological approach inspired social studies as well which moved away from the strictly practical affordances Gibson focused on. Sophie Pedersen and Jytte Bang pointed out that objects also afford particular social uses and, therefore, also have social affordance qualities.[22] Furthermore, they put the cultural meaning of objects on par with their physical qualities for 'our activity with a given object is channelled also by its socially (historically) structured setting', especially 'when objects are experienced in relation to the practice in which they have meaning.'[23]

Andrea Scarantino was cautious about the difference between particular manifestations of affordances which result in events where organisms perform an action, do something, for example, use a tool, and where something happens to them, for instance, they fall off a cliff. Consequently, she distinguished between goal and happening affordances.[24] This dual categorisation can be applied with illuminating results to architecture. In this case, objects that presented the most grandiose and definitive visual elements of the urban environment. The built environment, especially monumental and commemorative edifices, embodied the community's affiliations and transmitted a visual message about these through the style and décor of architecture. As products of cultural-historical processes, these objects contributed to both goal and happening affordances at the same time. They made a statement about the affiliation of the community or the benefactor and, thus, had a representational character by (goal-) affording this expression, while their presence also altered the environment and its visual impression established new (happening) affordances by conditioning perceptions about the surrounding. The simultaneous presence of the two types of affordances entailed that the urban environment affected all inhabitants and that the same setting afforded similar perceptions for every viewer from the common culture group of the inhabitants of a city.

According to Woolf, 'one may have an identity without asserting it explicitly'.[25] The difficulties arising from social complexities like this, entail that 'insights are more achievable than definitive answers.'[26] Therefore, the countless personal perceptions of civic identity cannot be attempted here. Instead, this research considers the collective aspect of communal representation and self-perception by assessing the manifestation of these and their impact on the negotiation process. My analysis focuses on the built environment: structures and public spaces that impacted the perceptions

[20] James J. Gibson, *The ecological approach to visual perception*, Classic Edition, Psychology Press, New York, 2013, 213
[21] *ibid.* 119
[22] Sofie Pedersen, Jytte Bang, 'Historicizing affordance theory: A rendezvous between ecological psychology and cultural-historical activity theory' in *Theory & psychology*, Vol.26 (2016), 741
[23] *ibid*. 742
[24] Andrea Scarantino, 'Affordances Explained' in *Philosophy of science*, Vol.70 (2003), 958
[25] Woolf, 'Afterword', 135
[26] Janet Huskinson, 'Introduction' in J. Huskinson, *Experiencing Rome: culture, identity and power in the Roman Empire*, Routledge, London, 2000, 1

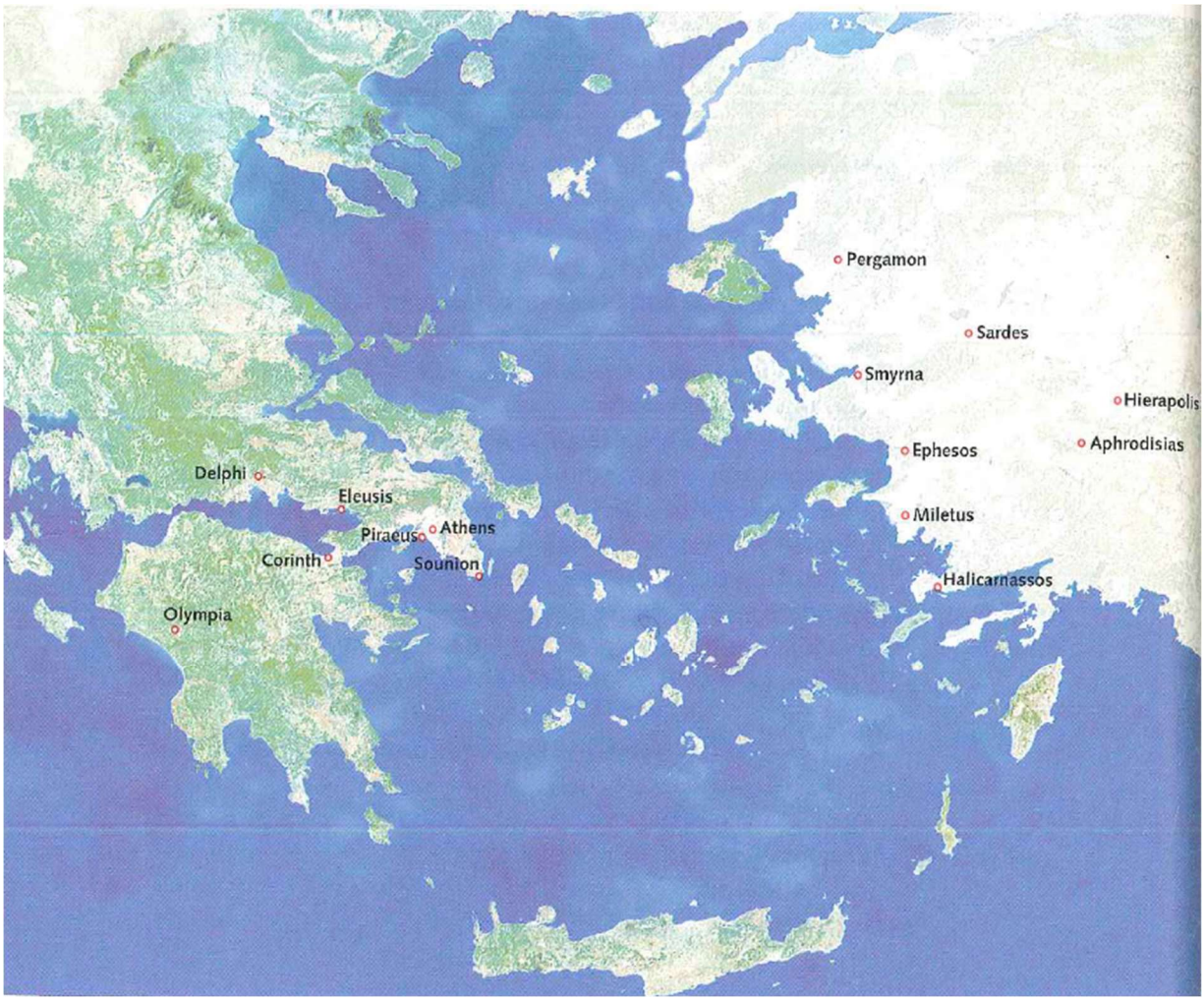
about the urban fabric. These made a statement of affiliation visible whenever one passed by through inscriptions and defining stylistic markers on the façade. Where the extant evidence allows, it is crucial to consider architectural pieces as part of compositions, for example, squares, streets or sanctuaries, for the experience was formulated by the perception of all present visual clues. While such an assemblage might have included heterogeneous elements, the mixture presented its components in relation and discussion with each other displaying a cohesive narrative.[27]

These narratives can be considered as the joint effect of the affordances of the urban space that provided a publicly displayed interpretation of the city's identity. One of the most important questions was the issues of belonging to the empire. Three socio-ideological models for interpreting this position and relations to the Roman empire were proposed by Arjen Zuiderhoek and Wouter Vanacker, namely the *polis*-citizen, the client-patron and the familial model.[28]

### I.4.Case studies

Given the limits of this paper, the selection of the analysed poleis includes two well-established, leading cities located in the coastal area and two inland towns that experienced their initial upswing during the Roman era. Pergamon and Ephesus, the two largest settlements in province Asia serving as governmental seats in different periods, were exposed to the most profound political impact of the empire while vying for primacy. The modern photograph below, map 1, shows a slightly different image due to the silting of the river beds which makes Ephesus more inland today. Pergamon served as the royal capital of the Attalid kings. Accordingly, it received due attention that elevated it to a cultural capital of the Mediterranean. Beside the sanctuaries dedicated to Athena, Demeter, Dionysius, Hera and Asclepius, the city accommodated a vast library attached to the royal palaces and a considerable gymnasium. Ephesus had belonged to various Hellenistic empires; lastly, it was added to the Attalid kingdom after the Romans defeated the Seleucids and signed the treaty of Apameia in 188 BCE. The advantageous harbour at the estuary of the river Kaystros and the nearby sanctuary of Artemis designated the city as a popular destination for commercial, financial and religious activities. The case of Aphrodisias is expected to showcase the consequences of a city owing its emergence partly to the ancestral claim of the imperial gens Julia to its city goddess Venus/Aphrodite and its support for Rome during the Mithridatic wars. The city was of secondary importance in its synoikism with the neighbouring Plarasa as it is suggested by the sequence they were mentioned in contemporary documents.29 The modest settlement developed successfully to obtain the title of metropolis and serve as the centre of the province Caria from the late 3rd century CE.

[27] Manuel De Landa, *Assemblage theory*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2016, 1-2
[28] Wouter Vanacker, Arjan Zuiderhoek, 'Introduction' in W. Vanacker, A. Zuiderhoek (eds.), *Imperial Identities in the Roman World,* Routledge*,* London, 2016, 6-8
[29] Angelos Chaniotis, 'Vom Erlebniss zum Mythos: Identitätskonstruction im kaiserzeitlichen Aphrodisias' in E. Schwertheim, E. Winter (eds.), *Stadt Und Stadtentwicklung in Kleinasien,* R. Habelt, Bonn, 2003, 70




Map 1 Map of the Aegean (Raja, *Urban development*, xvi)

Hierapolis was annexed by the Attalids with the same act as Ephesus. The settlement owed its prosperity to its hot springs, the toxic gases emerging from caves which were associated with the underworld and prophecies and the ancient Cybele cult established by the Phrygians here.[30]

Devastated by multiple earthquakes, the city was largely rebuilt from imperial funds under the Julio-Claudian dynasty. All these poleis accommodated major building projects and thanks to the excavations going on for over a century, these sites are among the best documented areas of the region, yielding a substantial source material to analyse. The chronological span of this research is framed by the rise of Augustus in the 30s BCE that created a monarchic construction that allowed provincials to conform to a more uniform state than they were incorporated into since the Attalid bequest in 133 BCE. The course of events offers a point of termination that is designated also by the available evidence around end of the Severan dynasty on account of the onset of the third century crisis and the incursion of Germanic tribes in the 260s CE that instigated urban construction projects to take a different approach and focus more on safety features and measures.

[30] Strabo, *Geography*, 12.8

I.5.State of the art

Some excellent studies have already addressed the questions of provincial identity in the empire and urban development in the selected cities. Integration to the Roman empire is generally explored on a conceptual level of administration, legitimacy and empire, with a stronger focus on the Western part of the empire discussing mainland Greece as the easternmost region.[31] The bulk of scholarly works dealing with Greek identity turned also to mainland Greece or left the province *Asia* untouched while others followed the work of orators and philosophers that resulted in a restricted focus on the intelligentsia.[32] The book of Jesper Madsen came closest as it investigated the processes of becoming Roman in *Bithynia et Pontus*.[33] Furthermore, many conferences were organised to address the question of identity. However, the selected *poleis* and *polis* identity feature scarcely in these either due to the broader focus, as in *Experiencing Rome* edited by Janet Huskinson, or due to the discussion concentrating on one specific edifice or building type, as in *Patris und Imperium* edited by Christof Berns.[34] Similarly, the attention that urban experience has received so far in the ancient world was more focused on activities and a Western geography, mainly Italy and North Africa.[35] The most valuable exceptions are the following: Guy Rogers's monograph analysing the Salutaris procession in Ephesus arguing that the Roman affiliation was a thin façade while the Ionian origin of the *polis* was more important to the local elite.[36] The two comparative works dealing with architecture and urbanism *Urban development and regional identity in the Eastern Roman provinces* by Rubina Raja and *Städtebau und Bauherren im römischen Kleinasien* by Helmut Halfmann aided this research immensely due to their dealings with sources I will consider too although their aim differed slightly from mine: Raja dealt extensively with Ephesus and Aphrodisias but the juxtaposition was more display oriented rather than analytic and presented urban development in separate chapters focusing on one city at the time.[37] Halfmann's interests were driven by identifying benefactors, the analysis of their

[31] see, for example, Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire,* University of California Press, Berkeley, 2000 and Wolf, 'Becoming Roman, staying Greek' *passim.*

[32] For example, see the omission of Asia in S. Goldhill (ed*.) Being Greek under Rome: cultural identity, the second sophistic and the development of empire*, Cambridge, 2001 and for focus on rhetoric, see Simon Swain, Hellenism and Empire: language, classicism, and power in the Greek world, AD 50-250, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1996

[33] Jesper M. Madsen, *Eager to be Roman: Greek response to Roman rule in Pontus and Bithynia*, Duckworth, London, 2009

[34] J. Huskinson (ed.), *Experiencing Rome: culture, identity and power in the Roman Empire*, Routledge, London, 2000 and C. Berns (ed.), *Patris und Imperium: kulturelle und politische Indentität in den Städten der römischen Provinzen Kleinasiens in der frühen Kaiserzeit: Kolloquium Köln, November 1998*, Peeters, Leuven, 2002

[35] see, for example, M. Flohr (ed.), *Urban Space and Urban History in the Roman World*, Routledge, London, 2020

[36] Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesos,* 137

[37] See sections addressing identity Rubina Raja, *Urban development and regional identity in the Eastern Roman provinces, 50 BC-AD 250: Aphrodisias, Ephesos*, Athens, Gerasa, Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen, 2012, 49-54 and 84-90

personae, activities and affiliations with less consideration on what this meant for the community and polis identity.[38]

## I.6.Sources

This research relies heavily on archaeological finds in order to make inferences about the urban environment. Recent publications from Aphrodisias and Hierapolis provide new evidence that enables a more accurate interpretation and more secure suggestions about the urban experience of the inhabitants. The free lying sites of Aphrodisias, Hierapolis and Ephesus facilitated widescale excavations and the survival of evidence to a further extent that in the case of Pergamon where modern-day Bergama covers the southeastern part of the ancient city. Fortunately, spaces of great importance and interest for this study, *agorai* and sanctuaries were uncovered and sufficiently published. Due to the favourable proximity of quarries with ample supply of various stones, the sites were dully embellished with statues and public inscriptions. Most of the statues we know about are attested only by their plinth inscription or another secondary reference to them. On the whole, evidence can be scanty and fragmentary as it will be highlighted below. In general, our understanding is limited by the re-use of materials that denies crucial information to be obtained about the primary setting of the artefacts. Moreover, destruction by natural disasters, military atrocities and plunder make our sources patchy and unevenly distributed across time and space.

## I.7.Approach and method

Below, I set out to analyse how *polis* identity was negotiated in the selected cities. To do so, I aim to parse features of the public sphere that made a statement about the community's affiliation and assess how the communal image of *poleis* was re-constructed using local and foreign elements. It is also important to explore the created image about the excluded, the other, that might have just as well designated a community through elimination and contraposition. Where the evidence allows, the person linked to the introduction of a particular feature will be investigated to yield intel both about the group of people who got the opportunity to make ostentatious statements as part of the negotiation process and about their possible motives behind their choices. While certain groups of people might have had more influence on shaping the identity of a community, most importantly the elite, their alterations had to resonate to a considerable extent with the ideas of their fellow inhabitants in order to be accepted.[39] This limitation was more profound than the practical need of the approval of the city council, *boule*, where members of the elite faced their greatest local rivals. Although not directly binding, public opinion and taste made judgement about projects pertaining to public affairs like space and the cityscape and, thus, the whole community could exercise some democratic access to the

[38] Helmut Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren im römischen Kleinasien: Ein Vergleich zwischen Pergamon und Ephesos*, Istanbuler Mitteilungen- Beiheft 43, Wasmuth, Tübingen, 2001, *passim.*
[39] Stephan, *Honoratioren, Griechen, Polisbürger*, 158

construction and re-construction of the civic identity even if this was democratic strictly on contemporary standards.[40] From a cultic perspective, James Rives pointed to the importance of 'normality', that is familiarity, similarity, by adopting foreign cults. In general, Roman practices came close to Greek ones while, for example, monotheistic cults could appear more foreign.[41] While this certainly played a role in cultural exchange, especially when facing the metropolitan Roman culture shared by the provincial elite by the time of the high empire, globalisation theory suggests that the peculiar local choice was inspired by global trends not simply copying the foreign, a phenomenon termed glocalisation.[42] Regarding the selection of novel elements, Onno van Nijf noted that only those could stick that harmonised with the local needs.[43] Out of the numerous trends, the fashion of the dominant group could be the most influential one but many alternatives existed. Decisions following aesthetic or pragmatic preferences occasionally entailed the import of features from a third culture that was part of the imperial 'register' of available influences, for example, Egyptian. The particular constellation of the local profile and needs could result in unique, innovative expressions as the community responded to new cultural impulses. It is important to note that the novelty of changes made to the urban environment did not have the same cumulative effect for the individual as they did on the local culture across the studied period for generations did not witness earlier alterations firsthand but were brought up within the changed setting which served as the default environment for them. Thus, the novelty factor was less impactful on the level of the individual so the direction of cultural change can be better discerned by taking a diachronic perspective that focuses on trends on a communal level.

The selection of the analysed *poleis* aims to create a comparative framework that allows for the detection of common and specific traits among the settlements while shedding light on regional peculiarities and developmental differences when juxtaposing the bigger, coastal ones with the inland *poleis*. To facilitate the presentation of the comparison, I will follow a diachronic scheme. Chapters dealing with segments of the whole time span of the research provide snapshots that allow the analysis of the course of development of each *polis* as well as the comparison of *poleis* at synchronic stages. This also enables commentary on similar trends the various settlements experienced in different periods.

The four chapters below align with a dynastic periodisation for the personal benefaction of emperors was a decisive factor in local development with regards to both the direction of change, and the scale of it as the relationship each town had with the centre depended also on the persona of the ruling emperor too. The varying length of dynastic periods and the different stages of development the

[40] Raja, *Urban development*, 49-50
[41] James Rives, 'Religion in the Roman world' in J. Huskinson, *Experiencing Rome,* 264
[42] Martin Pitts, Miguel John Versluys, 'Globalisation and the Roman world: perspectives and opportunities' in M. Pitts, and M.J. Versluys (eds*.), Globalisation and the Roman world: world history, connectivity and material culture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2015, 19
[43] van Nijf, 'Local heroes', 317

cities experienced asynchronously result in an uneven distribution of evidence that is reflected by the length of the chapters. While other factors, such as the level of urban development in preceding periods, entail that this periodisation does not necessarily designate a turning point in the development of some selected cities, it does for others, further extrapolating the urban images across the selection. These differences are peculiar to each period and contribute to the understanding of these. Moreover, the diachronic evaluation dissolves the unevenness of the building blocks as they give a whole.

The comparison concentrates on statements of affiliation and novel stylistic features expressed in the most frequented parts of the *poleis*. Each chapter starts with *agorai* followed by features of cultic edifices and leisure complexes located elsewhere. Busy urban spaces offered the best opportunity for propagating a message to the largest crowd possible, thus, these attracted the urban elite and the imperial court to display their virtues and magnanimity through benefactions that, in turn, shaped the public sphere with consequences for the other inhabitants of the *poleis*. Inscriptions will be considered mainly as visual clues for non-extant evidence, as in plinth inscriptions; in case they display Latin as the language of imperial power; if the versions of bilingual inscriptions bear a different message and less for their content since thorough reading of longer texts was sometimes not possible due to the optical situation of the text or on account of its length. Although this study is focused on public spaces, numismatic evidence will be considered on account of the information it can yield about structures pridefully displayed on the reverse. Honorific statues will be considered to map the images of exemplary people put on a pedestal to guide the communities and showcase the prime of their inhabitants or to propagate the *polis's* relations to the power centre. People honoured publicly were awarded titles like founder, *ktistes*, and benefactor of the city, *euergetes*, and other hero-like characteristics showing the greatness of their deeds and how dependent the communities were on their service.[44] It is difficult to distinguish between the cult statues of emperors and their appearances as benefactors but such separation seems to be artificial with regards to the interpretation of the viewers. Therefore, cult statues will be mentioned separate from their temple only if the features of the depiction allow further inferences other than the existence of the artefact. At the end of each chapter, I contrast the two groups and the four cities with each other and offer a diachronic comparison to point to similarities across the board and the distinct path each *polis* went down on.

Beside stylistic and aesthetic choices, there are further features of the built environment that necessitate consideration. These will be treated by the analysis as integral parts of the space or complex they appeared in. The content that is focused on here comprises of the imperial family, local myths and the persona of the mythical founder(s) of the *polis* that should refer to the contemporarily promoted images of the shared past among residents and reveal emphasised affiliations through the ample representation of these. Cultic practices are important to this research so far as they add a further qualification to the built environment in a way that it impacted the viewers' perception of it

[44] Eva Mortensen, 'Narratives and Shared Memories of Heroes in the Aphrodisian Landscape' in E. Mortensen, B. Poulson (eds.), *Cityscapes and monuments of western Asia Minor,* 42-43

and in cases where such activities offer suggestions about the character and use of the urban space. Most importantly, they can help both to determine the degree of continuity of the local cults, and the presence of imperial cult and other foreign elements, Roman or otherwise, and to ascertain the *polis's* relationship with the centre of power and the empire on a whole. For the imperial cult was a provincial initiative which was not or only tentatively regulated from the centre, it can offer valuable insight about the local self-positioning not only in relation to the centre but also to the region and rival cities.[45] The horizontal connection to other provincial settlements was coordinated by the *koinon*, the provincial association for the imperial cult which was in charge of organising festivities which Tim Whitmarsh described as the 'most trans-local of the events in a city.'[46] Furthermore, it is important that the communal life of *poleis* was mainly organised by the religious calendar that stipulated the date and the programme of festivities that strengthened communal bonds and the feeling of belonging to the community. Eckhard Stephan noted that an imperial identity of provincials was not based on the imperial cult as it was just a way to acknowledge hegemony.[47] While it could be argued that the *koinon* provided some sort of imperial identity tying regional patches together to create an empire, regarding the focus of this study, the important aspect of the cult is rather its impact on urban space.

