

# The RAG

## Packard Humanities Institute Grant —

### *A Massive Boost to Aerial Archaeology in Jordan*

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All around the world our archaeological heritage is under threat. Landscapes are being transformed everywhere by new roads, expanding towns and villages, new agricultural practices. This is especially true of developing countries which are both catching up on the West and are being driven by particularly high growth in population. In Britain, since the 1940s, population has grown by 20% (from 50 to 60 million). The impact of development and growth on the landscape and on its cultural heritage is managed in various ways not least by a long-established programme of aerial reconnaissance to search for sites, record them in a novel view and within their landscape context, and then monitor them at regular intervals. An unforeseen consequence has been an explosion in the number of known sites and the transformation of our understanding of human settlement which previously had focussed on a small number of high profile sites. It has also led to aerial reconnaissance developing as a sub-discipline, capable of generating not just new data but capable of undertaking interpretation and explanation – Aerial Archaeology.

Until recently Aerial Archaeology was confined to a few countries in Northwest Europe, most notably Britain where it had been pioneered in the 1920s. The collapse of the Soviet Empire has seen its extension to Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. Otherwise, there was none anywhere in the world outside Europe (including the United States). The exception since 1997, has been Jordan where I have long benefited from the active support and patronage of Prince Hassan (brother of the late King Hussein) and Prince Feisal (brother of the current King Abdullah). Every year for more than a decade now, I have been flown for 10 or more hours annually, mainly in military helicopters. Together with colleagues Bob Bewley and Francesca Radcliffe (who joined me in 1998 and 2002 respectively), we have taken some 16,000 aerial photographs of several hundred sites. Sadly, we were unable to develop the project properly and that was a particular tragedy in the case of Jordan.

As everywhere else the twin driving forces for change and therefore threat and damage, has been population growth. Britain's 20% increase pales compared to Lebanon's 340% in the same period. But what of Syria with a 600% increase? Horrifying and hugely destructive in both cases, and such rises would have strained the resources of even rich Britain with its established infrastructure for archaeological preservation. Jordan? A different world again – a population in 1943 of 340,000 has now risen to its present 6 million – a 2000% increase!

Within the last month, the Packard Humanities Institute (PHI) in Palo Alto California has come to the rescue. PHI is directed by Dr David Packard, himself a Classicist with a keen lifetime interest in archaeology and a personal interest in supporting projects of enduring importance. This year our Aerial Archaeology in Jordan Project was likely to have been supported by grants totalling c. \$35,000 – barely enough to keep us viable, and largely going on infrastructure. Instead, as a result of PHI's generous support, we will have an additional stunning \$262,000! And they have promised similar support for subsequent years.

Some of the new funding will go to increasing our flying hours from ten to thirty; some to extending the associated ground work. More will go to the building of a web site on which we can present ALL of our 16,000 photographs, plus thousands more in existing archives and the thousands more to be taken in the future. Plus maps, plans, diagrams ... all of it linked to the site database being constructed in Jordan at the same time. That way our imagery can be readily available to the dozens of archaeologists working in Jordan. A further substantial part will be used to provide 7 months or so Teaching Replacement for me every year to allow me to focus on directing this hugely expanded project and developing it academically. As part of UWA's contribution to the project, the Faculty of Arts will be financing two doctoral scholarships on the aerial archaeology of Jordan.

David Kennedy

# THE RIDDLE OF THE REGALIA

*Bill Leadbetter*



**Dr Bill Leadbetter: Policy Adviser to the WA Minister for Heritage**

The Palatine Hill was once the administrative centre of the Roman Empire. In late Republican times, it was the swanky district of the rich and famous. Cicero had his house there; so did his great enemy, Catilina. It was there, in a modest villa, but close to the famed House of Romulus, that the man who became the Emperor Augustus made his home. Augustus' villa, a part of which has recently been restored and opened to the public, became the heart of a great building which, over decades and centuries, spread over the whole hill, until finally an area which had once been a suburb of the affluent and fashionable became a vast and rambling interconnected structure. This was the heart of the Empire: the "palatium" of the Palatine; the brick and marble monument from which we derive the word "Palace".



**The Palatine**

**The Colosseum**

Today this precinct, is a rich archeological park. Together with the adjoining Forum and Colosseum, it is a magnet both for tourists and for archaeologists still working to uncover much of the heart of the ancient city.



In 2006 archaeologists, working in the neglected north-eastern corner of the Palatine precinct, made an unprecedented discovery. While excavating (picture above) the base of a structure, they encountered a small flagged chamber in which they found wooden boxes containing a number of objects wrapped in linen and silk. When these objects were exposed, they were identified as lances, javelins, a socket for a wooden pole (possibly a standard), three spheres made from glass and chalcedony, and an elaborate artifact, identified by the excavating archaeologist as a sceptre (picture below).





The part of the sceptre that survives is its head – a globe sitting within the unfolding petals of a flower – possibly a lotus. The other objects are most likely to have been other parts of the regalia of an emperor, in particular the imperial standard that accompanied the emperor and signified his presence. These objects are the Roman equivalent of the crown jewels, and their discovery is of immense significance, since they are the only imperial artifacts of this type to survive from antiquity. While there are many depictions of these kinds of things in portraits and likenesses of emperors, these are the only known actual models.

Survival of artifacts such as this is always a matter of luck. Normally one might expect such important ceremonial objects to be passed from emperor to emperor, or to have been plundered and dispersed at moments of defeat. Instead, on this occasion, they have been hidden, much as a coin hoard was, perhaps to be retrieved later on. The fact that no-one returned for them indicates both a defeated emperor and a shattered court.