### I.8.Argument

In what follows I aim to show that public spaces were created or enhanced in a way that enabled them to express statements of affiliation and affect identity. The effect on the community was in close accordance with the statements even if these were not always conceived with the goal of exerting such an influence. By turning into a feature of the environment, the particularity of these statements loosened and a more generalised meaning took its place that was more relatable for the inhabitant community. The changes driven by but also signalling this phenomenon show a steady incorporation into the empire mostly on the initiative of the local elite as the opportunity to make a statement of affiliation on *polis*-wide scale and participate in the negotiation of *polis* identity was available for the privileged class only for they had the required financial means at their disposal to erect the most durable and splendorous edifices. The composition of the elite, however, was defined by the local particularities of social and economic factors which were impacted by Rome and the centre of power. As a result, the wish to express proximity and belonging to the power centre in the empire instigated the emergence of Roman features that were, nevertheless, presented in a way that connected them to the local milieu. The comparison shows that inter-city competition facilitated not only the development of the imperial cult to place the community closer to the emperor but also the display of the mythical local past to parade ancient roots. The latter remained in harmonic relation

[45] Simon R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: the Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984, 88
[46] Tim Whitmarsh, 'Thinking local' in T. Whitmarsh (ed.), *Local knowledge and microidentities in the Imperial Greek world*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010, 189-200, 7
[47] Stephan, *Honoratioren, Griechen, Polisbürger:* 235 cf. Price, *Rituals and power*, 87

with the development of the communities' feeling of belonging to the empire as organic parts of it. Most importantly, the architectural features confirm that the negotiation process was played out on local terms and the interpretation of being incorporated into the empire was produced by locals in a visual language that enrolled foreign elements into its ranks that were already an amalgam of various influences. The development illustrated by the evidence discussed below demonstrates how cultural features emanating from a Roman milieu joined this amalgam and became an inextricable part of it.

## II. Julio-Claudian era

### II.1.Introduction

Although Rome controlled *Asia* for four generations before, the Julio-Claudian era was an important period of beginnings for the cities' relations with the monarchic framework developed under Augustus. The initial shape of these set the precedent for later times. The transition from the republican setup to the Principate brought a more concentrated and steadier message radiating from the centre that affected and inspired provincials. The birth of the new regime offered a novel opportunity for the cities to join the Augustan endeavour and show their support and obedience to the leader of the *oikumene*. With the civil wars over, long-lasting peace commenced in the province that ushered in a period without the personal presence of the emperor or Roman officials of high importance, at least when compared to the multitude history-changing personae who traversed the province during the preceding decades. Since *Asia* remained a public province, Roman administration continued to be governed by a proconsul of consular rank who was appointed for a fixed year tenure. That a senior official was required meant that overseeing this province carried immense prestige that was equalled only by one other province, *Africa Proconsualris*.

This period offers an abundance of sources that make the early Principate highly visible and facilitate the understanding of the ruling trends in this period. This chapter seeks to map out the response of the provincial cities to the transition. A crucial aspect to explore is the way provincials interpreted the new system of relations, especially the emergence of a sole leader. These carry distinguished importance since the defined the rules and practices were followed in the ensuing periods too with regards to inter- and intra-city and *polis*-centre relations.

### *II.2.Agorai*

The *agorai* of Pergamon show that Roman overlordship did not necessarily transform the cityscape with a wand strike as they remained rather unchanged in this period.[48] The two central squares, the upper and the lower agora, were venues of major construction projects under the Attalid king Eumenes II (r.197-159 BCE). The unaltered spaces suggest that the Pergamenes opted to keep the historical appearance of the city that recalled times of their unrivalled primacy as the royal capital of the Attalids. The saturation of the city and abundance of Hellenistic art is best indicated by the plunder of art pieces under Nero when many statues were taken to adorn the emperor's palace, the *domus aurea* in Rome.[49]

[48] Marianne Mathys, 'The Agorai of Pergamon. Urban space and civic stage' in L. Cavalier, R. Descart, J. des Courtils (eds.), *Basiliques et agoras de Grèce et d'Asie Mineure*, Asonius, Bordeaux, 2012, 266 and Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren,* 8

[49] Tacitus, *Annales*. 16.23.1

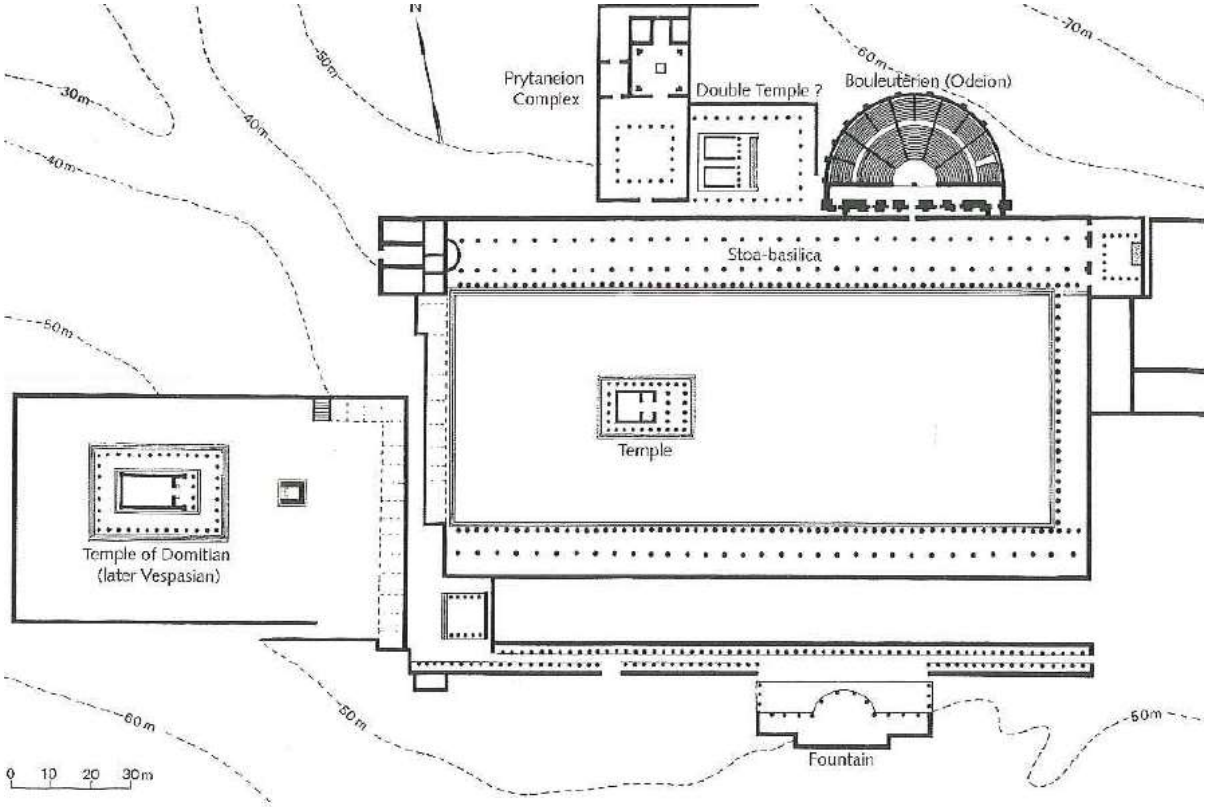



Figure 1 Ephesus, plan of the upper agora (Raja*, Urban development*, 62)

By contrast, the Ephesian squares attest to the commencement of a new era. The upper or *Staatsagora* was the administrative centre of the city with all related institutions and their offices around the square. Four structures are of special importance here: a Greek style *peripteros,* located on the longitudinal axis of the agora, a double-podium structure, located between the *prytaneion* and the *bouleuterion* (both were erected later), the stoa-basilica and the Memmius Monument.[50] There is no consensus on the cults accommodated by the temple in the middle of the square.[51] It was donated by the *conventus civium Romanorum*, the local community of Romans. If it was dedicated to *Divus Julius* and *Dea Roma* or Augustus and *Roma*, the two most common suggestions, it would indicate that local architectural forms strengthened the local, Greek character of worship of deities associated with Rome.[52]The function of the podium structure is not clear either. It could have displayed statues which might have had cultic importance too. An inscription found near the podium structure attested to the dedication of a statue of Augustus by a local notable, Apollonios Passalas, but a cultic function cannot

[50] For the *prytaneion* and *bouleterion* see, Peter Scherrer, 'Der *conventus civium Romanorum* und kaiserliche Freigelassene als Bauherren in Ephesos in augusteischer Zeit' in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten – Neue Sitten: Zu Rezeption und Integration römischen und italischen Kulturguts in Kleinasien*, Phoibos Verlag, Vienna, 2007, 66

[51] Arguing for Augustus worship see, *ibid.* 66, 69, also Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren,* 24-25, for a more balanced discussion, see Raja, *Urban developement*, 66-68, that does not consider the detailed analysis of Ulf Kenzler, 'Die augusteische Neugestaltung des Staatsmarkts von Ephesus. Kulturgemeinschaften und die Erschaffung einer römischen Stadt' in *Hephaistos*, Vol. 24 (2006), 173-174

[52] For chronology and dedication see Raja, *Urban development*, 67, for comments on the *peripteros* see Hilke Thür, 'Wie römischis ist der sog. Staatsmarkt in Ephesos' in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten – Neue Sitten*, 85

be confirmed yet.[53] As the Greek name suggests, families with long standing local roots were active in the cult of Roma that is corroborated by the lists of priests of *Dea Roma*.[54]

The stoa-basilica framed the agora on its northern side presenting an architectural mixture of the Greek stoa and the Italian basilica. Its length of 164.7 m was unmatched in the West, while the lifted central ship was an Italian feature new to Asia.[55] Its bilingual dedication by the family of C. Sextilius Pollio, a local notable, his wife and adopted son, mentioned the mixed name in Greek but gave *basilica* in Latin. The dedicatees were Artemis, Augustus, Tiberius and the *demos*.[56] Hennen von Hesberg noted that the Latin letters were almost double the size (19-20 cm) of the Greek ones (11 cm).[57] The wealthy patron donated a sculpture group of the imperial family inside and later received his own statue close to this group so the manifested proximity suggested both close relations with the centre of power and also his personal importance. [58] This association did not only positioned Pollio favourably but improved the community's status by displaying its leading figure so close to the emperor.

The Memmius Monument erected by Gaius Memmius, the grandson of Sulla, displayed the dedicator and his famous ancestor. It boasted arcs that recalled triumphal arches and, thus, the victory of the future dictator in the first Mithridatic war.[59] The reception of this monument could have been controversial as Sulla imposed a sizeable reparation payment on the Ephesians, taxes of five years to be paid in one, punishing, thus, the community for their participation in the Asiatic Vespers and for their support for Mithridates VI.[60] On the other hand, Ephesus rebelled against Mithridates and killed his general Zenobius earlier that shows anti-Mithridatic sentiment that, in turn, could have positioned Sulla as a liberator in the eyes of many Ephesians.[61] Whether the monument served as the tomb of Memmius is uncertain. Many funerary monuments took prominent positions along the Curetes street that connected the two *agorai* of Ephesus but the sources are inconclusive regarding the purpose of this structure.

The perceptible Roman presence on the upper agora was evaluated very differently among scholars. Hilke Thür considered the podium structure and the basilica, especially on account of the inscription, as of Roman appearance seeing the rest of the square Greek/Hellenistic in nature.[62] Dirk Steuernagel saw an Italian forum-type arrangement but also pointed to the Greek-Hellenistic forms of

[53] Raja, *Urban development*, 68
[54] Kenzler, 'Die augusteische Neugestaltung des Staatsmarkts', 176
[55] Henner von Hesberg, 'Die Basilika von Ephesos: die kulturelle Kompetenz der neuen Stifter' in C. Berns (ed.), *Patris und Imperium,* 149-150
[56] Philip Stinson, 'Imitation and Adaptation in Architectural Design: Two Roman Basilicas at Ephesus and Aphrodisias' in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten – Neue Sitten*, 96, CIL III, 13676
[57] von Hesberg, 'Die Basilika von Ephesos', 154
[58] Stinson, 'Imitation and Adaptation in Architectural Design', 93
[59] Anton Bammer, 'Zum Monument des C. Memmius in Ephesos' in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten – Neue Sitten*, 58-60, for the dedication see I Eph, 2.403
[60] Appian, *Mithirdateios*, 62
[61] *ibid.* 48
[62] Thür 'Wie römisch?' 85

the agora and the pluralism of dedicators of heterogeneous traditions.[63] By contrast, Guy Rogers detected a conspicuous foreignness of the square, although, only in opposition to a 'native Ionian dialect' that might have been the dominant character at a point but it is difficult to isolate such a default factor in a multicultural milieu as Ephesus.[64] More vehemently, Ulf Kenzler saw the process of turning an agora into a forum through the establishment of cultic structures describing 'wie Unerhört eine solche Umstaltung einer Agora eigentlich war. Als Sinnbild der griechischen Identität war dieser Platz das Symbol der Selbstständigkeit einer jenen Polis. Eingriffe in ihre funktionale, bauliche und kultische Struktur berühten die alten grichischen Traditionen einer Stadt in allem Innerste.'[65] The Memmius Monument certainly recalled less fortunate relations with the Romans and the basilica-stoa did replace a Hellenistic stoa. Furthermore, the podium structure made a statement with its proximity to the administrative-political surrounding that was newly erected under Augustus. However, the independence of the *poleis* had been heavily restricted at this point for over a hundred years. On the other hand, local administration reflected the free status of the city with the Hellenistic offices remaining in place. The statues of Artemis found in front of and in the *prytaneion* show that Roman features were far from being the only important influence. However, the Greek character was partially the result of a Roman decision as the statues certainly came with the *curetes*, who, together with the celebration of Artemis-mysteries, were relocated from the sanctuary to the *prytaneion* possibly by Augustus.[66] Attesting to the presence of these citizens, a Tiberian inscription lists six *curetes,* four of whom bore *Roman* names. Bearers of this sacred office banged their shields each year during the reenactment of Artemis's birth to scare away Hera from Leto.[67] In case these locals came from Greek background, the importance of the patron deity did not wane even after obtaining Roman names while in case these people had Italian heritage, their integration to the community entailed the veneration of local cults. Although the square witnessed an overhaul, the general impression presents the mixture of Greek and Roman elements that created a distinct, local expression of imperial influence suiting the needs and tradition of the residents like the full-square-length basilica did. As for the identity of the city, Greek was only one, if the most important cultural influence among many which, as the square attests to, were changing.

[63] for the arrangement, see Dirk Steuernagel, 'The Upper Agora at Ephesos: an Imperial Forum?' in D. Schowalter *et.al*., *Religion in Ephesos Reconsidered*, Brill, Leiden, 2019, 94, for the actors, see *ibid.* 103, for the forms, see *ibid.* 105

[64] Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesos,* 137

[65] Kenzler, 'Die augusteische Neugestaltung des Staatsmarkts', 171, 'how outrageous actually was such a transformation of an agora. As the emblem of Greek identity, this square was the symbol of independence of such a polis. Interventions into its functional, architectural and cultic structure touched the old Greek traditions of a city in their very core.'

[66] Guy MacLean Rogers, 'From the Greek Polis to the Greco-Roman Polis Augustus and the Artemision of Ephesos' in H. Elton, G. Reger (eds.), *Regionalism in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor*, Aesonius, Pessac, 2007, 137

[67] *ibid.* 137

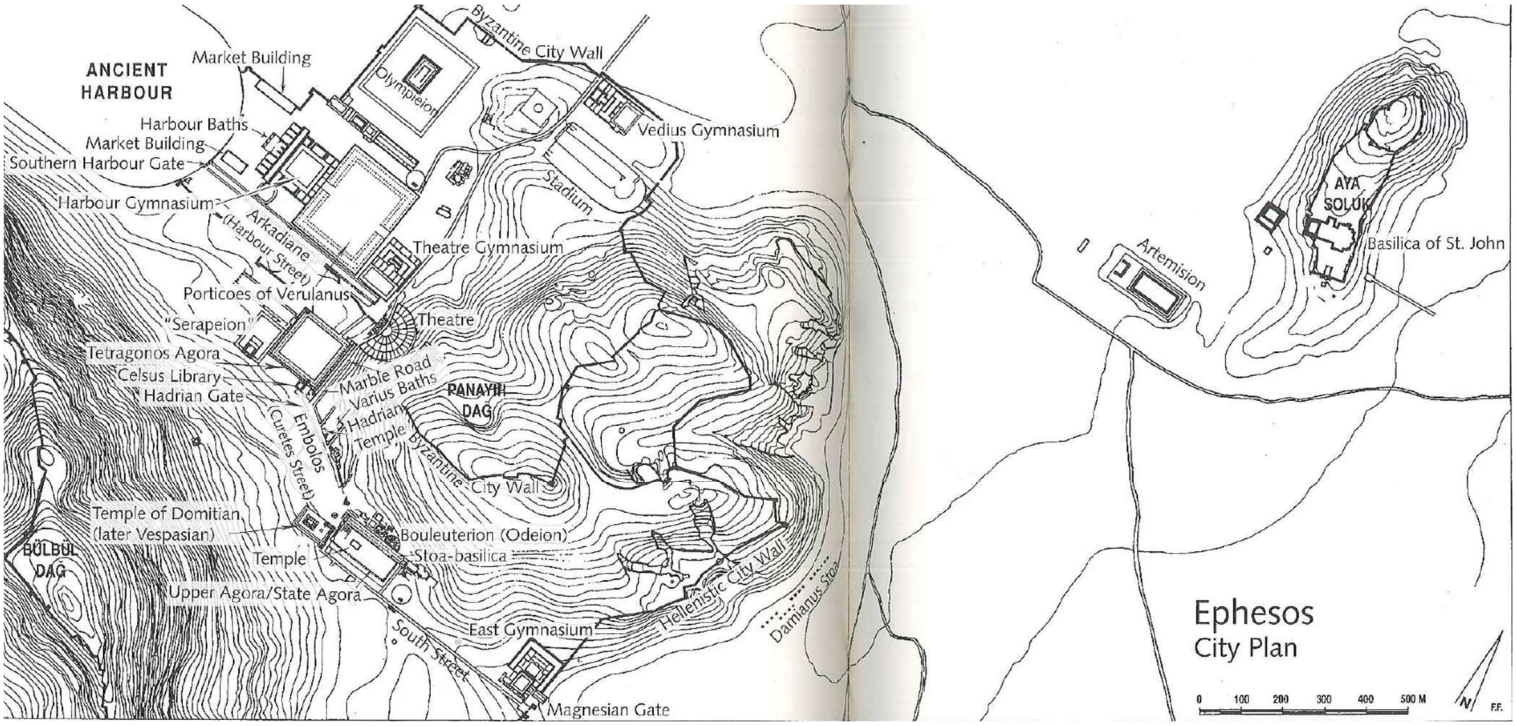



Figure 2 Ephesus, city plan (Raja, Urban development, 60-61)

The commercial centre of Ephesus, the lower or Tetragonos agora, located between the theatre and the river Kaystros, see harbour on the map, exhibited similar marks. Scherrer noted that the shape of the square was a Roman one although the square got fully enclosed only under Claudius.[68] The equestrian statue of the emperor must have been part of the same works.[69] The contemporary structure of importance here is the Mazaeus-Mithridates gate that was erected by the freedmen of Augustus to serve as the south gate to the agora, linking it to the *triodos*, the junction of the three main roads within the city. The Latin part of the bilingual inscription on the façade of the Hellenistic gate building, dated to 3 BCE, gave the full imperial title for the patrons, Augustus and his son-in-law, Agrippa, identifying them as dedicatees while the shorter Greek part in the middle, see figure 3, mentioned the benefactors dedicating to their patrons and the *demos*.[70] The inscription in such a central place made an ideological statement even for those who could not read themselves but heard others reading it out. The Latin part paraded affiliation to the highest circles in the oecumenical language of power while the Greek part pointed to the importance of the community and the benefactors' service for it.[71] Furthermore, a statue group of the imperial family gazed down from the top of the gate making the presence of the ruler being felt by every passer-by regardless of their literacy.[72]

[68] Scherrer 'Der *conventus'*, 65 for architecture, see Meral Ortaç, 'Zur Veränderung der kleinasiatischen Propyla in der frühen Kaiserzeit in Bauform und Bedeutung'in C. Berns (ed.), *Patris und Imperium*, 175
[69] Raja, *Urban development*, 74
[70] Scherrer 'Der *conventus'*, 64, I Eph 7.3006
[71] on language of power, see Clifford Ando, 'Imperial Identities', 17
[72] Vermeule, *Roman Imperial Art in Greece and Asia Minor*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge:MA, 2014, 219

Figure 3 Ephesus, Mazaeus and Mithridates gate, east façade (Wikimedia Commons, rheins)

The gate is also a good example to showcase the difference between and also the simultaneous effect of goal and happening affordances; the former being the statement of the freedmen about their affiliation to their patrons and to their *polis*, while the latter provided a strong imperial association for a frequented place in town by manifesting the presence of the Roman ruling family and a Latin inscription using a Roman dating formula and towering above the viewer.

In general, the Ephesian public sphere was more diverse with more foreign elements than the other cities that time. The Curetes street is the best example for this phenomenon. The city honoured Roman politicians, for example, the same Isauricus with a cult monument and a festival and Caesar with a statue, for their service to the city and Arsinoe IV, the sister of Cleopatra, who was assassinated in the city, received a monumental tomb, the *octagon* giving, thus, a cosmopolitan appearance to the city.[73]

Contrasting the vivid changes in Ephesus, little is known about the pre-Flavian period of Hierapolis.[74] The city had a central agora but most of the structures must have been destroyed in earthquakes, first under Tiberius then under Nero, and were rebuilt again under the Flavian dynasty. The scarce evidence is hoped to be enriched by further excavations and publications. So far, many columns were found that were dedicated to Tiberius that show a significant construction activity within the city, probably after the earthquake. One column, whose exact primary setting is not known

[73] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 22-23, 27
[74] Francesco D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale). An Archaeological Guide*, trans. Paul Arthur, Ege Yayınları, Istanbul, 2006, 35

due to its re-use in the great bath, was dedicated to *Sebastos* Tiberius by a certain Hikesios Kokos son of Pollis, an 'upright and pious son of the city, devoted to the *patria*.'[75] Without reading too much into the standard attributes frequently used on inscriptions, the message that an impeccable citizen honours the emperor should have been integrative with respect to the position of the Roman ruler vis-à-vis the city. The city's gratitude for the imperial help must have been displayed also by a statue base dedicated by the *demos* to Tiberius.[76]

The extant evidence from Aphrodisias presents a fuller account. The *agorai* of Aphrodisias owed most of their appearance to the early Julio-Claudian era. The northern stoa of the north agora was dedicated by C. Julius Zoilos, a major benefactor of the city and former slave of Caesar manumitted by Octavian.[77] The structure contributed to the Roma style colonnaded enclosure of the square devised by the same benefactor. Later, the complex was completed by T. Claudius Diogenes, a member of the local elite, by adding the south building, known as the portico of Tiberius based on its dedication to the emperor.[78] The administrative centre of the town, thus, received a Roman style setting with Greek buildings like in Ephesus.

On private land across the *plateia*, the *Sebasteion* added a peculiar visual narrative to the composition of the new city centre. The construction started under Tiberius and was finished under Claudius after multiple earthquakes hampered the progress.[79] The complex faced west looking at the north agora with a propylon adorned with an aediculated façade displaying the statues of the Julio-Claudian family, with contemporary additions of new members, Aeneas and Aphrodite, Prometor of the *Theoi Sebastoi*, the local translation of Venus Genetrix.[80] The statues on the propylon looked over not only those who walked on the festive avenue within the *Sebasteion* but also those who walked along the *plateia* from the sanctuary to the theatre and the way back or simply exited the north agora to the East.[81] Reminiscent of the Forum Julium, the elongated temenos framed the road to a Greek style *pseudodipteros* temple dedicated to Aphrodite, *Theoi Sebastoi* and the *demos*. The joint worship shows that the imperial cult was an essentially Greek endeavour with a matching framework. The loose thematic programme of the two, 90 m long, three-storey porticoes along the temenos attests to an integrative approach, see figure 5. These displayed panel reliefs above the forty-five porticoes in columnar frames on both sides of the route.[82]

[75] Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX,* 327
[76] *ibid.* 325
[77] Raja, *Urban development*, 30
[78] *ibid.* 33
[79] Roland R.R. Smith, 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias' in *JRS*, Vol.77 (1987), 90
[80] *ibid.* 95
[81] Ruth Lindner, *Mythos Und Identität: Studien Zur Selbstdarstellung Kleinasiatischer Städte in Der Römischen Kaiserzeit*, F. Steiner, Stuttgart, 1994, 49
[82] Christopher Ratté, 'The urban development of Aphrodisias in the Late Hellenistic and Early Imperial periods' in C. Berns (ed.), *Patris und Imperium*, 2002, for the temple, see 11, for the temenos, see 18, for dimensions, see Smith, 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion', 92

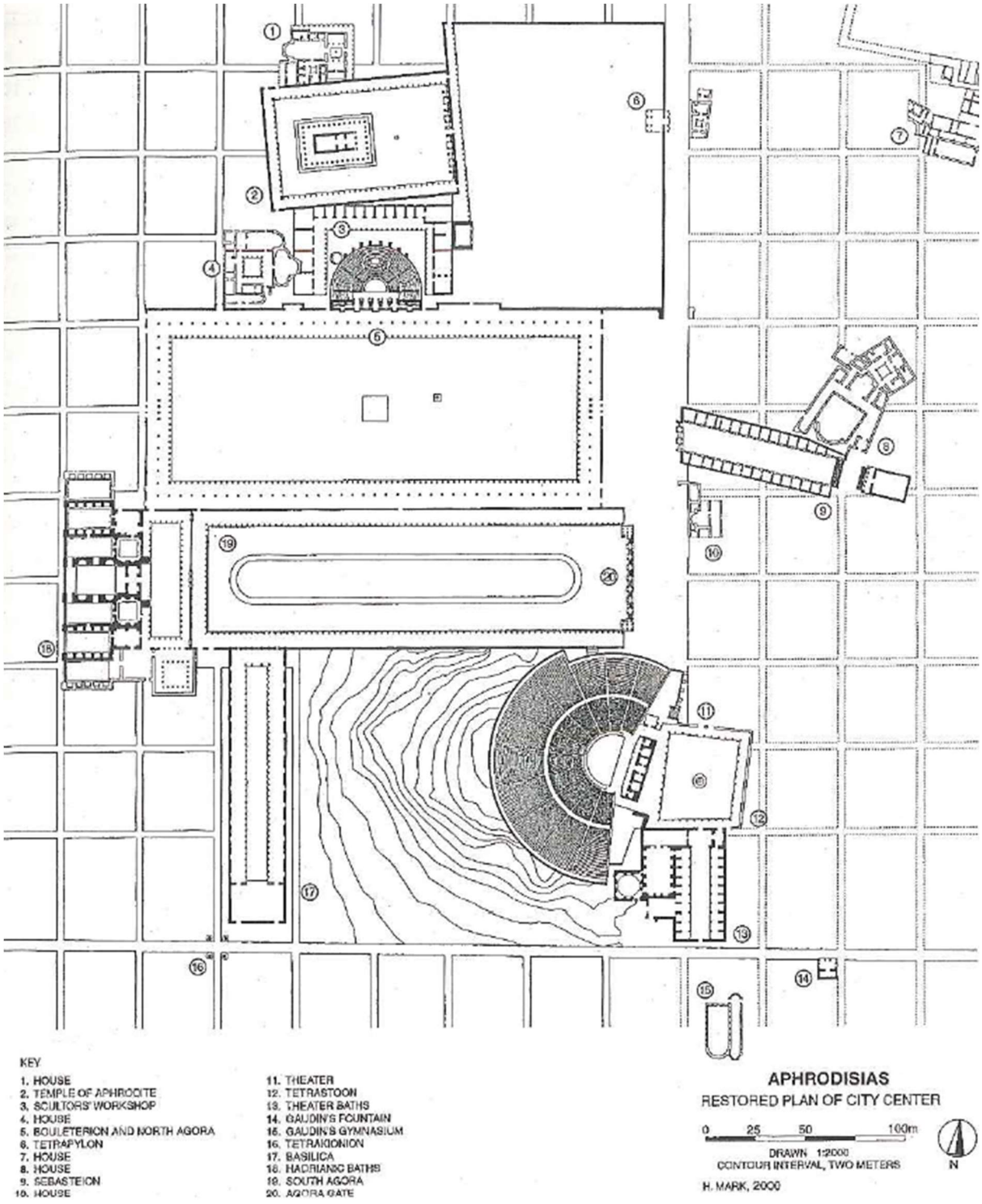



Figure 4 Aphrodisias, city plan (Raja, Urban development, 15)

On its second floor, the south portico displayed well-known scenes from Greek mythology featuring also the story of Aeneas, son of Aphrodite, to emphasise the connection through the mythic ties between the two groups descendant of Aphrodite: the Romans, especially the imperial family, the *gens Julia*, who claimed a relationship to Venus-Aphrodite through Julos son of Aeneas (see figure 9, first floor, second porticus), and the inhabitants of the goddess's city.

Figure 5 Aphrodisias, south portico of the *Sebasteion* (Wikimedia Commons, wneuheisel)

With a slight change of focus, this programme continued on the second floor where Roman emperors were depicted as Olympic gods, *Theoi Sebastoi Olympoi* blending together the spheres of Greek gods and Roman emperors on account of descent and superhuman accomplishments. These allegorical scenes narrated Roman dominance over the world, for example, displaying the emperor in heroic nude aided by land and sea or being crowned by a togate figure (Senate or Roman People) and subjugating new territories like Britannia and Armenia.[83] R.R.R. Smith noted the absence of the depiction of Greek *ethne* which he interpreted as an attempt to emphasise the organic belonging of Greeks to the empire consigning hostilities with Rome to oblivion.[84] The north portico is less well-preserved which enables nonetheless a secure recognition of its universal imperial programme.The first floor displayed statues of *ethne* of the empire naming them in the genitive (for example, *ethnous Dakon*, [the statue of] the nation of the Dacians) to resolve the clash of the neuter of the Greek *ethnos* and the draped, female depictions endowed with differentiating costumes and attributes that were probably copied from Rome.[85] The second floor contained universal allegories alluding to life in the empire and to its physical extent.[86]

[83] Ratté, 'The urban development of Aphrodisias', 96-98
[84] Roland R.R. Smith, *The marble reliefs from the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion,* Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Darmstadt, 2013, 311
[85] Smith, 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion', 96
[86] *ibid.* 95-96

Figure 6 Aphrodisias, *Sebasteion* relief depicting the emperor (Aphrodisias Excavations Online)

The complex was funded by brothers of two local families. The south portico and the temple were donated by the already mentioned Diogenes and Attalos, or rather his wife Attalis Apphion since he died during the planning stage. The propylon and the north portico was dedicated by Menander and Eusebes and his wife Apphias.[87] The Greek provincial recasting of Roman imperial themes is a remarkable local interpretation of the place of the Greeks and Aphrodisians in the empire through the

[87] Smith, 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion', 90

narrative it constructed to disseminate this message.[88] The way to represent the emperor from a provincial point of view followed no models but developed its own inventive assemblage.[89]

Contemporary with the portico of Tiberius, and lying immediately on the south side of it, stretches what is termed the south agora. This was identified by Andrew Wilson during recent excavations as a leisure complex featuring a palm grove and a 169 m long and 30 m wide pool in the middle of the square.[90] Although it took Augustan porticoes in Rome as its model, the facility was unique at the time. It featured also statues of nymphs and fountain heads as the most ornamental part of the water circulation system.[91] In light of this new evidence, the interpretation of the central pool by Christopher Ratté requires some reconsiderations. According to him, the south agora attests to the effects of political changes on the use of the agora in the Greek city.[92] However, the agora was not defunct in a way he perceived, the pool barring traditional commercial and political activities, for it was not devised as an agora. A better example that fits Ratté's argument might be the *tetrastoon*, a colonnaded square to the east from the theatre. It was certainly in use by the time of Tiberius as the marketplace sported statutes of Germanicus and Agrippina that might have stood east to the theatre in the south part of the 'piazza', see item 12 in figure 4. Kenan Erim dated to the reign of Tiberius and Caligula respectively.[93] Therefore, the fact that a leisure complex on the south agora was more desirable than a further administrative-commercial hub shows the desire of the community for luxury and the display of such a status just as well as it signals the lack of necessity of additions with the same function as the north agora and the *tetrastoon*. More importantly, the palm groove provides an alternative for the bath that took the social/leisure function of the agora in Ratté's point. What the new centre in Aphrodisias, established by people in close connection to Rome, propagated, but also attested to, was the richness and well-connectedness of the city.

[88] Ratté, 'The urban development of Aphrodisias', 19
[89] for inventiveness see, Smith, 'The Imperial Reliefs from the Sebasteion', 89
[90] Andrew Wilson, 'Water, nymphs and a palm grove: monumental water display at Aphrodisias' in R.R.R. Smith *et.al*, *Aphrodisias Papers 5: Excavation and research at Aphrodisias, 2006-2012*, Portsmouth:R.I., JRA Supplement 103, 2016, for a general description of the pool, see i*bid.* 106-108, for chronology, see *ibid.* 127-28, for dimensions, see *ibid.* 129
[91] *ibid.* 135
[92] Ratté, 'The urban development of Aphrodisias', 20
[93] Kenan T. Erim, 'Recent Discoveries at Aphrodisias' in E. Akurgal (ed.), *The Proceedings of the Xth International Congress of Classical Archaeology, Ankara-İzmir, 23-30 IX 1973,* Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 1978, 1070

Figure 7 Aphrodisias, eastern part of the south agora, view from the south (Aphrodisias Excavations Online)

II.3.Cultic edifices

Our knowledge about new or Roman cultic edifices in Pergamon is limited for this period but they show that Pergamon was not an isolated bastion of Hellenism free from signs of participation in the empire. The importance of the imperial cult is shown by the temple of Augustus and Roma the city was allowed to erect in 29 BCE.[94] For this key structure could not yet have been identified archaeologically, the best description is given by coins showing Augustus's armoured cult statue in a temple.[95] Hosting the cult of Augustus and the status it lent to the city entailed dedications being put up by outsider communities, for example, another statue of Augustus was dedicated by the Italians of Amisus.[96] Thus, the cityscape could also be altered by outsiders, although, these dedications strengthened aspects already present in the community. Further evidence comes from the Dionysius temple, located below the Hellenistic theatre, in the form of two wells or altars dedicated to Dionysius and Augustus by the high priest, *archiboukolos*, of the Dionysiac association in the 20's BCE.[97] Expressing their affiliation to Augustus was important enough, at least for the elite, to parade it on the official coinage and by the reification of it in a local cult setting.

[94] Dio, 51.20.7
[95] Steven J Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, Brill, Leiden, 1993, 13
[96] Vermeule, *Roman Imperial Art,* 215
[97] Wolfgang Radt, 'Zwei augusteische Dionysos-Altärchen aus Pergamon' in, N. Başgelen, M. Lugal (eds.), *Festschrift für Jale Inan* Armağani, Arkeoloji Ve Sanat Yayinlari, Istanbul, 1989, 201-202

Figure 8 Pergamene coin showing temple with two columns enclosing the statue of Augustus resting on a spear with his right hand (RPC I 2362)

The terrace of the Athena sanctuary is perhaps the most indicative space to gauge the development of the Pergamene community in the period. Public affairs, politics and institutional continuity shaped the statuary of the terrace. Romans and Pergamenes who benefacted the city were apparent in depictions. Honorary statues were dedicated to many, among them Caesar, the provincial governor P. Servilius Isauricus and also his daughter. From the Pergamenes Diodoros Pasparos was honoured for leading a successful embassy to Rome that aimed to recover assets that were confiscated during the troublesome period of the Mithridatic Wars when city also lost its free status. This was recovered later from Caesar by Mithridates of Pergamon whom the demos honoured as *ktistes* for this contribution.[98] Marianne Mathys noted the Hellenistic visual programme of these and other statues that played on the royal Attalid past of the city parading Pergamon's unique history and position among the *poleis* of the region.[99] On the other hand, politics also necessitated changes that altered the cityscape, for example, the statue of *Athena Promachos* standing in front of the sanctuary was replaced by the statue of Augustus in 20 BCE when the ruler had a conflict with Athens and was about to visit Pergamon. The statue dedicated by the *demos*, thus, substituted the Roman emperor for the previous defender of the city at least in the narration of this space.[100] Finally, the continuous tradition of erecting statues to the priestesses of Athena on the terrace points to the vitality of earlier institutions and their active, space-shaping power well into the Roman period.[101]

The local cult centre in Ephesus, the sanctuary of Artemis, experienced a significant addition beyond the abovementioned rearrangements. A temple of Augustus, the *Augusteum*, was erected there

[98] for honorific practices, see Marianne Mathys, 'Eine Frage der Ehre: Statuarische Repräsentation der pergamenischen Bürger' in R. Grüßinger, V. Kästner, A. Scholl (eds.), *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*, Michael Imhof Verlag, Petersberg, 2011, 278, for Pasparos, see Marianne Mathys, Verena Stappmanns, Ralf von den Hoff, 'Das Gymnasion – Architektur, Nutzung und Bildwerke' in R. Grüßinger, V. Kästner, A. Scholl (eds.), *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*, 275, for Mithridates, see also *ibid.* 17
[99] Mathys, 'Eine Frage der Ehre', 280
[100] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 19
[101] *ibid.* 280

in 6/5 BCE with a temenos that was adorned with a statue group of the imperial family.[102] Indicating a local initiative, an Asian-type Tyche was crowning the statue of Augustus.[103] The involvement of the personification of the city attested to a close relationship between the community and the emperor. This structure positioned the emperor in a spiritually important place, close to the city's patron goddess. At the western end of the Curetes street, another strong local tradition had one of its main manifestations in the *heroon* of Androkles, son of the Athenian king Kodros and mythical founder of the city. Although the dating of the monument is uncertain, somewhere in the second or first century BCE, it is worth noting it on account of its importance in emphasising the Ionic roots of the community. Further features of the monument are not known as it was later restored in the Byzantine period.[104]

By contrast the smaller town of the Aphrodisians does not show any signs of cultic intrusion in the major complex of the city that was the sanctuary of Aphrodite located north to the north agora. Instead, structural alteration took place as the temenos received a marble *cella* and a columnated porch (*octastylon* temple) in the 30's BCE. It was dedicated by Zoilos while the outer columns around were added later during the first century CE.[105] The freedman was also responsible for setting up the boundary stones marking the asylum territory, defined by Caesar, around the sanctuary and took the opportunity to advertise his name on them. The cult statue of the Aphrodisian Aphrodite bore witness to the archaic, local fertility goddess she submerged that, in turn, affected the way she was depicted: standing frontally, in a heavy robe like the Ephesian Artemis, see figure 10. The difference to the Aphrodite panels in the *Sebasteion* is apparent in the below comparison. These attest to the obligations to the visual narrative there that required a way of depiction that suited the Graeco-Roman common sign system and implied a shared culture rather than a distinct, eastern iconography that would have appeared as counterintuitive in that setting.

Likewise, but a bit later in time, the local, the cultic infrastructure received major attention. The focus on local cults might be explained as restoration work after the devastating earthquake in 17 CE for the central Apollo temple together with the Plutonium and a third temple were dated to Tiberian times.[106] Later, a temple was dedicated to emperor worship as a Claudian coin issue shown by figure 11 attests to by depicting a temple structure on the reverse with the legend ΓΕΝΕΙ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΩΝ, to the *gens* of the *Sebastoi*.[107]

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[102] Lilli Zabrana, 'The Artemision in the Roman Era: New Results of Research within the Sanctuary of Artemis' in D. Schowalter *et.al*., *Religion in Ephesos Reconsidered*, 2019, 164, 168
[103] Vermeule, *Roman Imperial Art*, 219
[104] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 26
[105] Raja, *Urban development*, 43-44
[106] Francesco D'Andria, 'Gods and Amazons in the nymphaea of Hierapolis' in F. D'Andria, Francesco, I. Romeo (eds.), *Roman sculpture in Asia Minor: proceedings of the International Conference to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Italian excavations at Hierapolis in Phrygia, held on May 24-26, 2007, in Cavallino (Lecce),* Portsmouth:R.I., JRA Supplemet 80, 2011, 162
[107] Tullia Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX: Storia e Instituzioni di Hierapolis*, Ege Yayinlari Istanbul, 2017, 335

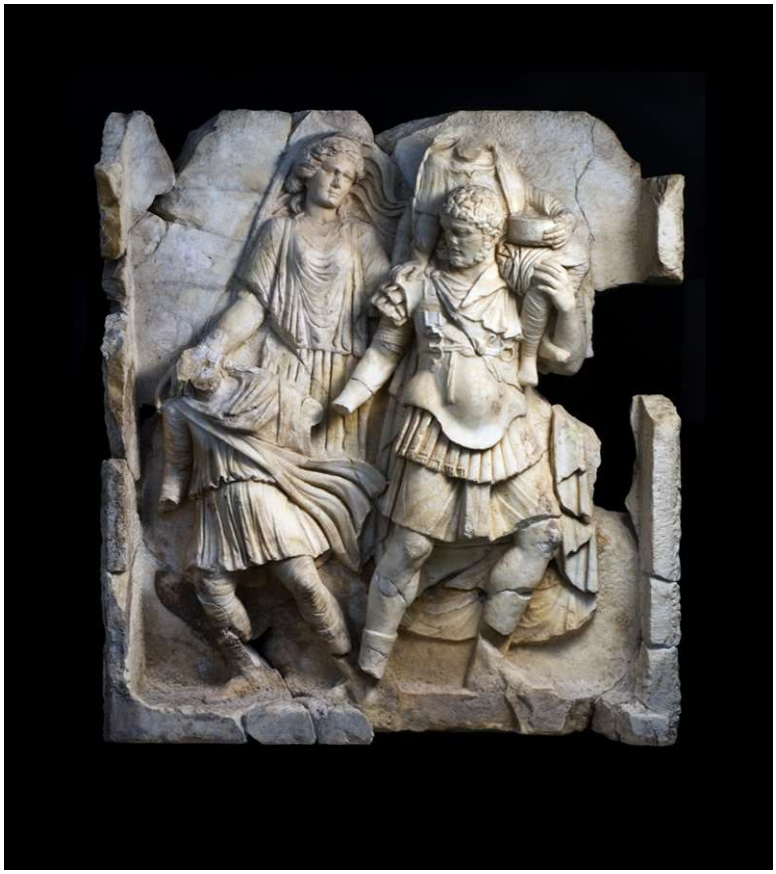

Figure 9 Aphrodisias, *Sebasteion* relief showing Julos to the left, Aeneas with his father Anchises to the right and Aphrodite behind (Aphrodisias Excavations Online)

Figure 10 Aphrodisias, cult statue of Aphrodite (Aphrodisias Excavations Online)

Figure 11 Hierapolis, coin showing the temple of the gens *Sebastoi* on the reverse (RPC I 2973A)

While this casts light on the local devotion for the imperial family, the temple was not an official sanctuary of the cult under the auspices of the koinon. Unfortunately, more cannot be ascertained for the archaeological identification of this structure is still in progress.

II.4.Leisure complexes

At this early stage, the attention to leisure structures was rather limited in light of other contemporary projects and later trends. Examples of smaller dedications show that leisure was imbibed by cultic and political affiliation too. In the Pergamene gymnasium, members of the imperial family, for example, Gaius and Lucius Caesar along with Caesar and Augustus received statues right next to the Hellenistic kings.[108] Although their seat was not in the city anymore, in many aspects, rulers were honoured as before. The Hierapolitan theatre had a central location, see figure 14, and experienced multiple renovations in later times. Moreover, it accommodated an altar dedicated by the *agonothetes,* Zosimos son of Menophantos, to the *demos, Dea Roma* and Gaius Caesar, the grandson of Augustus. The inscription that identified the function of the slab shows that the imperial cult appeared in this *polis* in the decade around the turn of the era the latest.[109] Extension works were also under way in Ephesus whose stadium, which lay to the northeast from the Tetragonos agora, was enlarged under Nero. The new south *cavea* was donated by the freedman G. Sertinius Orpex and his daughter Mareina.[110] In addition, Augustus received a statue in the theatre that identified him as *ktistes* and probably showed him with a *corona civica* which attests to the interests the Ephesians took in keeping up with the news and fashionable depictions coming from Rome.[111] Under Augustus, the Aphrodisians received their own theatre on the eastern slope of the south hill in the city thanks to the benefaction of Zoilos.[112] Constructions and additions of the lack of these needs to be evaluated in the light of already existing structures. Ephesus and Pergamon were already served by Hellenistic theatres. Therefore, the Pergamenes could enjoy plays in a setting from the previous era while the addition in Ephesus signals an increased demand for space on the *cavea*.

II.5.Comparison

The first chronological section shows a rather diverse image. Pergamon and Hierapolis experienced less change than Aphrodisias and Ephesus did. This can partially be ascribed to the difference in developmental stages. Due to the earthquakes at Hierapolis and their obscuring effect on the Julio-Claudian cityscape, it is difficult to judge its situation. The catastrophes certainly curtailed the evolution of the city that was again and again restored to its beauty. By contrast, Aphrodisias

[108] Mathys, 'The Agorai of Pergamon', 266, for the gymnasium statues, see Mathys, Stappmanns, von den Hoff, 'Das Gymnasion', 276
[109] Tullia Ritti, *An epigraphic guide to Hierapolis (Pamukkale)*, trans. Paul Arthur, Ege Yayınları, Istanbul, 2006, 151-152
[110] I Eph 6.2113
[111] Scherrer, 'The *conventus'*, 67
[112] Raja, *Urban developement,* 44-45

received most of its defining structures in this period. Halfmann dubbed the Pergamene stance more conservative compared to the enthusiasm for Roman elements exhibited by Ephesus and ascribed the difference to the contrasting background of persons putting up structures and to the misaligned stage of urban development in the two cities.[113] It cannot be doubted that Pergamon was built up to a considerable degree under the Attalids and did not require major additions unlike Ephesos whose commerce experienced an upswing in the period as it is attested by a series of statues put up by various trading groups, *negotiatores,* honouring their members and patrons showing the influence of these organisations on the public space.[114] The created wealth and a higher population enabled and necessitated the town to expand and establish projects to express its status. The composition of the local elite and the base of their wealth differed with Pergamene notables possessing landed property while the Ephesians having a limited access to arable land and being more focused on commerce which attracted Italian and other merchants who could integrate into the community.[115] Aphrodisias shows similarities to Epehsus. While the local elite appears to have had close links to Rome, freedmen were also active in contributing to the Aphrodisian grandeur. The high status Zoilos obtained was described by many as a stroke of fortune signalling the whimsical opportunities created by the turbulent last fifty years of the first century BCE. Having the freedman of Caesar and Augustus channelling immense funds to one's city, carrying out a whole architectural programme was not the rule for *poleis* in Asia Minor as it is shown by the Hierapolitan findings. These point to the indispensability of imperial donation in restoring a whole city after a natural disaster on such a scale. The epigraphic sources confirm this as they reveal a handful of dedications to emperors by individuals bearing fully Greek names that indicates more than a gesture for marginal imperial support as does the establishment of the local tribes *Rhomais* and *Tiberiana*.[116]

These trends confirm that initially the local elite was the privileged group that shaped the architectural environment of the major nodes and centres. However, the superior status of Roman citizens, when accompanied with immense funds, opened up opportunities for those coming from without the traditional Greek elite. This introduced new aspects to being elite when defined as members of the community with formative effect on *polis* identity. The presence of the Roman element was, in general, dependent on networks, be that political, like in case of Pergamon, economic, as Ephesus has shown, personal, taking the example of Aphrodisias or charitable, as supposedly in Hierapolis. This also correlated with the community's historical relationship to Rome, most importantly, the side it supported in the latest conflicts, thus, the outcome of the conflicts also determined the agenda and aims of the *polis*. However, the adoption of Roman forms was not dependent on new social elements as it is proved by the activity of Diogenes in Aphrodisias and the dedications by the Pergamene and Hierapolitan elite. On the other hand, regarding the urban

[113] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 103
[114] *ibid.* 72
[115] *ibid.* 31-32
[116] Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX*, 325

environment, the presence of Romans or persons more exposed to Roman influence did catalyse the emergence of Roman features. The cityscape was not at odds with a Hellenistic Greek *polis* despite the varying Roman elements synthesised into the local milieu. The vast majority of the buildings erected were Greek in style with the arrangement of public spaces being more open to adopt Roman ways as it was shown by the upper agora in Ephesus and Aphrodisias.

All *poleis* opted to gain the favour of leading Roman politicians by displaying their affection. Ephesus took advantage of its Italian population and from serving as the seat of the governor, Pergamon utilised the political leverage of its leading citizens while Aphrodisias relied on its good relations to leading Roman politicians, most notably Caesar and Augustus.[117] The shift in the Aphrodisian focus shows the civic sphere being pushed into the foreground and the earlier pride taken in the military support provided to the Romans being relegated, although the statues of the locals honoured for participation in the Mithridatic war were still standing.[118] This self-positioning was not yet the fully fledged inter-city rivalry as the restoration of the pre-war privileges was more important.

The erected structures show a trend where interests concentrated on administrative and cultic edifices and less so on leisure complexes. Most *poleis* experienced changes to cultic complexes. The additions to the Artemision were more numerous compared to the documented cases in Pergamon where the changes affected directly one existing statue. Although intervention in the Artemision was not new since a Roman altar featuring togate figures was erected during republican times, the replacement of the *megabyzos* with the priestess of Artemis after Actium and the abovementioned transfer of the *curetes* were institutional changes on a level that were not documented elsewhere.[119] Political reasons lay behind changes in both cities; while changes in Pergamon resulted from self-censure, the Ephesian traditions appear to be altered in which form they could continue to thrive. The *Sebasteion* was a unique landmark with unmistakable Roman themes. Nevertheless, it presented a local reading of a Greek population about their membership in the Roman empire that characterised, although in a less explicit fashion, the central public spaces of Aphrodisias too that remained in essence of a Greek character. For Hierapolis, the scattered evidence allows more insight into the statements about affiliation than to the possible impact of the urban environment on the inhabitants. On the other hand, the importance of the local cults did not suffer as both cities advanced the infrastructure of their local-Greek *polis* deities. Although the emergence of new evidence might necessitate some reconsideration, it is interesting to see that the sanctuaries of the inland settlements did not gain Roman additions like the Artemision did. Augustus and the *Sebastoi* could have been

[117] for inscriptions, see Reynolds, Erim, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, texts 6, 7, 10, 12 and 13

[118] see, for example the statue of a military commander who was identified by Mortensen as Kallikrates, son of Pythodoros, Mortensen, 'Narratives and Shared Memories', 48-49

[119] for the altar, see Ulrike Muss, 'Republik und Kaiser im Artemision von Ephesos' in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten – Neue Sitten,* 247, for the change in the priestly institution, see François Kirbihler, 'Ruler Cults and Imperial Cults at Ephesos: First Century BCE to Third Century CE' in D. Schowalter *et.al*., *Religion in Ephesos Reconsidered*, 202

straightforward candidates to expand the cults housed by the Hierapolitan Apollo temple and the sanctuary of the Aphrodisian Aphrodite, respectively.

Alterations done to the civic identity of the *poleis* reflected the above trends. Even with the multiple changes, the Ephesian identity did not require nor allow the import of unaltered Roman features but applied a selection to suit their needs in thanking for and seeking Roman favour. The cityscape in Pergamon shows more continuity that indicates weak push factors for change in their identity provided that we attribute low impact to the change of their ruler and that the city lost its leading political position with the governor's seat transferred to Ephesus.[120] Although Pergamon professed her affiliation through the imperial cult, Ephesus witnessed more changes as there, the situation enabled easier access to the circles of the elite through the accumulation of wealth. Thus, Italians and their freedmen could leave their mark on the cityscape by establishing an environment different from the preceding Hellenistic one that signals a multicultural resident body and their affiliation with Rome and her masters; in addition to the abovementioned also in the form of the established *Sebasta* voting tribe and the increasing amount of local Roman citizens from the time of Claudius.[121] The Aphrodisian community experienced its most dynamic changes in this era for the synoikism with Plarasa reached a stage under Augustus when references to the joint community disappeared and gave way to Aphrodisians only.[122] This might have provided an opportunity to re-define their *polis* identity more freely. In general, Ephesus might have experienced the most drastic visual changes followed by Aphrodisias with an inconclusive picture at Hierapolis and Pergamon being forced less to negotiate in terms of urban environment.

[120] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 20
[121] Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesos*, 12
[122] Chaniotis, 'Vom Erlebniss zum Mythos'70

## III. Flavian era

### III.1.Introduction

The end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty raised questions about imperial legitimacy and the line of succession. Vespasian brought an end to the hectic year of the four emperors with his army defeating Vitellius, re-established peace in the empire and facilitated a return to stabilised politics in general. The cities of Asia Minor enjoyed continuous prosperity lying far away from the upheaval in Judea and the political calamities of Domitian's court. The main concerns of this chapter are the impact and local peculiarities of the twenty-seven-year long Flavian rule (69-96 CE), the direction the cities took in incorporating further imperial features into their identity and their relation to the new rulers. The discussion of this shorter period presents both an aftermath to the Julio-Claudian era and a prologue of the archaeologically more sensational times under the Nerva-Antonines. The Flavian period proffers the opportunity to see provincials who grew up among Julio-Claudian structures and experienced the related interpretations of their place as part of their history. Therefore, the phenomena in this period should be assessed in light of the advancements of the integration process in the previous period. With regard to architecture and urban planning, this means a cumulative affect from a diachronic perspective, Flavian buildings appeared next to Julio-Claudians and furthered the Roman element in the local identity. Furthermore, numerous trends gaining full momentum in the ensuing period started under the Flavians as it will be discussed below. This can be partially explained by the abovementioned prosperity that was furthered also by imperial endeavours like the road construction connecting Pergamon with Ephesus and Sardis that was finished in the mid-70s CE. The period is worth exploring just as well on its own account. The developments in the imperial cult, for example, took a turn with the appearance of the second neokorate temple and ushered in an age where cities strove to acquire the title of the imperial temple-warden, *neokoros*. At the same time, Roman-style leisure achieved a never-before-seen impact in the province that resulted in changes in the cityscapes.

### III.2.*Agorai*

The *agorai* exhibit the same characteristics as in the previous period with some extremities. Pergamon has no data to offer, the city continued to exist without any notable new structures. By contrast, Ephesus experienced further major construction projects. On its west side, the *Staatsagora* accommodated the first neokorate temple, dated to 88-91 CE. It was dedicated by T. Claudius Aristion, a local notable, who also served as the first neokoros, to the *Sebastoi* most importantly Domitian who was dropped for Vespasian after the *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian.[123] Through the acquisition of the title temple-warden of an imperial cult, the city overcame a one-hundred-year long disadvantage vis-à-vis Pergamon and, thus, could book a major gain in prestige.[124]

[123] Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 36, for the dating, see *ibid.* 44
[124] Kirbihler, 'Ruler Cults and Imperial Cults at Ephesos', 204

Figure 12 Ephesus, cult statue of Domitian (Wikimedia Commons, Carole Raddato)

Although the Artemision was already a huge trans-regional attraction in the city, with the *Sebastoi* temple, the regional importance of Ephesus increased as it is shown by the bases of Domitian statues put up in its court by cities from across Asia Minor.[125] The style of the structure followed Greek tradition. Showing some western influence by having a *cryptoporticus* as a promenade, it harmonised with the square's other structures continuing the row of Greek style edifices with occasional Roman features.[126] The colossal Flavian cult statues found in the temple precinct attest to the scale and importance of this endeavour to the Ephesians.[127] The temple increased the cultic aspect of the square and established a direct connection with the current ruling dynasty putting Ephesus in a unique position in the region.

[125] Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 12, for a detailed treatment of an Aphrodisian dedication, see *ibid.* 32-35
[126] Sabine Ladstätter, 'The So-Called Imperial Cult Temple for Domitian in Ephesos' in D. Schowalter *et.al*., *Religion in Ephesos Reconsidered*, Brill, Leiden, 2019, 13, for the cryptoporticus, see *ibid*. 27
[127] Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 62

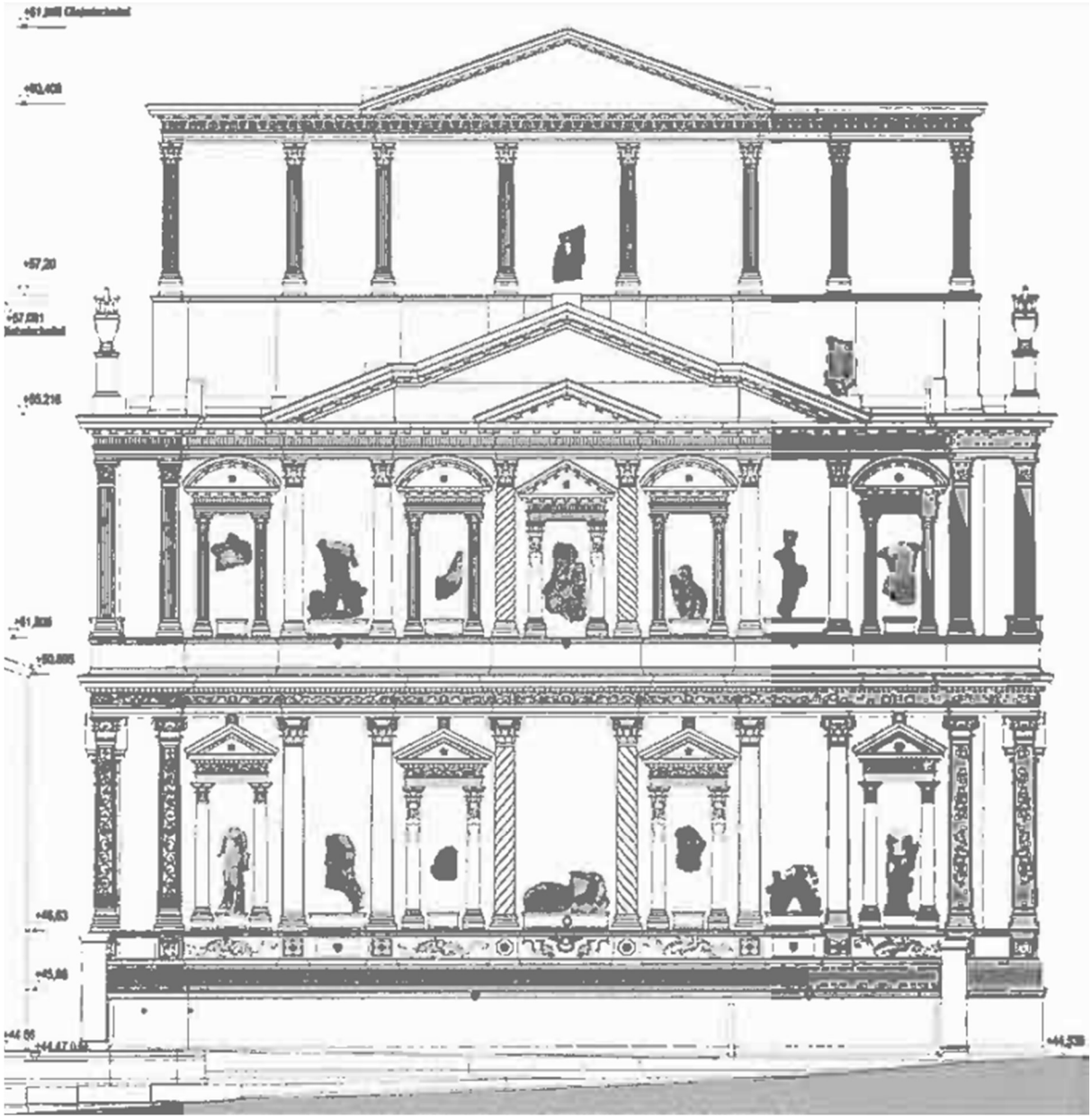

Figure 13 Ephesus, Bassus nymphaeum, drawing of the reconstructed façade (Rathmayr, 'Die Skulpturenausstattung des C. Laecanius Bassus Nymphaeum', 135)

Besides the cultic expansion, the leisure aspect of the upper agora was significantly developed as public fountains mushroomed on the square; the well of Domitian to the north of the temple and two *nymphaea* along the south side were added. In the southwest corner, the ex-proconsul of Asia, C. Laecanius Bassus Caecina Paetus dedicated the earliest known example of a *tabernacle*-façade *nymphaeum* that depicted a vivid assembly of sea creatures, tritons, nymphs and other deities, see figure 13.[128] The composition included a depiction of the founder Androkles and at least two depictions of Bassus: one in a toga, emphasising his status as Roman citizen and official and possibly

[128] Elisabeth Rathmayr, 'Die Skulpturenausstattung des C. Laecanius Bassus Nymphaeum in Ephesos' in F. D'Andria, Francesco, I. Romeo (eds.), *Roman sculpture in Asia Minor*, 131, for the statue programme, see *ibid.* 135-137

another one presenting him in a different aspect.[129] Erecting a monument in part for himself was a clear objective for Bassus to crown his efforts with the aqueduct that provided for the Ephesians and supplied the *nymphaeum* with water. However, the contrasting execution to the Memmius monument shows that the benevolent *euergetes* ushering in a luxurious era was more fitting for a Roman that time than referencing military triumphs. The other *nymphaeum* served as an end of the new aqueduct and displayed the source of the water through allegorical statues of the river Marnas and Klaseas. The composition with cornucopia propagated the wealth of the city through the abundance of water, a Roman yardstick of civilisational advancement and wellbeing.[130]

The Hierapolitan evidence offers a useful documentation of a significant upswing of the city under Domitian. The proconsul of Asia, S. Julius Frontinus, stepped up as a substantial benefactor and restored the *plateia* in its entire length running through the city in a north-south direction and marked the end points with triumphal arch-like gates allowing traffic to pass through their three passageways. The bilingual dedicatory inscription of the north gate preserved the Domitian date of 86 CE and the dedication to the emperor, of course, with an erasure of the name which could, nevertheless, be restored.[131] The *damnatio memoriae* could not destroy the emperor's mark as contemporaries could remember and recognise the inscribed name easily. What the damaged part shows is that the community was kept up to date with political developments in Rome and followed the decision of the Senate meticulously. The Frontinus gate, as it became to be known, might have made a more long-lasting impression on those who frequently crossed the boundaries of the town. Although dedications, even bilingual ones, meant themselves no novelty considering the dedications to Julio-Claudians encountered above, the central position of this dedication conveyed a greater authority ceded to Domitian as the structure marked the entrance to the city like a title or a book cover and, thus, it could easily become the first and identifying image of the city. At the same time, a vast territory was levelled at the north edge of the city to create a new agora which was enclosed with Ionic *stoai*. A purely commercial function cannot be ascribed to this agora for the east side was occupied by a stoa-basilica that possibly accommodated a room for emperor worship. Furthermore, the unpaved centre of the agora together with its dimensions, roughly matching that of a stadium in length, suggest that events like athletic contests, *agones* and gladiator combats, *munera*, which would otherwise necessitate a stadium or an amphitheatre (facilities the city never obtained) could take place here.[132] On the other hand, the shops run under the arcades around the agora attest to the commercial use of this area that signals an increased economic activity in the city. The arrangement of the agora shows a contrast to the upper agora in Ephesus in that it was conceived as one building project and featured a basilica-stoa from the beginning.

[129] Rathmayr, 'Die Skulpturenausstattung des C. Laecanius Bassus Nymphaeum', 145-146
[130] Raja, *Urban development*, 71
[131] Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX*, 350
[132] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 36

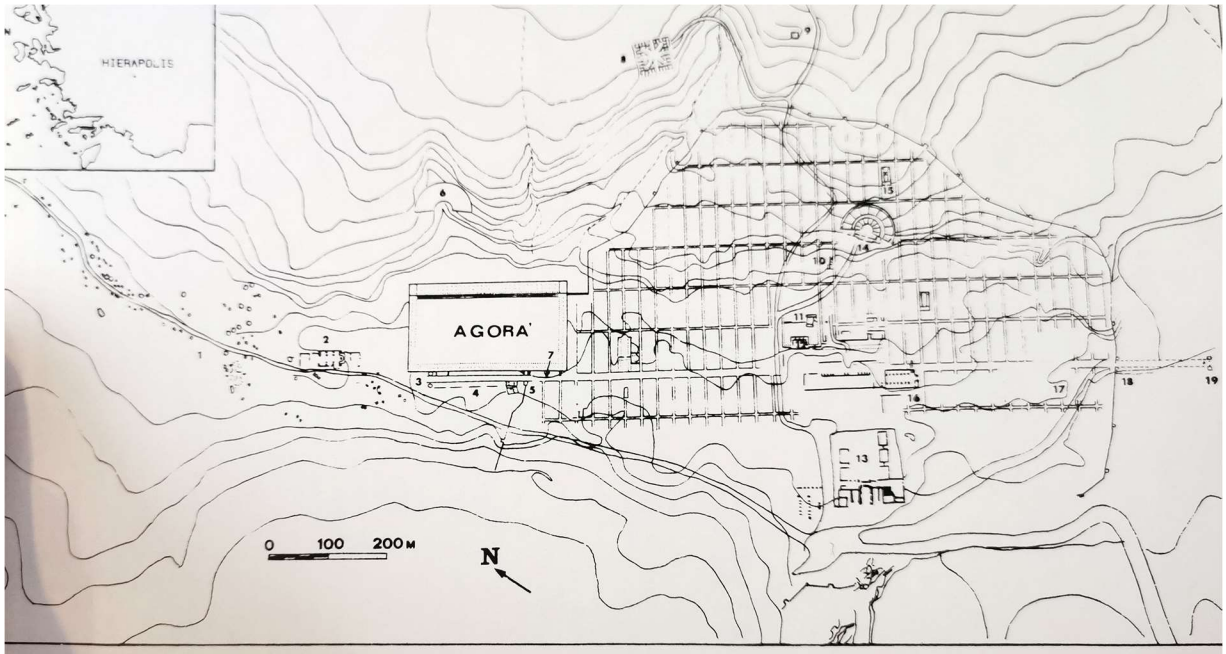


Fig. 4-3. Hierapolis, plan of the town (all dates A.D.)

**1** - Northern necropolis
**2** - Baths and church, 2nd-3rd c.
**3** - Frontinus Gate, end of 1st c.
**4** - Street of Frontinus, end of 1st c.
**5** - Northern Byzantine Gate, 5th c.
**6** - Theater, 2nd c.
**7** - Nymphaeum of the Tritons, 3rd c.
**8** - Martyrion of St. Philip, 5th c.
**9** - *Castellum aquae*
**10** - House of the Ionic Capitals, 2nd-3rd c.
**11** - Sanctuary of Apollo, Plutonion
**12** - Nymphaeum of the Sanctuary, 3rd c.
**13** - Large Baths, 2nd c.
**14** - Theater, 1st-3rd c.
**15** - Church above the theater, 5th-6th c.
**16** - Pier Church, 6th c.
**17** - Gymnasium, 1st c.
**18** - Southern Byzantine Gate, 5th c.
**19** - Southern Gate, end of 1st c.

Figure 14 Hierapolis, city plan (D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 98)

Figure 15 Hierapolis, Frontinus gate, northern facade (Wikimedia Commons, Following Hadrian)

The completeness of the plans was probably due to the time lag in development and the regional influence of other *poleis* that implemented Roman features more gradually. It might very well be an exception, but the newly established north agora does not fit the trend observed by Ratté discussed in the previous chapter. [133] The multifunctional space can be seen as a compromise for it fitted well the smaller community that wanted to enjoy all the aspects such a space could offer them but probably did not have the means to afford a host of other structures. The whole restoration project after the Neronian earthquake could not have been financed entirely from local funds that shows similarity to the Tiberian restoration.

Likewise, after the works on the *Sebasteion* were finished, Aphrodisias received a basilica. The proximity of the theatre hill caused that this structure, instead of framing the agora with its long side, joined the south edge of the palm groove with its shorter side.[134] Thus, it functioned as a covered walkway providing shade and shelter from rain along two street blocks to the south. While the stoa-basilica of Ephesus brought this type of structure closer for other *poleis* in the region, it provided an available Asian model which was followed by the Hierapolitans but not the Aphrodisians who opted for stronger Roman features which points to a different source of inspiration, probably Rome.

On the other hand, the Aphrodisian basilica had significant local features on account of the inside decoration of the building that provided another narrative about the identity of the community. Three relief panels displayed multiple characters the city honoured as their founders. The semi-mythical Assyrian king Ninos, the spouse of Semiramis, was depicted in a *chiton* with a bare tree, an eagle on his left and a man in cuirass with a sacrificial altar on his right, see figure 16. The tree, that was suggested to be thunderstruck, was believed to provide a conspicuous natural omen designating a sacred place ideal for founding a city. The suitability of the space is further corroborated by the eagle of the locally worshipped Zeus Ninuendos, an aspect of the deity hinting at the early name of the city it got after Ninos, Ninoe.[135] The eastern origin linking the settlement to the first empire in the area shows how coveted ancient origin was to gain prestige and excel among other *poleis* in the region. On the other hand, competition did not mean complete detachment. The other two reliefs of interest here stressed kinship with neighbouring settlements. Figure 17 depicting Bellerophon shows the hero wearing a *chlamys* in a setting that refers to the founding of a city and, thus, contrasts the Bellerophon panel of the *Sebasteion* where these are missing. It cannot be assumed without doubt that the hero was recognised as a founder in the earlier periods. What we can say is that this was not considered important to be expressed explicitly on the porticoes.[136]

[133] *supra* n.92
[134] Raja, *Urban development*, 40-43
[135] Pascale Linant de Bellefonds, 'Pictorial Foundation Myths in Roman Asia Minor' in E.S. Gruen (ed.), *Cultural identity in the ancient Mediterranean,* Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles:CA, 2011, 36
[136] Mortensen, 'Narratives and Shared Memories', 46


Figure 16 Aphrodisias, Basilica relief showing Ninos (Yildirim, 'Identities and empire', 51)

Figure 17 Aphrodisias, Basilica relief showing Bellerophon (Yildirim, 'Identities and empire', 51)

Figure 18 Aphrodisias, Basilica relief showing Semiramis and Gordis (Yildirim, 'Identities and empire', 51)

By contrast, the basilica panel shows the hero and his winged horse Pegasos and, on a rocky terrain with a tripod and a snake, a nude Apollo, whose prophesying wisdom was consulted traditionally before embarking on such an endeavour. Bellerophon provided Ionian ties that reflect the pursuit of a venerable Greek pedigree. No doubt, the Roman views of the time had their impact. Stephanus of Byzantium provides a genealogy which suggests a kinship of the hero to Chrysaor son of Glaucus, founder of many Carian cities that points to the importance of the regional network of the Aphrodisians.[137] Pascale Linant de Bellefonds suggested that Bellerophon's journeys provided an easy match to find a *ktistes* with which the Aphrodisians could not only relate to their fellow Plarasans, who saw Chrysaor as the founder of their settlement, but could even claim primacy through Bellerophon.[138] The depiction of the cuirassed Gordis and Semiramis in a himation sacrificing on the third relief points into a similar direction, see figure 18. The ruler identified with the Phrygian king Gordios might have established links with the neighbouring community of Gordiouteichos to lay claims on relations with the ancient Phrygian kingdom which was considered the first in Western Asia.[139] The presence of Hellenic and non-Hellenic elements shows that the Aphrodisian community was ready to recognise non-Greek parts of their history, and possibly also their community, and utilise these to position themselves among the *poleis* of the region. At the same time, the prominent presence of the eastern and local foundation narratives in Aphrodisias operated outside the Roman framework and made claims to establish the community's venerable past rather on its own standing. The overall picture, considering all the foundation myths, does nevertheless harmonise. Günther Schörner noted even that the Roman style structure that housed these narratives served as a metaphor for the incorporation of Aphrodisias into the empire and the community's resonance with the imperial on account of its links to the Assyrian empire.[140] Incorporation here might be inaccurate as far as it emphasises an action being done by another party. Being part would be a more suitable phrase that conveys the Aphrodisian point of view of belonging to a great state with strong links to its founders.

### III.3.Cultic edifices

Although the development of cultic structures was focused on *agorai,* in general, the sanctuary of the Ephesian Artemis received some attention. Restoration works were carried out there on a scale that was worth commemorating in an inscription. The wall of the *Augusteum temenos* was restored from the funds of the temple that shows how steadily the imperial cult fitted into the local cults.[141] The fact that the Roman element was embellished suggests continuity of worship and attention to the

[137] Bahadirin Yildirim, 'Identities and empire: Local mythology and the self-representation of Aphrodisias' in B.E. Borg (ed), *Paideia: The World of the Second Sophistic*, De Gruyter, Berlin, 2008, 35
[138] Linant de Bellefonds, 'Pictorial Foundation Myths', 38
[139] *ibid.* 26
[140] Günther Schörner, 'Representing and Remembering Rituals in Public Space: Depictions of Sacrifice in Roman Asia Minor' in E. Mortensen, B. Poulson (eds.), *Cityscapes and monuments of western Asia Minor: memories and identities*, Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2017, 94-95
[141] I Eph, 2.412

previous structures of the imperial cult even when a new, more sensational neokorate temple was built in the heart of the city.

III.4.Leisure complexes

Roman style leisure emerged in this period on a scale that its impact began to influence the urban space. Although the completion of most of the benefactions provided by the Ephesian Aristion are dated to a later period, the debate is still ongoing, one item of his extensive building project needs to be mentioned here. Based on epigraphic evidence, the harbour gymnasium, lying to the north of the Tetragonos agora, was to some extent completed under Domitian. Steven Friesen argued convincingly that the bath, accommodating a Roman style cycle and Greek style gymnasium complex, was established not only to provide the inhabitants with space for recreation and education but also to serve the visiting athletes competing in the Olympic Games established as part of the cult of Domitian.[142] Similarly to the erasure in Hierapolis, Ephesians were anxious to distance themselves from the fallen emperor since no mention of the Olympic games are preserved in the period after Domitian.[143] The growing importance of the city entailed that more people visited urban festivities. Consequently, the Hellenistic theatre lying to the west between the harbour gymnasium and the Tetragonos agora received a new part that extended the auditorium.[144] A further addition was the three-storeyed *scaenae frons* with tabernacle-façade that bore a dedication to Domitian.[145] The parodoi were covered with segment-arched vaults to close off the *orchestra* which enabled the theatre to accommodate Roman style *spectacula*, *munera*, and beast shows, *venationes*.[146] By contrast, the Hierapolitan one had a *logeion* matching the height of the Greek standard and, therefore, was not able to accommodate novel style *spectacula* which probably took place under more modest circumstances in the agora.[147] It is probably the better financial situation of Aphrodisias that allowed the completion of a stadium on the north edge of the city in the late first century CE. To facilitate a better view on Roman-style *spectacula*, one end that in Greek tradition would have been left open was enclosed to give place to another segment of the *cavea*.[148] In such a facility, *venationes* could be organised easier due to the enclosed stage. These structures attest to the need of the community for structures that accommodated Roman-style leisure that was quite different from Greek practices. This marked out the city in the region as the venue of these events adding to its prestige and attractions.

[142] for the dating, see Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 122, on the rooms dedicated to the Roman cycle, see *ibid.* 124
[143] *ibid.* 118
[144] Friedrich Krinzinger, Peter Ruggendorfer, *Das Theater von Ephesos. Archäologischer Befund, Funde und Chronologie*, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna, 2017, 489
[145] *ibid.* 487
[146] *ibid.* 491
[147] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 153
[148] Aphrodisias Excavations Online, stadium

III.5.Comparison

The negotiation process in the Flavian era shows broadly the same picture as in the previous period. The silence of the Pergamene evidence is difficult to account for. While the maintenance of existing structures could consume considerable funds, Pergamene financial matters were unlikely to obstruct building projects. The elite was certainly potent in entering imperial offices that necessitated sizeable wealth, for example, G. Antius Aulus Julius Quadratus was the first easterner to reach consulship in 94 CE.[149] Although at the end of the Flavian dynasty, the old Attalid prestige facilities were over two hundred years old, they seemingly satisfied the needs of the community or at least no benefactor was ready to cater for leisure the way the Ephesians were. Thus, the political participation in the empire remained more significant for the Pergamene than the cultural interactions in the urban space. By contrast, other *poleis* made the next step of integration as it is shown by the broad popularity of Roman-style leisure that necessitated prestige facilities to accommodate related events. Ephesus, Hierapolis and Aphrodisias were affected similarly although the level of execution differed as it matched the financial capability of the *poleis*. These attractions hallmarked highly developed, leading urban centres and brought prestige of regional importance that could boost the pride of the inhabitants and alter their perception of their hometown. The residents lived among structures that showed local innovation in architecture and in adapting their existing buildings to be fit for novel practices. The transformation of the existing infrastructure did not only reflect the city's affiliation but also the changing taste and activities of the population. Another factor was the agenda of the Flavians. First, the ruler cult received Augustus's tacit approval that was followed by Tiberius's disapproving indifference and Gaius's short-lived endeavour in Miletus.[150] The cult did not experience any major expansion in *Asia* until Domitian's neokorate temple which fits the trend of Domitian's aim to benefit the *populus*. Thus, while Ephesus gained a lot from the cult, the endeavour had benefits for the power centre too by bringing the emperor closer to the provincials and obtaining popularity. The appearance of the cult was notably following earlier, local trends. Ephesus continued a tradition we observed before at the middle temple on the *Staatsagora* and the Aphrodisian *Sebasteion*. Greek style temples used for emperor worship reflect the essential Greek nature of the cult with a Roman subject. The popularity of basilicas points to a slightly different direction, as these exhibited Italian features to introduce fashionable architectural solutions in Asian *poleis* to negotiate relationship with the centre that was less hierarchical and more of a horizontal bond where the source of the trend did not provide a better-off position for the results were the same among group members; namely, that the city had a basilica. How much regional inspiration can be attributed to Ephesus in the spread of the basilica in *Asia* is not certain. It might not be a far-fetched statement to say that both Aphrodisians and Hierapolitans travelled wide enough to get firsthand inspiration from Italy.

[149] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 154
[150] for Tiberius's stance, see Tacitus, *Annales*, 4.37.1, for Gaius, see Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 21

Unlike the Julio-Claudian era, the Flavian one saw cities receiving significant contributions from Roman officers who had no affiliation to the settlements they embellished other than those being their place of service. The activity of Frontinus changed Hierapolis similarly to the Ephesian situation with Bassus. Beyond the charitable aspect, the reason behind these projects must have been the visibility the two busy sites offered. It is interesting to contrast these actors with the prominent figures of the previous era. Before, freedmen and locals carried the baton, although we should not forget about Isauricus and Aristion as counterexamples from different groups. The activity of Roman officers in the Flavian era shows the interests of the authorities in the region that signals a high level of integration the cities made into the empire considering the nature of benefactions and the purpose of these facilities. While Hierapolis and Ephesus supply palpable evidence, the less well-docuemnted situation at Aphrodisias is unlikely to contradict this tendency. Furthermore, their activity and the honours paid to them in return made the officials of the empire visible in the respective *poleis* further tuning the atmosphere of the cities towards a common imperial one, exerting similar effects to the imperial cult.

As a counterpoint, the importance of city founders should be mentioned for this signalled the intensifying inter-city competition. Striving for individual peculiarity on account of uniqueness as expressed by the Assyrian and Phrygian links propagated by Aphrodisias is rather the exception. In general, we see the need to relate to the prevalence ascribed to an Ionian pedigree by the Romans. The careful selection of the exhibited Aphrodisian founders covers this group as well by referring to Bellerophon, but we should mention the strong Androklean myth in Ephesus too. The latter confirms the continuity and the importance of this tradition.

The interpretation of their position and the detectable amount of change in the cities largely remained the same as observed in the previous chapter. The communities, except for Pergamon, tried to establish their position in the empire by developing a cityscape that confirmed this through high prestige adaptations from the Roman register. Besides, local features were also highlighted to display venerable and ancient ancestry to boost the standing of the community and exhibit the peculiar identity of the *polis*. The prosperity and development experienced by the *poleis* in the Flavian period, even under the rule of Domitian, entailed a more favourable relationship to the rulers when compared with the accounts of court members like Suetonius.[151]

[151] see, for example, Suetonius*, Life of Domitian*, 3.2, 22

# IV. Nerva-Antonine era

## IV.1.Introduction

After the fall of the Flavians, the empire entered the most prosperous time under the adoptive emperors who had closer connections to Asia Minor. The province enjoyed the most intensive presence of emperors in this period: Trajan's father and the future emperor Antoninus Pius both served as proconsuls of *Asia* which allowed them plenty of time to visit the major cities of the region. Trajan and Lucius Verus travelled through the region when heading to the Persian front while Hadrian visited the province multiple times. Ephesus was the most frequented stops on these journeys and Verus set up his headquarters there in the early stage of his campaign.[152] Hadrian stopped at Pergamon, thrice at Ephesus and possibly also visited Hierapolis when staying at Laodicea.[153] Although the empire was facing enemies on multiple borders, the central position of *Asia* spared it from atrocities again. The proximity of numerous emperors brought the local communities closer to the imperial court, presenting new challenges and benefits. This chapter analyses the impact of the frequent imperial visits while also exploring the further steps the cities made to express and negotiate their place in the empire. It is important to note that unlike in the previous periods, the adoptive way of designating an heir allowed less room to establish links and express affection to future emperors. Thus, *poleis* had to act fast to secure their privileges and good terms with the ascended emperor. The person of the next emperor became clearer in the second half of the period since Pius adopted Lucius and Marcus Aurelius before he was elevated while the latter was followed by his son Commodus.

[152] Lorenz Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity: The Battle Frieze on the "Parthian" Monument at Ephesus', in L. Winkler-Horaček, P. Schulz, R. von den Hoff (eds.), *Structure, Image, Ornament*, Oxbow Books, Oxford, 2014, 199

[153] Anthony R. Birley, 'Hadrian's Travels' in P. Erdkamp, O. Hekster, G. de Kleijn *et.al.* (eds.) *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power*, Brill, Leiden, 2003, 430-431

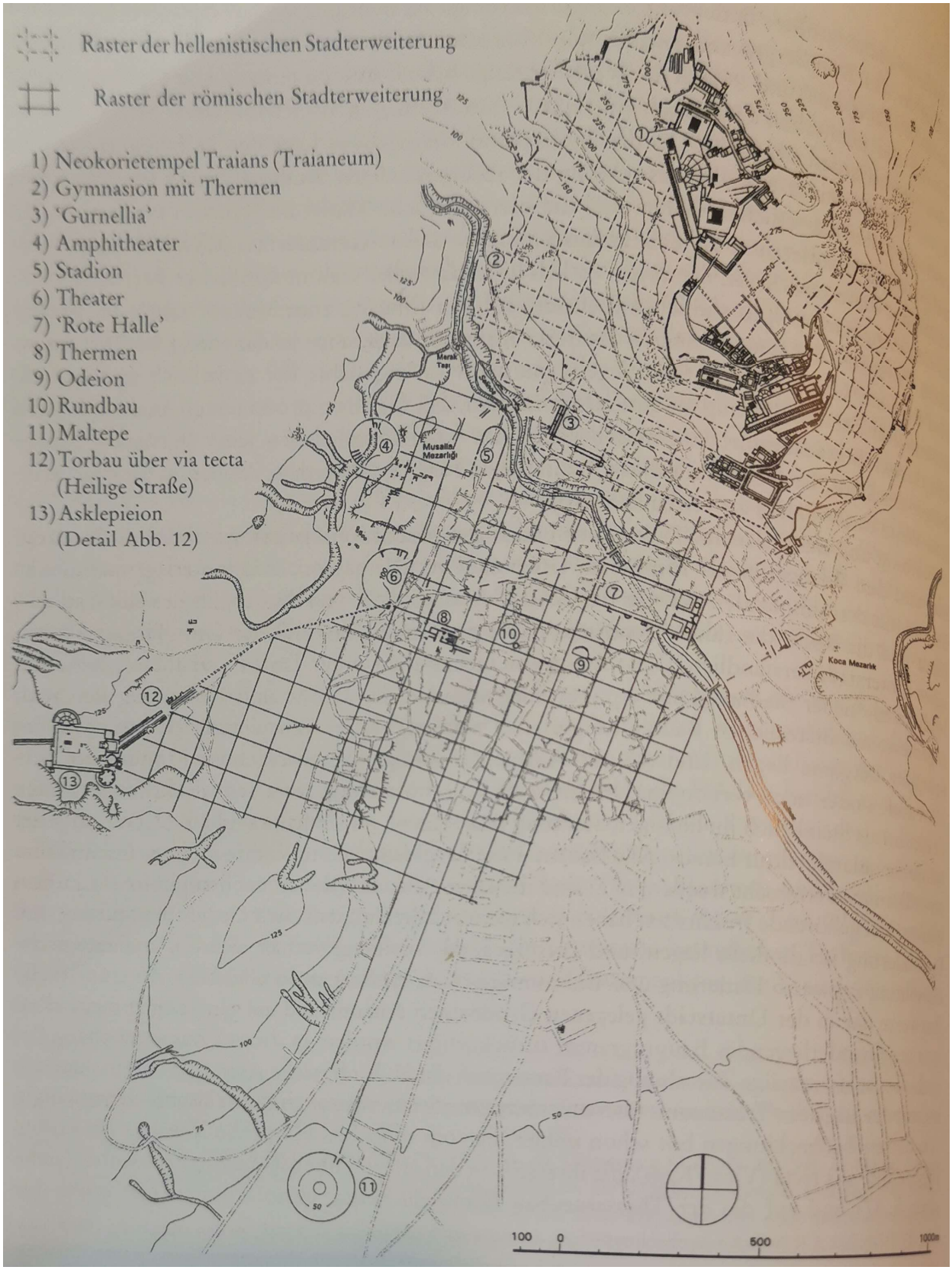


Figure 19 Pergamon, plan of the city (Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 52)

IV.2.*Agorai*

Pergamon entered a period of extensive construction activities that transformed the city that did not need to wait for long to receive her second neokorate. Under Trajan, the upper agora, a most prominent place in the city, saw a major building project that crowned the acropolis. Pergamon did not need to wait for long to receive her second neokorate. To provide enough space for the temenos, a vaulted substructure was built on the slope to provide more ground for the complex, see figure 20.[154] Separating it from the surrounding area, the temenos was enclosed by columnar hall structures. Looking to the west from the middle of the temenos, its placement ensured that the new neokorate temple of the imperial cult, the *Trajaneum*, was visible from a great distance when approaching from the south and west or sailing along the coastline.[155] As such, it could easily become a metonymic association for the whole city among those who travelled a lot. The Italian-style podium temple was covered in white marble and housed the colossal statue of Trajan with the later addition of Hadrian's.[156] The imperial message was difficult to miss, the Roman emperor was worshipped at the top of the city in a royal neighbourhood which, up until then, contributed to the panorama with Attalid palaces. Although the temple was dedicated to Zeus as well, later coinage shows that the important feature for the self-positioning of the city was the emperors, here Trajan and later, the duo including Hadrian and Augustus in the first temple. The co-inhabitant Zeus and Roma of the Augustan temple were not depicted anymore.[157] The addition of the imperial temple to the Attalid royal quarter had a symbolic meaning by altering the old governmental centre and also by towering above the city from the top of the acropolis.

In the meantime, the expansion and embellishment of the Ephesian upper agora came to an end with the bouleuterion being rebuilt as a benefaction from the local notable, M. Cl. P Vedius Antoninus Pheadrus Sabinus[158] The imperial statues found during the excavations here attest to the close connections between the court and Sabinus who was probably the first senator from Ephesus.[159] The incentive to express this close connection led to the presence of the imperial family in one of the most important buildings for communal political decision making manifesting, thus, the influence exerted by the emperor on local affairs. With the upper square being fully built up, the lower city got more attention.

[154] Wolfgang Radt, Elisabeth Steiner, *Pergamon: Geschichte und Bauten einer antiken Metropole* Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1999, 213
[155] Klaus Nohlen, 'Ein Tempel für den Kaiserkult – Das Trajaneum von Pergamon' in R. Grüßinger, V. Kästner, A. Scholl (eds.), *Pergamon*, 159
[156] *ibid.* 159-160
[157] Bernhard Weisser, 'Pergamum as Paradigm' in C.J. Howgego, V. Heuchert, A. Burnett (eds.), *Coinage and identity in the Roman provinces*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005, 141
[158] Raja, *Urban development*, 83
[159] Angela Kalinowski, *Memory, Family, and Community in Roman Ephesos*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2021, 106, for the statues, see *ibid.* 144

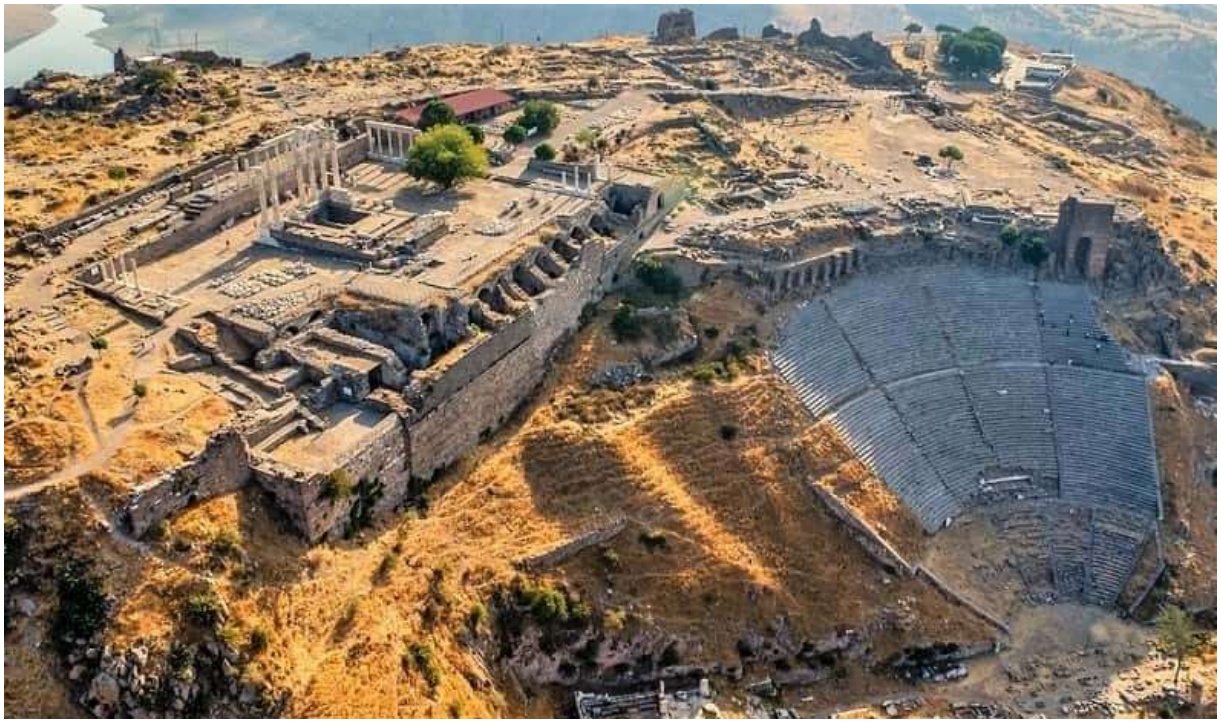

Figure 20 Pergamon, Southern slope of the acropolis, view from the southwest showing the *Trajaneum* to the left and the Hellenistic theatre to the right (Maidan Project Online, Pergamon)

In the vicinity of the Tetragonos agora, to the southwest, the building of the *Serapeion* was found which was dated to the early second century.[160] The Roman-style podium temple included five niches along both sides of the interior temple walls that matched the number of the most popular deities of Egyptian origin: Sarapis, Isis, Anubis, Harpokrates and Apis whose statues must have stood there.[161] Unfortunately, only fragments of the Egyptian granite statues were found so far.[162] Inside the temple, a canal system was established to evoke the Nile and narrow staircases were designed to allow a play with darkness and light that was suggested to have an important role during initiation ceremonies.[163] On the other side of the Tetragonos agora, closing off the *triodos* junction on its western side, stood the Celsus library which was gifted to the *polis* by the former proconsul of *Asia*, T. Julius Celsus Polemaeanus, provided that he would be buried beneath the structure that was finished after his death by Aristion in 110 CE.[164] The grandiose building provided an end to the Curetes street so its gigantic tabernacle-façade was visible for all who were heading down from the upper agora on the most important street of the city. The front was adorned with statues of Athene, Androkles, and equestrian statues of Celsus.[165] Beyond the lavish appearance, the structure shows the need for a public library in the *polis* that appears as an integral part and a symbol of the metropolitan prestige status.

[160] *ibid.* 82 cf. Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 42 arguing for a Domitian date
[161] Hölbl, *Zeugnisse ägyptischer Religionsvorstellungen*, 35, on structure, see Thekla Schultz, 'The So-called Serapeion in Ephesos: First Results of the Building Research' in D. Schowalter *et.al*., *Religion in Ephesos Reconsidered*, 46
[162] Hölbl, *Zeugnisse ägyptischer Religionsvorstellungen,* 33
[163] Schultz, 'The So-called Serapeion', 58
[164] Raja, *Urban development*, 80
[165] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren*, 68-69, Linant de Bellefonds, 'Pictorial Foundation Myths', 28-29

Figure 21 Ephesus, Celsus library, façade facing the Curetes street (Wikimedia Commons, Herbert Weber)

Next to the library, the south gate of the *triodos*, the so-called Hadrian's gate was erected during Trajan's Parthian campaign (115-117 CE), certainly in the hope to honour the triumphant emperor on his way back from the front. Since Trajan died in Cilicia, the gate was re-dedicated to Hadrian instead who did not visit the city on his journey to Rome but on his tour in 124 CE.[166] Architecturally, the gate is a mixture of the Greek propylon and the Roman arch. However, as Thür noted, the gate itself is none of the above, its features are the result of a local interpretation which was unique at the time.[167] The local appearance points to the local atmosphere created by the gate.

Aphrodisias received further new, significant structures to her *agorai* that delineate the important aspects of development for the community. On the northern side of the north agora, an odeon type bouleuterion was erected to accommodate events requiring an odeon and to provide a meeting place for the *boule*.[168] It was donated by the *asiarch* and senator Tiberius Claudius Attalos, his family and his brother Diogenes whose statues stood inside the building.[169] The two most impressive buildings were added to the south agora. On its east side, a colossal, two-storeyed gate building towered over the square with a columnar façade divided by eight bays on each storey that accommodated statues of the Antonines and mythological friezes.[170] Opposite the lavish gate, situated on the west side of the agora, the Hadrianic baths provided leisure both through a Roman-style bath

[166] Hilke Thür, *Das Hadrianstor in Ephesos*, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philipp Von Zabern Vienna, 1989, 135
[167] *ibid.* 77-79
[168] Raja, *Urban development*, 35-36
[169] CIG, 2781b, Aphrodisias Excavations Online, bouleuterion
[170] Aphrodisias Excavations Online, agora gate

cycle and through a palaestra for exercise and ambulatory activities among its many marble statues inspired by Greek mythology.[171] The baths were built or remodelled on a large scale probably after the water supply was increased by a new aqueduct.[172] Another baths were erected on the southside of the *tertastoon* close to the theatre, hence the name theatre baths.[173] The erection of the two baths shows the great demand for this type of leisure and also the wealth of the Aphrodisian elite to erect such structures and supply them with water. Furthermore, the lag in establishing major bath complexes point to the geographical challenges faced in terms of water supply. With these overcome, the city had one of the most lavish leisure parks of the time.

In Hierapolis, the statuary shows that the imperial and the local elements in the public sphere reached an equilibrium in this period. The common practice of statue dedications to the emperors continued along the same lines. Three statue bases were found that once bore the image of Trajan and further ones that held the image of Hadrian, Sabina, Antoninus Pius Faustina major.[174] Pius was honoured when he was governor as saviour and benefactor of the city, *soter kai euergetes*. On the other hand, this tradition was complemented by the emergence of members of the local elite on pedestals. Prominent figures received multiple dedications, for example, Zeuxis son of Zeuxis who had a long career in the city's administration.[175] Her sister Apphias was also an active donor in the city and she dedicated a statue to the *Sebastoi* and the *demos*.[176] A further honorific statue to the local noble man, an *advocatus fisci* of Phrygia and *Asia*, P. Aelius Zeuxidemos Arsitos Zenon, shows that Hierapolis entered the inter-city network and took a prominent place that attracted enough attention to receive such a dedication from the koinon of the Greeks of Asia.[177] What is even more important is that the manifested signs of this process appeared in the cityscape displaying the community's level of integration and importance in the empire.

### IV.3.Cultic edifices

Works related to cultic structures were done in all four cities in this era with various effects. The Pergamene sanctuary of Demeter received a new Corinthian prostyle under Antoninus Pius.[178] This addition did not alter the impression of the sanctuary but shows its continuous importance and that older complexes were continuously tended to. In the lower city, a gigantic temple was erected over the river Selinus under Hadrian. Since the marble covering was dismantled in the later period, the underlying red bricks hallmarked the structure and inspired the name red hall or red basilica.

[171] Aphrodisias Excavations Online, Hadrianic baths
[172] Raja, *Urban development,* 39
[173] *ibid.* 46-47
[174] For Trajan, see Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX*, 355-357, for Hadrian and Sabina, *ibid.*409-140, for Antoninus Pius and Faustina, *ibid.* 413-414 and 423, 425-526
[175] see, for example, *ibid.* 360
[176] *ibid.* 361
[177] *ibid.* 453-455
[178] Radt, Steiner, *Pergamon*, 184

Figure 22 Pergamon, red basilica, central hall from the southeast (Wikimedia Commons, Mark Landon)

The extensive use of bricks made Wolfgang Radt suggest the involvement of Roman architects and labour force at the construction.[179] Although no evidence survived from the cella, the design of the building and the statues found outside identify the temple as a place for worshipping deities of Egyptian origin.[180] Archaeologists found a complex water drainage system that channelled the river underneath the temple and a canal traversing the floor, evoking the homeland of the worshipped deities, most importantly the Nile.[181] Cultic activity could have been focused on Serapis or Isis but inscriptions also report about the veneration of other Hellenised deities there, Anubis, Harpokrates, Osiris, Apis, Helios, Ares the Dioscuri, Cybele, Magna Mater and Zeus-Serapis.[182] Four colossal statues were arranged in front of the entrance in Egyptian fashion depicting Sakhmet, Thot, Sobek and another, unidentified figure. Ulrich Mania noted that the statues depict the deities in a way that is unique in Roman art as these present a mixture of Egyptian, Roman and Greek features, see figure 23. Furthermore, he pointed to the lack of evidence about the cultic importance of these deities outside of Egypt. Therefore, the gatekeeper statues cannot be considered indicative of the cultic activities performed in the temple but as items contributing to the setting without carrying the original cultural value attached to them in their homeland.[183]

[179] Radt, Steiner, *Pergamon,* 205
[180] Ulrich Mania, *Die rote Halle in Pergamon: Ausstattung und Funktion*, Philipp Von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein, 2011, 96
[181] *ibid.* 97
[182] *ibid.* 98
[183] *ibid.* 61

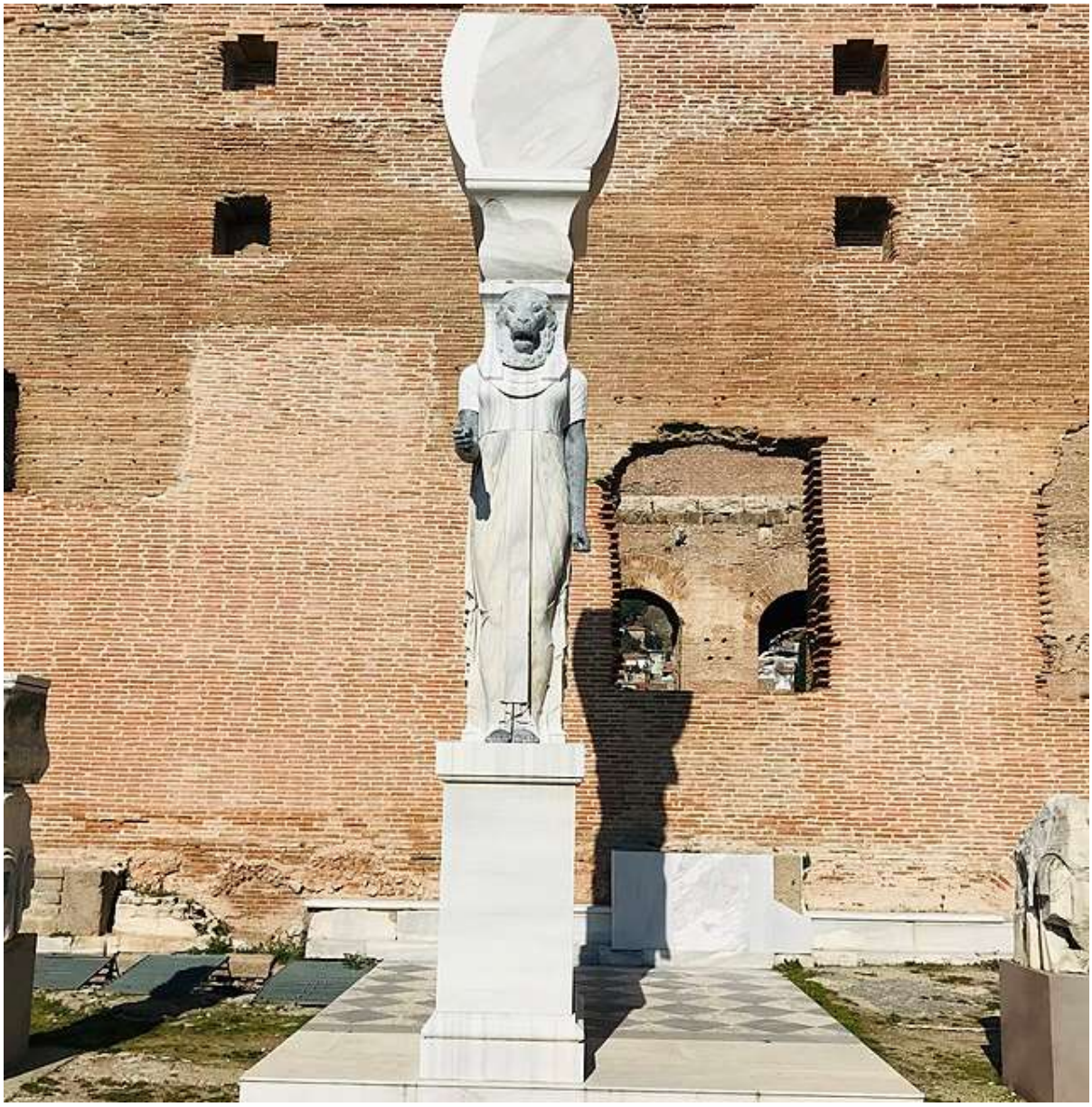

Figure 23 Pergamon, red basilica, restored statue of Sakhmet (Wikimedia Commons, Maurice Flesier)

Although the circumstances of the temple's establishment are not clear, the inscriptions attest to the use of the structure and, thus, prove that religion of Egyptian inspiration was present in Pergamon too.

The other centre of religion was the refurbished *Asklepieion,* located in the southwest corner of the city, see figures 24 and 25. The sanctuary could be reached via the *via tecta*, a colonnaded, roofed street providing comfortable safety from burning sunlight and rainfall. The hallway incorporated the *heroon* of Telephus son of Heracles, the mythical founder of Pergamon.[184] Proceeding further, a grandiose propylon provided entrance to the sanctuary. It was dedicated by Aulus Claudius Charax, a local notable who reached the suffect consulship in 147 CE that is assumed

[184] Milena Melfi, 'The Archaeology of the Asclepieum of Pergamum' in, D. A. Russell, M. Trapp, H.G. Nesselrath (Eds.), *In Praise of Asclepius: Aelius Aristides, Selected Prose Hymns,* Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2016, 91

to predate closely the erection of the gateway.[185] The sanctuary received a new temple dedicated to Zeus-Asklepios by another local consular, incumbent of the year 142 CE, L. Cuspius Pactumeius Rufinus.[186] With Asklepios's healing qualities in focus, this place was sought out by pilgrims and those suffering in various illnesses in hope of cures that were often received through incubation. The syncretism of Zeus and Asklepios into a governor and saviour of the universe resonated well in its all-encompassing features with the domed building structure as it was inspired by the Pantheon in Rome that was erected to all the gods.[187] Following contemporary trends came to expression also in the library of the sanctuary that showed Roman features taking after Hadrian's library in Athens. Flavia Melitine, a member of the local elite, dedicated the library and a statue of Hadrian inside of it, providing an intellectual knowledge hub that cultivated highly skilled medical doctors like Galen who started his career in the mid-140s CE in the *Asklepieion*. The cultural importance of the sanctuary was enhanced by two further structures of interest here; the Roman-style theatre erected in the northwestern corner of the sanctuary and the rotunda with its nine, horse-shoe-like niches occupying the southwestern one.[188] These housed leisure activities associated with cultic festivities like plays about Asklepios and cultic feasts respectively.[189] The sanctuary showed a different face of Pergamon through the statues it sported: instead of the institutional and monarchic character of the altar terrace, the sanctuary had a more public atmosphere with images of philosophers, playwrights and therapists.[190] Adorned with these lavish facilities, the regional importance of the sanctuary grew even further and attracted noble visitors and intellectuals beside the patients. Of course, sometimes these categories overlapped, for instance, when the famous rhetor, Aelius Aristides, stayed at the *Asklepieion* that was second only to the Epidaurian sanctuary in importance at the time.[191]

The Ephesians were able to obtain further prestige by receiving their second imperial neokorate under Hadrian thanks to the lobbying of the local priest, Ti. Cl. Piso Diphantos.[192] In the early 130s CE, the vast temple called the *Olympeion* was put up on the northern edge of the city on the northern side of the harbour gymnasium.[193] Probably, this act of imperial approval provided the reassurance to continue the Olympic games that were organised again from the reign of Hadrian.[194]

[185] Jürgen W. Riethmüller, 'Das Asklepieion von Pergamon' in R. Grüßinger, V. Kästner, A. Scholl (eds.), *Pergamon,* 233
[186] *ibid.* 233
[187] Melfi, 'The Archaeology of the Asclepieum of Pergamum' 109
[188] *ibid.* 101, 113
[189] *ibid.* 109
[190] *ibid.* 104
[191] *ibid.* 89
[192] I Eph, 2.248
[193] for dating, see Kirbihler, 'Ruler Cults and Imperial Cults at Ephesus'204
[194] Friesen, *Twice Neokoros*, 118

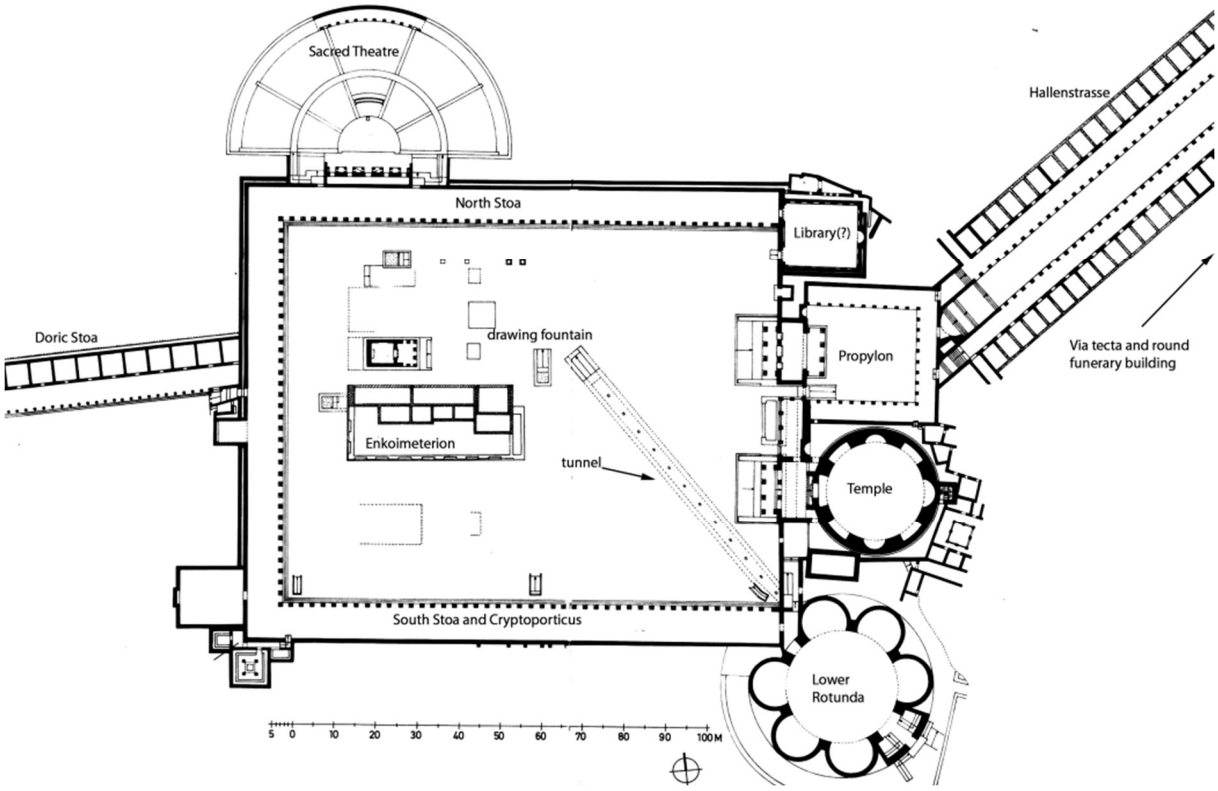


Figure 24 Pergamon, plan of the Asklepieion (Melfi, 'The Archaeology of the Asclepieum of Pergamum', 102)

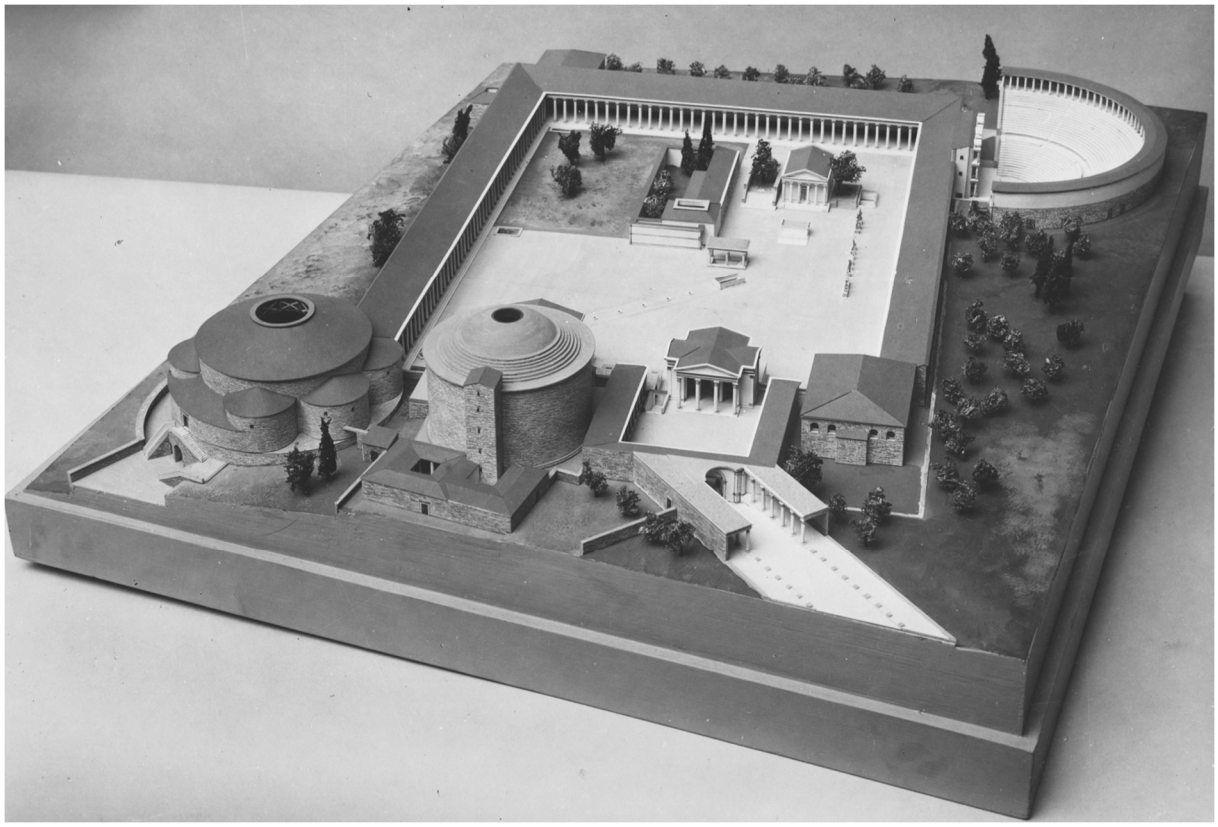

Figure 25 Pergamon, model of the Asklepieion (Melfi, 'The Archaeology of the Asclepieum of Pergamum', 102)

Existing traditions were not neglected either for the famous rhetor, Flavius Damianus, felt it desirable to donate a *via tecta*, referred to as the stoa of Damianus, that provided the same benefits as the similar structure leading to the Pergamene *Asklepieion* for those who journeyed to the *Artemision* from the Magnesian gate, located to the east from the upper agora.[195]

The other most imposing new structure of the city presents some perplexing uncertainties. Although its primary location could not have been identified, the Antonine altar must have created a major cultic centre wherever it stood.[196] It is striking that the Ephesians strove for obtaining such a structure partly to rival the great altar of Pergamon based on its close resemblance to it.[197] It was important to them to sport a similar structure not simply to gain prestige. This hints at the still perceptible and valid royal appeal of the Pergamene altar that resonated with the Ephesians and the local character of the competition that was aimed to outdo the regional contenders and to rank higher than other cities on an empire wide list. The seventy-meter-long altar frieze consisted of panels measuring roughly two meters by two meters.[198] The dating of the monument is subject to scholarly debate for the battle scenes depicted on the panels cannot be identified without doubts. The opening scene offers a firm *terminus post quem*, 138 CE, through the depiction of the double adoption scene featuring Hadrian and empress Sabina, Antoninus Pius and Faustina major, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.[199] Günther Schörner noted that while the emperor panel faithfully displays a Roman milieu with the figures clad in tunica and togas over their heads, the related sacrificial scene exposes a local rendition of the event that took place in Rome.[200] The cattle depicted in the scene, see figure 26, is a humped zebu common to Asia Minor but less so to Italy. Furthermore, an attendant is leading the victim tied with a rope that was a typical procedure by sacrifices in Asia Minor.[201] These peculiarities depicted a sacrifice in a way that was familiar to the Ephesian viewer and transferred this familiarity to events in Rome which were likely performed differently. The established connotations generated an image that overstated similarity and kinship between Rome and Ephesus. The other part of the altar frieze which is key to the dating is the battle frieze. Unfortunately, the first panel was damaged. Preserved are only the horses of the biga carrying supposedly the emperor.[202] Scholars who advocate a later dating of the monument recognise the frieze as a commemoration of Lucius Verus's Parthian campaign on account of a fragmented head and the depiction of the enemy.[203]

[195] Alexander Sokolicek, 'The Magnesian Gate of Ephesos' in D. Schowalter *et.al*., *Religion in Ephesos Reconsidered*, Brill, Leiden, 2019, 112
[196] Raja, *Urban developement*, 83
[197] Vermeule, *Roman Imperial Art*, 97
[198] *ibid.* 95
[199] Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity', 198
[200] Günther Schörner, 'Representing and Remembering Rituals', 93
[201] *ibid.* 92
[202] Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity', 200
[203] *ibid.* 199

Figure 26 Ephesus, Antonine altar, sacrificial scene, 43 (Günther Schörner, 'Representing and Remembering Rituals, 93)

On the other hand, Lorenz Winkler-Horaček has convincingly argued that the representation of the enemy is far from uniformly eastern which raised doubts about Lucius's campaign being depicted here.[204] While some figures are wearing Phrygian caps and long-sleeved overgarments of Persian style, others appear with a hairstyle and attire (half-dressed or naked) common to depictions of northern, Gallic and Dacian enemies of the empire. The Roman party does not appear uniform either.

[204] Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity', 204

Roman soldiers in uniform are present along others who wear Greek dress like *chiton* or *exomis*.[205] Given the rarity of this representation in Roman art, Winkler-Horaček suggested that the frieze is an allegorical element of a peculiar visual programme which stresses the Greek position within a heterogenous Roman empire that fends off the 'barbarian' threat that is the legacy from the Classical forebearers fighting the Parthian war.[206] Further panels depict the apotheosis of empress Plotina embedded in the story of Selene, Trajan surrounded by various allegorical figures, the personification of Ephesus and probably Alexandria in an Egyptian garb, or the home provinces of the cities.[207] The narrative ends with *Dea Roma* facing the preceding events.[208] Therefore, the general message of the frieze favours an earlier dating which can be linked to the ascendance of Antoninus Pius propagating a desirable image of empire wide unison and glory.

The erection of such a structure with a vivid allegorical message matches the Aphrodisian *Sebasteion* with regard to the insight it offers into local ideas about identity. Winkler-Horaček stressed the unique nature of the insertion of idealized warriors into battle scenes and emphasised the local, Ephesian character of the monument.[209] He interpreted the shared struggle of soldiers dressed in Roman uniform and in Greek attire to express that the 'survival of Greek culture can be guaranteed only through the supremacy and eternal triumph of Rome' and that the 'Greek identity can indeed only realize its full potential within the Roman empire.'[210] Without questioning this view, I would like to emphasise the shared activity of the individual actors of the Roman army that is defeating the 'barbarians'. Considering that a Roman field general shown by figure 27 is wearing trousers like his enemies, hinting at his eastern heritage, the composition implies a common cause and mutual contribution to the empire by a diverse community in which Greeks had their own peculiar identity but also played an integral part in the empire.[211] Therefore, the triumph of Rome came about due to the joint effort where *Romans* came from all corners of the empire and supremacy lay most importantly with the emperor. This message of the local narrative offered a more equal interpretation of the status of the locals within the Roman construction.

Although on a smaller scale, Aphrodisias beautified its cultic centre too. The sanctuary of Aphrodite experienced major works from the Hadrianic period onwards. Showing the community's prosperity. A sizeable forecourt was enclosed together with the sanctuary by a temenos wall under Hadrian and a monumental tetrapylon was added under the Antonines to provide access to the *plateia*.[212]

[205] Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity', 200-201
[206] *ibid.* 212
[207] Vermeule, *Roman Imperial Art*, 102-107
[208] *ibid.* 118-120
[209] Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity', 211
[210] *ibid.* 212
[211] *ibid.* 212
[212] Raja, *Urban development*, 44

Figure 27 Ephesus, Antonine altar, Parthian frieze, battle scene, 67, to the right, Roman field general wearing trousers, in the middle, Greek soldier wearing an *exomis* (Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity', 202)

The high-quality stonework expressed the *polis's* wealth in a contemporary fashion while beatifying an ancient complex of high traditional importance. Of course, matching the vast number of cultic structures in bigger cities was not a viable option.

By contrast, Hierapolis shows resemblance to the coastal giants on account of erecting a completely new complex. A new temple, the *dodekatheon,* was dedicated to the twelve gods and Hadrian by a local *sacerdos* of Zeus and ambassador of the city, Ti. Julius Myndios and his wife Glykonis who served as a priestess there.[213] The two focal points of the cult were *Zeus Olympios,* associated with Hadrian, and the poliad deity *Apollo Archegetes.* Here, the local was combined with the imperial by exploiting the divine link copied from the imperial propaganda kit of Hadrian. Thus, the endeavour of the centre was fulfilled by a local incentive with the mutual benefit of generating a feeling of proximity to the emperor. The local traditions were still highly significant for all communities providing a cornerstone of their identity.

[213] Ritti, *An epigraphic guide to Hierapolis (Pamukkale)*, 111

Figure 28 Aphrodisias, tetrapylon of the Aphrodite sanctuary, view from the east (Aphrodisias Excavations Online)

IV.4.Leisure complexes

Roman-style leisure gained momentum in this period with a plethora of complexes mushrooming across the cities. Substantial changes affected the lower city of Pergamon. This quarter was established based on a new, Roman grid whose misalignment with the Hellenistic grid draw a visibly perceivable contrast along the line where the two quarters bordered on each other close to the foot of the acropolis hill, see figure 19.[214] On the western edge of the city, Roman-style baths, a theatre, amphitheatre and a stadium were constructed to accommodate festive events and an odeon was built in a more central location, two blocks to the south from the red hall, see figure 19. While the Hellenistic theatre of Dionysus remained in use, the Roman theatre lay closer to the city and did not necessitate climbing the slope of the acropolis to enjoy the programme.[215] Building an amphitheatre was a rare occasion in Asia Minor, only two other settlements ventured so far. With it, the Pergamenes

[214] Peter Scherrer, 'The Historical topography of Ephesus' in D. Parrish, H. Abbasoğlu (eds.), *Urbanism in Western Asia Minor: new studies on Aphrodisias, Ephesos, Hierapolis, Pergamon, Perge and Xanthos*, *JRA Supplement,* Portsmouth: RI, 2001, 62

[215] Wolfgang Radt, 'The Urban Development of Pergamon' in D. Parrish, H. Abbasoğlu (eds.), *Urbanism in Western Asia Minor*, 53-54

showed their commitment in furnishing themselves with Roman-style leisure and taking the pride in erecting an edifice dedicated to *muneras*, *venationes* and even *naumachies* as the excavations have confirmed the design that allowed the flooding of the stage.[216]

The leisure facilities of Ephesus further increased in this period. The above mentioned Vedius dedicated a gymnasium-bath complex on the northern side of the city to Antoninus Pius and Artemis.[217] The complex featured numerous statues, among them Androkles as a hunter, hinting at the activity that led him to the place where the city was founded.[218] Luxurious structures emerged on the Curetes street too. Towards the middle of the northern side of the street, a rich local decurion, P. Quintilius Valens Varius, gifted a bath complex and dedicated it to Hadrian and the neokorate *demos*.[219] The front *tertrastyle* prostyle had a lavish façade while on the rear, it was connected to the bath complex. Up until recently, the structure was believed to be a temple of Hadrian. However, Ursula Quatemberg has demonstrated the homogeneity of the 'temple' and the bath structures and argued convincingly for their simultaneous construction.[220] Furthermore, she argued that the relief blocks depicting Androkles, amazons and an assembly of various gods were also part of the original design.[221] Amazons struck a chord of regional identity for the legendary female warriors were native to Asia Minor according to the myths. The next block towards the upper agora gave place to the 17-meter-long *nymphaeum* of Trajan that was dedicated by Aristion and his wife to Trajan, Artemis and the *demos*. The fountain's two-storeyed tabernacle structure housed statues on display: Nerva in a himation, Trajan as Jupiter, Androkles, Aphrodite and Dionysius. Beyond the theme, the traditional forms characteristic to Asia Minor ensured that the fountain harmonised with its surrounding.[222]

In Aphrodisias, a cost-effective solution was implemented to provide a venue for *munera* and *venationes*: the *parodoi* of the theatre were covered with vaults and the *orchestra* was lowered to create a pit to allow the inhabitants to enjoy this type of leisure.[223] The theatre was also a centre for local pride as the so-called archive wall was inscribed with a selection of documents that attested to the high status and close allegiance of the Aphrodisians with the Romans.[224] Therefore, the designation is not entirely correct in that recordkeeping was not the aim of the inscriptions.[225] It was rather to display them although the position and letter size entailed that only a couple, lowly placed ones were conveniently legible.

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[216] Felix Pirson, 'Pergamon, Türkei. Pergamon. Die Arbeiten des Jahres 2019' in *e-Forschungsberichte, Elektronische Publikationen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, 2020, Issue 3, 114
[217] Raja, *Urban development,* 83
[218] Linant de Bellefonds, 'Pictorial Foundation Myths', 29
[219] Ursula Quatember, 'The "Temple of Hadrian" on Curetes Street in Ephesus: new research into its building history' in *JRA,* Vol.23 (2010), 381
[220] *ibid.* 386
[221] *ibid*. 388
[222] Ursula Quatember, 'Neue Zeiten-Alte Sitten? Ti. Claudius Aristion und seine Bauten in Ephesos' in M. Meyer (ed.), *Neue Zeiten – Neue Sitten*, 109
[223] Raja, *Urban development,* 45
[224] Reynolds, Erim, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, 3
[225] Christopher P. Jones, 'Review of Reynolds, Aphrodisias and Rome', in *AJPh,* Vol.106 (1985), 263

Figure 29 Ephesus, prostyle of the Varius baths, view from the Curetes street (Wikimedia Commons, shankar s.)

Nevertheless, this textual ornamentation of the walls framed the way to the *cavea* so that visitors walked past a written eulogy about the privileges and distinctions of the Aphrodisians. What Aphrodisias could not achieve with building projects in the present, they tried to make up for by turning to the past, for example, parading the good relations with Rome on account of the provided military support during the Mithridatic Wars when they stood with the proconsul Quintus Oppius.[226]. Inscriptions from the Augustan era propagated the most successful period of the *polis* and emphasised its unique position also by adding texts about the failure of other communities in obtaining the same privileges, for example, the refusal of Augustus to grant liberty to the Samians.[227]

The Hierapolitan theatre received a similar overhaul under Hadrian and it was enlarged with a *summa cavea* to be able to accommodate more spectators.[228] The works might have been financed by the abovementioned Myndios. [229] *Munera* and *venationes* were held on a grand scale as it is attested to by an inscribed letter from Antoninus Pius that was found in secondary context as a wall block where it continued to advertise the high status of the city.[230] A large bath complex with a hypocaust system

[226] Reynolds, Erim, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, text 15
[227] *ibid.* text 13
[228] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 156
[229] Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX,* 401-403
[230] *ibid.* 430

was also erected during the second century CE to add a Roman style experience to the existing thermal attractions of the town.[231]

IV.5.Comparison

Under the Nerva-Antonines, the cities followed one broad trend with statements of integration visible in the cityscape. Pergamon did away quickly with the advantage the Ephesians and others gained in the previous one hundred and fifty years and entered into close competition with its regional rivals by erecting structures that changed the city considerably. Halfmann attributed Pergamon's quick development to the Pergamene upper circle that reached close proximity with the emperors like Quadratus did through his friendship with Trajan.[232] The favour of the biggest benefactor in the empire triggered more benefactions from the locals. While Halfmann did not explore the change from conservatism to the ostensible embracing of Roman urban features, the fact that this was an avenue trodden by others in the region could. Furthermore, the changed leisure habits contributed significantly to the Pergamene developments. Inter-city competition intensified with *poleis* collecting multiple neokorates to boost their prestige. On an intra-city level, especially with the mushrooming bath complexes, the benefactors also pursued to outdo their ancestors and fellow inhabitants in embellishing their hometown. The most conspicuous feature of the development was the establishment of new, leisure-focused centres within the city, for example, shifting the focus from the acropolis to the lower city and the *Asklepieion* in Pergamon. A similar trend can be observed in Ephesus with the lower city and the Curetes street getting more attention than the upper agora. The addition of these public centres emanated from the former ones being built up densely. Therefore, these did not obliterate the old centres which remained fully functional but added to the identity of the cities. On the other hand, the new places displayed a different image of the city where the new statements and messages were prominent like in the case of the Roman theatre in Pergamon, standing on the plain and not carved into the acropolis hill or the Ephesian constructions that were made on newly drained soil. These catered for novelty in a different way than the restructuring of previously built-up areas did. By contrast, the smaller, in-land *poleis* were not forced to establish such new centres nor would they have been able to do so on the same scale.

In effect, the abrupt advancement Pergamon made in constructions offers a similar image to the longer development of other *poleis*. The overhaul reveals the focal points of communal identity and connection points to the empire; the overall interests in leisure- and cult-related edifices accommodating Roman-style leisure and cultic practices with Roman subjects. Many spectacles aimed at delivering the same programme that entertained the upper circles of the empire and, thereby, offering the opportunity to join these circles on account of the shared experience. The lag in the transformation of the Aphrodisian theatre compared to the Ephesian one is unlikely to indicate any

[231] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 62
[232] Halfmann, *Städtebau und Bauherren,* 45

cultural differences, other than the more numerous Italian population at Ephesus. Instead, it hints at the lack of resources or necessity in implementing these changes. More quotidian leisure was easier to finance, for example, which was provided by baths which had a prerequisite of ample water supply. In general, this period shows an intensified building activity in the bigger, coastal cities than in the in-land group that could not keep up with the fast pace financially. In times the sporadic major works were carried out, an extraordinary benefactor was present to carry out these while in periods without such figures, constructions on such scales were unthinkable.

The *Asklepieion* presents a case that was in alignment with earlier developments elsewhere. The significant restoration work targeted an already established and prestigious sanctuary like at Aphrodisias although more thoroughly than there or at Ephesus. Like elsewhere, the cult retained much of its earlier character. Moreover, the syncretistic current did not appear as odd to the local community at the time as it can be surmised based on Aristides's account and the continuity of the bronze tablets dedicated in the sanctuary.[233] While the practice of Egyptian religious cults was not unknown to *Asia,* at least since the Ptolemaic rule, the scale of infrastructure accommodating such cults was unprecedented before. Both the Serapeion in Ephesus and the red hall in Pergamon suggest that Egyptian inspired religions were popular in these cities as it is further corroborated by small Isiac objects founds in the middle temple on the Ephesian upper agora, dated to the second century CE and name giving practices of the local elite, take, for example, L. Cornelius Philoserapis, *agoranomos* of the city. [234] Beside the Egyptian, the strongest non-Roman influence remained to be the Greek one.

All cities continued to cherish local traditions as it is shown by the works at the Aphrodisian sanctuary, the *dodekatheon* and the *Asklepieion*. The best example might be Ephesus with the Antonine altar and the continuous depiction of Androkles. It is likely that the founder also took a prominent place during the Salutaris processions that could appear quite frequently due to the generous donation of the local equestrian.[235] The processual statues also confirm the close coexistence of local and Roman features as further statues included the local voting tribes, impersonated groups: like the senate, the boule, the *gerousia* and the equestrian order, Augustus, Trajan and Plotina, multiple depictions of Artemis and Lysimachos, who was honoured as a founder on account of the relocation of the city from near the sanctuary to its present location on the bank of the Kaystros and renamed the city after his wife Arsinoe with only temporary effect.[236]

It appears that this further stage of integration entailed that the group of *euergetai* consisted mainly in members of the local elite. This was partially due to the high position some from the local elite could reach, including the most prestigious consular office, and the acquired financial means

[233] Wolf-Dieter Albert, 'Die Tabulae ansatae aus Pergamon' in E. Boehringer (ed.), *Pergamon, Gesammelte Aufsätze*, De Gruyter, Berlin, 1972, 34
[234] for the Isiac dedications see, Steuernagel, 'The Upper Agora' 94 for the *agoranomos,* see Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesus*, 91
[235] Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesus, 83*
[236] Rogers, *The sacred identity of Ephesus* ,83

though this. Furthermore, the frequent presence of the emperor in the region instigated the elite to embellish their hometown to showcase their devotion for the visiting emperor. While the donations from Roman governors were still significant, the advancement of the curial class enabled a higher local contribution to prestige projects in smaller places like Hierapolis too. The activity of the Hierapolitan Zeuxis confirms also that wealth and high status were not necessarily bound to Roman citizenship, at least in this far, in-land city.

Comparing the two most explicit narratives presented by friezes in this period, a significant change can be observed. The earlier message of the Aphrodisian *Sebasteion* about the connection and continuity on account of shared mythical ancestors of the Romans and Greeks gave way to one that used references to the present. The Antonine altar worked with allegories too but these pictured Greeks shoulder to shoulder with other Romans in a present or perpetual struggle.[237] With this depiction of Greeks in a mortal form, the narrative became more explicit and closer to the reader than it was in the *Sebasteion*. While this reflected contemporary thoughts about integrity and relations, the events of the time contributed to the different narratives too. The spectacular expansion under the Julio-Claudians when the *Sebasteion* was erected channelled attention to the triumph of subjugating multiple peoples and mastering the *oikumene*. By contrast, this activity became sporadic by the time Antoninus Pius ascended to the purple that resulted in a different narrative that placed the integrated empire in its focus since Hadrian had abandoned any plans about further expansion.[238] The coalescence of multiple peoples into one harmonious empire was not a simple enumeration anymore that eschewed to address the subjugation of Greeks but people striving for a shared goal who were also defined as a collective through their opposition to the hostile outsiders.

Innovation and a peculiar local interpretation still characterised the architecture of the cities, most notably that of Ephesus with the Antonine altar and Hadrian's gate as the prime examples. This entailed that the urban space felt local not only on account of the placement of the structures but due to the local blend of various, foreign features. On the other hand, this period saw both the erection of multiple Italian-style podium temples, that brought the appearance of the imperial temples closer to the Roman subject of the cultic activity inside, and a quintessentially Roman amphitheatre. These changes betray a higher degree of Roman features in the urban mixture of the cities, most notably in Pergamon and Ephesus. In general, the statement made by the buildings was rather clear and uniform among the studied cities; the amalgam of the cityscape was designed in a way to allow for the propagation of the distinct local identity and also to showcase that the inhabitants have access to all available prerequisites that define the cultured public life of the culturally Romans. The aspiration to present the *polis* as a leading city on imperial level did not only act in corroboration of the status of the elite but proffered a source of pride for the lower strata too beside the public benefits provided by the

[237] Winkler-Horaček, 'Roman Victory and Greek Identity' 211
[238] Josiah Osgood, '*Breviarium totius imperii*: the background of Appian's Roman History' in K. Welch (ed.), *Appian's Roman History: Empire and Civil War*, The Classical Press of Wales, 2015, 27

functionality of many prestige buildings. While this phenomenon started already in the Flavian period, it not only unfolded in this one but reached its climax too.

# V. Severan era

## V.1.Introduction

The last chapter of this paper follows the development of cities under the Severan dynasty (193-235 CE). After the Antonines, the personal imperial presence waned in *Asia*. Only one emperor, Caracalla, visited the province two years after his edict, the *Consitutio Antoniniana,* granted Roman citizenship to all free men of the empire in 212 CE. With the previous period, a high level of integration, luxury, and prestige became characteristic for the studied *poleis*. This chapter aims to see what pathways these followed after reaching an outstanding stage of urban development under the Nerva-Antonines. A further interesting point to investigate is the beginning of the empire's financial decline and its impact on the provincial cities. Military expenses were rising since the wars of Marcus Aurelius. The crisis set foot with the first emperor of the dynasty, Septimius Severus, who debased the silver *denarius* to cover his increased military expenditure for he realised that the satisfaction of the soldiery was paramount to keep him in his position. While his ascension ended a period of unrest, his successors were not able to establish secure political power and met violent ends that ultimately led to a general crisis for the remaining part of the third century. Therefore, the analysis of identity should take into consideration the symptoms and products of this political climate and the way these manifested in provincial cities in this short period.

## V.2.*Agorai*

Being already densely populated with structures, the *agorai* of Pergamon, Ephesus and Aphrodisias did not experience further construction projects in this period. By contrast, the *agorai* of Hierapolis received lavish *nymphaea* as embellishments. In the southwest corner of the north agora, facing the *plateia*, the *nymphaeum* of the tritons was dedicated to Severus Alexander. The more than sixty-meter-long fountain had a two-storeyed, columnated façade with statues of tritons and water-related mythical figures. [239] The frieze running between the storeys is of importance as it depicted an amazonomachy. Fancesco D'Andria noted that instead of the Hellenistic heroic nude of earlier renditions of the legendary fight, the frieze showed Greeks wearing breastplates.[240] Implicating a historical setting instead of a mythical one, the frieze expressed the local connection to amazons who occupied a significant place in the foundation myth of Hierapolis. Attributing the name of the settlement to the amazon Hiera, wife of Telephos, established a link between Hierapolis and Pergamon on account of the king's grandchild, Gryneion, founder of Pergamon. The couple was depicted on one of the panels of the great altar of Pergamon too confirming the local importance of the myth. Since Telephos was the son of Herakles, this link also supported a claim for a first-rate Greek pedigree too.

[239] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 120-125
[240] D'Andria, 'Gods and Amazons', 166

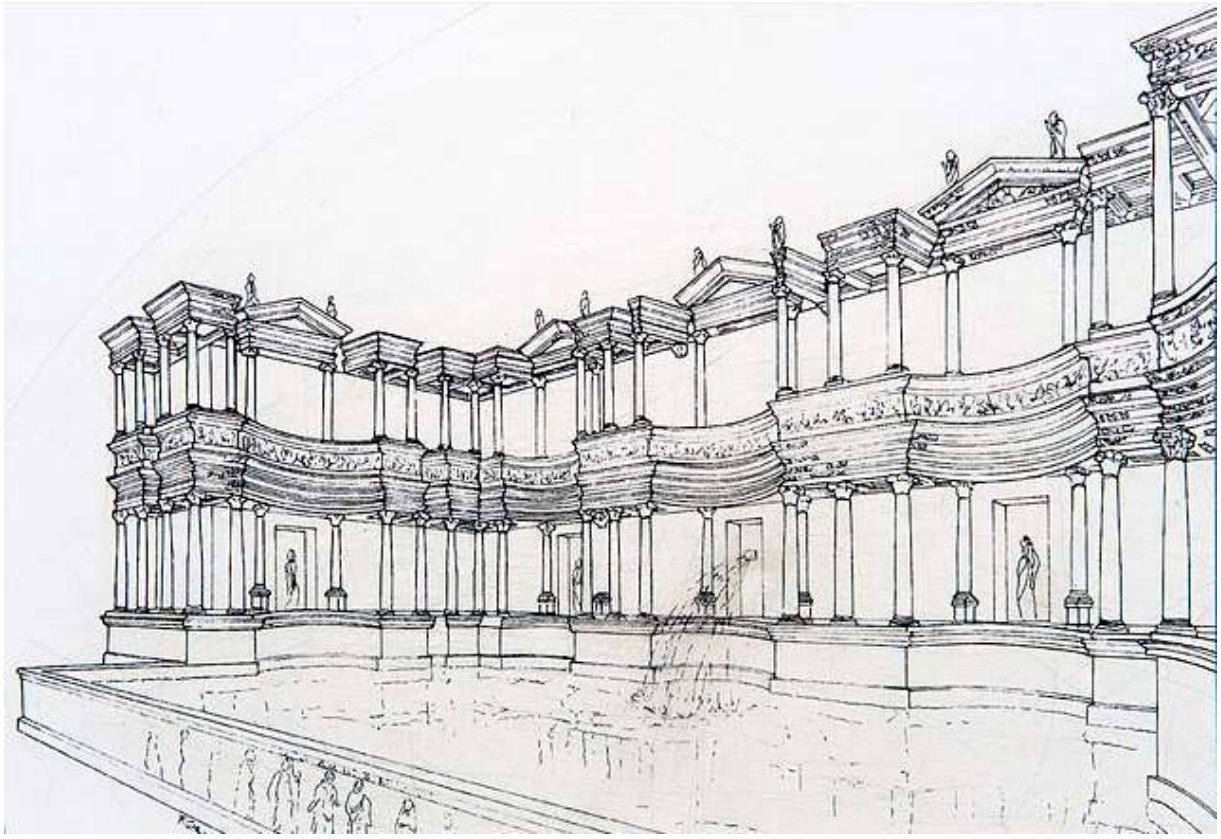

Figure 30 Hierapolis, nymphaeum of the triton, reconstruction (Wikimedia Commons, Dosseman)

The connection to the feared and respected female warriors was further emphasised by locating the plain of the river Thermodon, where the legendary battle with the Amazon's took place, near Hierapolis.[241] The other, U-shaped, *nymphaeum* of similar dimensions was located near the temple of Apollo. The so-called temple *nymphaeum* had a similar amazonomachy relief and statues of local deities, Zeus and Hera.[242] The message about the history of the town was, thus, present in all important squares of the city. Statue bases indicate that the local elite took an active role not only in holding public offices but in serving the emperor too. The local aristocrats G. Ageleius Apollonides and G. Memmius Eutychos were both honoured by the city for their exemplary performance.[243] The proximity of local leading figures to the imperial court could bring beneficial imperial attention to the *polis* as it is supposed to be the case with the sophist and rhetor, Antipater of Hierapolis who tutored the sons of Septimius and was elevated by him to consular rank.[244] Hinting at imperial benefactions, the city honoured multiple members of the imperial family with statues whose basis was found, among them that of Septimius and that of Elagabalus's grandmother, Julia Mamea.[245]

[241] D'Andria, 'Gods and Amazons', 169
[242] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 132-134
[243] for Apollonides, see, Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX*, 518-519, for Eutychos, see *ibid.* 515-516
[244] Ritti, *An epigraphic guide to Hierapolis (Pamukkale)*, 124
[245] for Septimius, see Ritti, *Hierapolis di Frigia IX*, 507-508, for Julia Mamea, *ibid.* 538-539

V.3.Cultic edifices

The accumulation of further neokorates continued in this period involving three out of our four cities. This very direct way of showing the community's affiliation to the emperor hints at a dominant political incentive behind these endeavours that stands out even more when contrasted with the overall lack of other projects. Ephesus sent a motion to Caracalla to establish their third neokorate for him but, in the end, the emperor changed his mind about the grant of an imperial neokorate after he got rid of his brother Geta and altered the neokorate to that of Artemis.[246] The fourth (third imperial) neokorate of Ephesus did not last longer as the grant from Elagabalus was revoked by the senate after his death and *damantio memoriae*.[247] The structures associated with these neokorates cannot be identified with certainty based on the available evidence. By contrast, Pergamon was successful in obtaining yet another neokorate, although Price argued for a joint one of Caracalla and Zeus Asklepius on account of the emperor's sacrifice to the deity in the temple after he was cured in Pergamon.[248] That the temple gave venue to the cult of another deity was in alignment with the local tradition shown by the earlier neokorates of Augustus and Roma and that of Trajan and Zeus. Older cults were not neglected either as the temple of Dionysus was rebuilt according to its Greek plan and was clad in marble inside reflecting the fashion of the time.[249] The new dedication was to Caracalla that shows the stimulative excitement about the emperor's presence. In general, restoration works appear to have taken over the main focus of building activity, at least in terms of monumental architecture. The south stoa of the *Olympeion* of Ephesus shows also signs of reparations at this time.[250]

Contrasting the overall stagnation elsewhere, Hierapolis enjoyed a heightened building activity. The city received its first neokorate under Elagabalus which is only attested to by inscriptions where the community used the prestigious title but the associated temple was not yet found.[251]

V.4.Leisure complexes

While leisure complexes were already built up elsewhere, Hierapolis made further steps in this direction. The theatre received a new, monumental *scaenae frons* bearing statues of the imperial family and a dedication to Septimius Severus, *Apollo Archegetes*, Caracalla, Geta and Julia Domna.[252] The decorative friezes attest to the continuous popularity of *munera* and *venationes* which were organised in the theatre that also received a floodable orchestra to be fit to accommodate

[246] Sviatoslav Dmitriev 'The neokoriai of Ephesus and city rivalry in Roman Asia Minor' in J. H. Richardson and F. Santangelo (eds.), *Priests and State in the Roman World*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2011, 541
[247] *ibid.* 544
[248] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 43
[249] Radt, Steiner, *Pergamon*, 190
[250] Raja, *Urban development*, 84
[251] Price, *Rituals and Power*, 264, for inscriptions, see, for example, Ritti, *An epigraphic guide to Hierapolis (Pamukkale)*, 542
[252] D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 149,

*naumachies*.[253] The lower rows of the auditorium were repaired from the funds of the guild of the local purple dryers that shows both the accumulated wealth from dying textiles and the importance of the theatre for the community.[254]

V.5.Comparison

The limited building activity suggests that factors necessary for vast construction projects which were present earlier had disappeared. One reason could be found in the considerable expenditure necessitated for the maintenance and restoration of the existing prestige buildings that could be sizeable in all four cities judged by the long list of existing structures. The associated expenses of these and other public *munera* and the rising tax burden might explain the reluctance of the local elite to engage in expensive public building projects. Therefore, the communities were anxious about retaining tax immunity for those they could and petitioned new emperors to confirm their status which was at the same time a source of pride. The emphasis on political and fiscal matters recalls the position of Pergamon noted in the early periods, except for the more integrated cityscape abundant in buildings with Roman inspired features. Other ways to express high status, and spend less money, were still actively used, for instance, the various festivities organised to honour the emperor or other local traditions as it was noted by Stephan who counted seven festivals in Ephesus and three *agones* in Aphrodisias.[255] Finally, not much later, the intrusion of Germanic tribes from the 260s CE onwards prompted the communities of Asia Minor to reconsider the type of buildings necessary to erect, giving priority to walls and fortifications.

As a result, the affordances of the built environment, especially monumental architecture, changed little from the reign of Marcus Aurelius until the end of the Severan era in Ephesus, Pergamon and Aphrodisias. This suggests that the negotiation of *poleis* identity slowed down and the image became steadier, at least with regard to statements made through public architecture.

By contrast, monumental architecture was erected in Hierapolis on a scale that was not matched by the other cities at the time. The reason for this must partially be sought in the lag of the community's prestige projects compared to the other *poleis* and the available funds. Although it could have never been intended to outdo the coastal giants of the province, it is clear that Hierapolis strove to follow the same path, only a bit later; it relied on and promoted a foundation myth that provided both good pedigree and venerable ancestors like Aphrodisias did on the basilica reliefs. Furthermore, it developed its infrastructure with buildings similar to those that propagated prosperity and status in other cities. For instance, the appearance of the *nymphaea* fits into earlier examples from Ephesus. The integration of the city to the empire proceeded along the same lines; what is confirmed by the buildings culturally is shown by the local senatorial elite politically. The two phenomena were closely

[253] for the friezes, see Ritti, *An epigraphic guide to Hierapolis (Pamukkale)*, 118-119, for the evidence for naumachies, see D'Andria, *Hierapolis of Phrygia (Pamukkale)*, 152
[254] Ritti, *An epigraphic guide to Hierapolis (Pamukkale)*,121
[255] for Epehsus, see Stephan, *Honoratioren, Griechen, Polisbürger,* 124, for Aphrodisias, see *ibid.* 89

interlinked and reinforced each other through the facilitated happening and goal affordances, respectively. The contrast to Aphrodisias is apparent; that *polis* never obtained a neokorate confirms that this necessitated the attention of the emperor most likely obtained by an advocate of extraordinarily high status. For the community had no such a figure after the Augustan period, it had to utilise other channels to show its status.

## VI. Conclusion

The above analysis has shown that the provincial cities of *Asia* could largely follow their own decision in altering their identity. While the global needs of the Roman empire, such as administration, tax collection, peacekeeping and control over foreign affairs, provided basic limitations, further integration was pursued by the local elite who could profit from this financially and politically. The composition of the most active benefactor group changed over time and depended on the local peculiarities, such as the location and status of the city, the size and composition of its population and the presence of Roman officials. The advancement of the elite benefited their local community too. More importantly, the choices of local benefactors entailed the development of the cityscape along local traditions with the incorporation of Roman and Italian features, such as technological novelties, architectural solutions and style and content of decorative elements.

The defining influences on the discourse, thus, came from two main sources: The Roman cultural impact was decisive thanks to the power imbalance between centre and periphery, the presence of high officials or the emperor instigated a heightened display of affiliation in *poleis* similarly to *poleis* with a higher proportion of Italian residents, like Ephesus. Not entirely independent from these were the local factors. The agenda of the local elite and the financial capabilities of the *polis* determined the broad direction of urban development. The specifics were largely influenced by traditions like myths, poliad gods, venerated founders but also conventional architectural style and shapes. Finally, local taste and preferences played a role when integrating new features, be that Roman or Egyptian. This facilitated significant innovations that catered for the local interpretation and reception. Furthermore, regional factors exerted their effect since inter-city competition instigated *poleis* to outdo each other in the same categories on account of rivalry but also of earlier trends of expressing and obtaining prestige, such as the number of neokorates or the erection of the most splendid monumental altar. Familiarity and harmony with the local milieu were formative aspects when it came to adapting new features or simply adding to the urban fabric of the *polis*. Therefore, the course of development in the *poleis* of *Asia* corroborates the points of Rives, van Nijf and glocalisation theory outlined in the introduction.[256] What is striking is the degree of innovation with which the incorporated features were expressed in the local milieu.

As a result of the organic mixture of local and foreign elements, the authenticity of the local community could survive through gradual, organic change. Of course, priorities were based on Roman standards, such as a Ionic descent. In some cases, alterations were implemented in a more rapid fashion like in Ephesus and in Pergamon. With these, either the overall impression of the complexes, as with the upper agora of Ephesus, or that of other contemporary projects, as with the *Asklepieion* in Pergamon, guaranteed a link to earlier traditions and, thus, facilitated continuity. All four cities had their unique identity on their own as well as a distinct relationship with the centre. If a categorisation

[256] *supra*. n.41-43

of the latter is sought, the models proposed by Vanacker and Zuiderhoek, offer a fitting pathway the *poleis* have appropriated and followed. On account of her pursuit of privileges, Pergamon can be seen as a wealthy client of Rome, using her influential ambassadors to better her position in the earlier periods. After the largescale projects have started in the second century, the image resembled more that of Ephesus with the exception that the Pergamene connections were established first on elite levels. Ephesos came closest to the *polis*-citizen strand due to the active Roman community. Obtaining the most prominent position in the region, the city could perceive herself as a beneficiary of the system and provided civic honours to the representatives of Rome she got in touch with. Hierapolis fits easily in the client-patron group but rather as a humbler client who was grateful for the substantial financial support similar to *sportulae*. Finally, the powerful statement made by the *Sebasteion* puts Aphrodisias in a familial relationship with the Romans backed by the mythical narrative focusing on Aeneas and the dominant position it shows the Roman emperor in. While the categorisation in itself has little value without facilitating our understanding, establishing a model with attached values, feelings and ways of interpretation, or even features identity could be the topic of interesting new research that could cast light on the mechanics of communities classified in the respective categories beyond the general feeling the labels evoke in the reader.

The analysis of public spaces indicates that the public sphere of *Asian poleis* presented statements about the affiliation of the leading circles of the cities that in turn established and contributed to a narrative that interpreted the community's position within the empire. This interpretation created an imperial identity that did not belong only to those who participated in imperial matters by serving in the imperial administration or the army. More fitting is the definition promoted by Vanacker and Zuiderhoek, that conceived a collective of inhabitants of the Roman empire and, thus, concerned all inhabitants of the *poleis* by exposing them to the message of the narrative that thematised and related to Roman rule often by incorporating Roman features.[257] However, this fraction of the *polis* identity did not replace the existing one, rather it blended into it. On the other hand, it is important to notice that the architectural expression of identity on a monumental scale differed among the four studied cities and across time.

Pergamon took a course where political relations to Rome were important. These were manifested most notably in cultic affiliations but with almost no effect to the cityscape. Therefore, the urban experience changed only by some statues that nevertheless signalled the political *status quo*. With regard to *polis* identity, urban space let Rome only to be perceptible on the horizon, the foreground was dominated by the Hellenistic heritage of the Attalids. After an even more eventless period under the Flavians, the local elite reached the higher imperial echelons which brought a change of taste and stance and an enormous building activity in the Nerva-Antonine era. While cultic edifices showed diverse interests with Egyptian and local elements bearing the impact of Rome, leisure-

[257] Vanacker, Zuiderhoek, 'Introduction', 2

oriented projects betrayed an intensified incorporation of Roman elements. The all-inclusive development put Pergamon on par with the leading cities of the empire that was certainly among the driving forces behind the erection of the prestige buildings. However, the drastic change characterising the urban space was probably of a milder effect on the *polis* identity due to the earlier political alignment with Rome. The setting, nevertheless, suggested that the Pergamene identity gained substantial Roman features that positioned the *polis* community as imperial. Although the visit of Caracalla instigated some building activity in the Severan era, the focus shifted to maintenance and restoration instead of construction of new buildings.

Ephesus exhibited a steadier development from the beginning of the studied time period onward. Due to success of the local Italian community and the residence of the provincial governor, the city's urban space was interspersed with Roman features. The overhaul of the administrative district, the upper agora, with the addition of cultic edifices, even in the sanctuary of Artemis, in the Julio-Claudian period made a strong statement about the affiliations of the community. Complemented with dedications along the Curetes street and on the lower agora, the surrounding broadcasted a message about the close connections between the city and the centre of the empire. Showing continuity, the Flavian era brought the construction of further cultic complexes, most importantly the imperial neokorate temple and the development of leisure complexes that provided entertainment to the public and expressed the prestige of the city in a luxurious way. Perceptible Roman elements were mixed with local forms and style. Therefore, Roman-style leisure was available for the *populus* in a local setting. The sense of imperial existence and a seamless belonging to the empire got an even more palpable expression under the Nerva-Antonines. Bath and other aquatic complexes, further temples for emperor worship and Egyptian gods attested to the imperial influences that resonated with the community. Local traditions were not waning either. The continuous depiction of the founder Androkles and the poliad deity Artemis propagated the uniqueness and the Greek roots of the community. The most eloquent interpretation of the *polis* identity was provided by the unique Antonine altar that depicted the Greeks as integral part of the empire. This image became more solid as the Severan era brought little to no change to the cityscape. Restorations became the most frequent building activity here too.

Aphrodisias presented the most vivid image of far-reaching development in the Julio-Claudian period. The newly established city centre that accommodated administration and a leisure park too exhibited Roman features in line with the most fashionable trends in the capital. Luxury was not only to provide for the public, the most lavish structure of the *Sebasteion* also supplied a uniquely local and straightforward interpretation for the community's prosperity, its relations with Rome, especially the ruling dynasty and its place within the empire. After the dynasty that the community aligned its fate with was gone, the building activity never reached the previous height again. However, major building projects embellished the town even without the benevolent cooperation of imperial freedmen. The city strove to emphasise both its peculiar status and its regional connections through its history as referred

to on the basilica reliefs. Furthermore, the Flavian era introduced changes that enabled the community to enjoy Roman-style *spectacula*. That the activities were on a smaller scale compared to Ephesus do not diminish the imperial identity of Aphrodisias. The organic development entailed that the cityscape became saturated with structures that contributed to the expression of statements about the *polis's* prosperity, importance and identity. In the next era, the city experienced some grandiose additions to its administrative, cultic and leisure facilities that were meant to propagate prestige. These new structures ensured that the city could claim the same high status in the region as it did before. The consequences for the *polis* identity were a maintained prestige and feeling of continuous progress that came to a halt in the Severan era bringing similar results as observed in Ephesus.

Hierapolis shows an inconclusive image in our first period due to the devastating earthquakes. Dedications suggest imperial help on a wide scale which the community could perceive as peculiar attention coming from the centre and that the locals were up-to-date with the affairs of the empire. The cultic centre around the Plutonium and the theatre developed under the Julio-Claudians providing the city a source of pride and attractions. The scarce evidence does not allow a satisfying reconstruction of the cityscape in this period. The Flavian era brought more attention to Hierapolis, one that is clearly visible today. The expansion of the city and the related structures show economic prosperity and interests in Roman-style *spectacula* and architectural features. The new *plataia* with gate buildings and the new agora introduced features that likely made a deeper impact on the urban space that anything in the previous period in terms of Roman features that located the community within the Roman empire on account of the surroundings of the inhabitants. While the Nerva-Antonine era shows a lessened construction activity with only the *dodekatheon* and the theatre on the map, the abundance of statuary confirms that the community's affiliation and aspirations to express these were still bound with Rome and her emperors. During Severan times, the city gained the most imposing structures and also a neokorate with which it rose above Aphrodisias. Considering the other cities that possessed a neokorate, Hierapolis was a small community that must have been a source of pride for the inhabitants whose leading members fulfilled duty in the imperial court and reached the higher echelons of the empire.

Time lags and fluctuation in building activity cannot be always explained by the geopolitical traits of the city. Pergamon's late awakening contradicts the trends that bigger, coastal cities were more exposed, Aphrodisias's moderate development after the Julio-Claudians and the ups and downs of Hierapolis confirms that the scale of activities was not constantly increasing. The rhythm of development, certainly that of monumental architecture, appears to be closely linked to the advancement of the local elite and the attention of Roman officials. This confirms the essential trends observed by Halfmann about the importance of the imperial connections of donors.

This study shed light on regional similarities, divergent strategies and local peculiarities. It has shown that the studied architecture had a decisive impact on urban space by making ideological statements through objects. These statements affected how the inhabitants of the *poleis* perceived their

environment by relating to the used architectural style, depicted themes and people and the established narrative these presented about their place in the region and the empire. This manipulation of the urban experience implies a shared communal identity the inhabitants shared on account of belonging to the same lived environment and the community of the *polis*. The studied *poleis* attest to an extensive provincial self-fashioning ability. Most prominently but not solely, this is expressed by the most eloquent visual programmes of the *Sebasteion* and the Antonine altar that betray not only a local interpretation of one's place in the empire or the relationship to it but a contribution of defining what belonging to the empire looked like and what being imperial, rather than Roman, meant to the people of *Asia.* It is important to note that this imperial discourse entailed that the definition negotiated here contributed to the empire-wide self-image of the culturally *Romans*.

This research could benefit further enquiries by showing the potential of archaeological evidence in reporting about influences on identity. Further research could reveal more by a comprehensive analysis of cities with more common features, for example, taking into consideration the available evidence from a micro-region or an area defined by one geographical unit. Such an enquiry could produce an insight into the finer differences within a closer network of connected settlements. The more compact unit is hoped to yield information about the dynamics of sub-regional development and tendencies of integration in a more homogeneous group of communities.

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