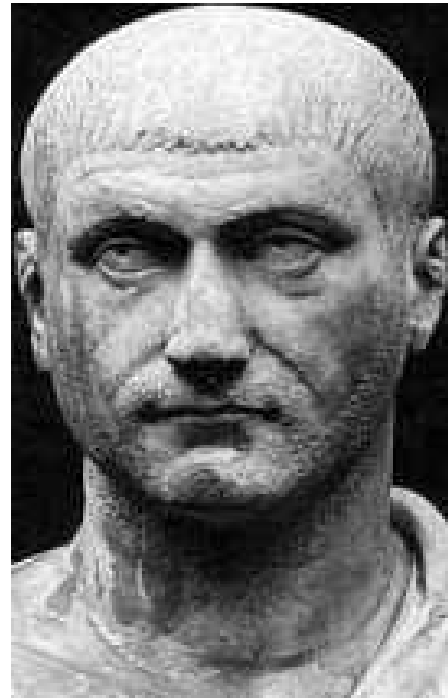
Who was this defeated emperor, who never returned to reclaim his regalia? There are a number of clues here that point strongly to his identity. This is the point at which the work of the archaeologist and that of the historian neatly intersect. The principal task of the archaeologist is the location and faithful recording of remains from the past. That of the historian is to identify and interpret the evidence that such remains provide in order better to inform our understanding of the past. In this case, there is enough information that can be both provided and inferred to establish a reasonably secure identification of the emperor in question.

Emperors rarely lived in Rome for any length of time after the end of the second century. Some never even made it to Rome at all. There were some exceptions: Septimius Severus; Elagabalus; Alexander Severus; Decius; Gallienus; Aurelian; Maxentius. The existence of what is, in effect, a hoard implies that the emperor in question left the city of Rome to decide a conflict (either a civil war or a foreign one) and never returned. That reduces the list of possible emperors further: emperors in question: Decius; Gallienus; Maxentius. Of these, Decius is the least likely, since he was slain in battle against a Gothic confederacy in the marshes of the Danube. That leaves Gallienus and Maxentius.

### Gallienus

Gallienus had to face many challenges to his imperial authority during the years of his reign. His final year was no different. In 268 the Empire was threatened by a fresh incursion of Gothic warrior bands. Gallienus marched against them, and won a significant victory at Naissus (Niš) in Moesia. He was unable to follow up on his victory, however, because he was distracted by the revolt of the commander of his cavalry, Aureolus, who had seized control of Mediolanum (Milan). Gallienus returned to Italy, and besieged his former ally. He was, however, murdered during the siege by a cabal of senior officers. After his death, his successor, Claudius II, caused him to be deified. These circumstances also make it unlikely that the regalia belonged to Gallienus. Not only had Gallienus departed the city for a foreign war that he had every expectation of winning, but he had done so unaware of the pending revolt of his cavalry commander, or of the conspiracy that ultimately took his life.

### What of Maxentius?



While his name emerges through this process of elimination, such a process can only ever be an indication; it is not decisive evidence.

Maxentius (picture of bust above) ruled Rome from 306 – 312. He was a usurping emperor at a time when there was a confusing number of emperors – both legitimate and illegitimate – all ruling a part of the Empire. Maxentius, who had seized power in Rome with the support of the Praetorian Guard, ruled Italy, Sicily and (briefly) Africa. He defied armies sent against him by his father-in-law, and rival, Galerius, principally by trusting to the great walls of Rome. Maxentius is usually depicted as one of the more monstrous emperors of Rome – a lazy debauchee who persecuted Christians and dabbled in magic. The origin of these depictions lies in the victory of the man who supplanted him. In October 312, Maxentius and his army were lured out of the city to confront the army of Constantine at the Milvian Bridge. Constantine defeated the forces of Maxentius, and Maxentius himself was killed – drowned in the Tiber, as he sought to withdraw to safety in the city. After his death, Constantine had Maxentius depicted as a vicious tyrant whose crimes against the people of Rome had prompted this war of liberation upon the city. Maxentius had none officially to mourn him. His memory was disparaged and his years of power, despised.

This provides us with an intelligible context for the concealment of a set of regalia that none returned to collect. It is, moreover, confirmed by scatters of early fourth century pottery within the context of the find. These regalia have now emerged from the depths of the Palatine and serve to remind us both of the great power that they symbolized – an absolute authority over the millions of people of the Mediterranean world – and also just how fragile and fleeting that power might be.

### What is a Sceptre?

From ancient times a rod or a staff has been a symbol of authority. In the Roman Republic consuls would carry an ivory sceptre—a *sceptrum eburneum*. The emperors of imperial Rome would often have an ivory tipped sceptre bearing a golden eagle—a *sceptrum Augusti*. (Ed.)

# An Odyssey Through the Eastern Roman Empire

## *Christine Curry*



*Christine Curry is a RAG member and a UWA graduate, with a Bachelor of Arts in Politics and Modern History.*

Damascus! Petra! Palmyra! The River Nile! Jarash! Philadelphia! Constantinople! All names that excite the imagination, stir the wanderlust and invoke images of thousands of years and layer on layer of history. And all part of the Eastern Roman world!

Recently, my husband and I travelled across this world, from Aswan to Istanbul, through today's countries of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Turkey, hoping to look for lost worlds and, in particular, the Roman world. We knew that what was once the Eastern Roman Empire is now mostly encompassed within the Islamic world, but what we discovered was that the Romans are still making their presence felt in hundreds of very real ways.



**Trajan's Kiosk at Temple of Philae, Aswan, Egypt**

The modern world tends to speak of the Roman Empire as if it was a single entity, but of course it spanned a myriad of frontiers and lands over many centuries. A glance at a map gives an idea of just how vast the Eastern frontier was, but it is not until you travel through the region that you come to appreciate just what the maps are telling you. In southern Egypt, close to the Sudanese border at Aswan, the Temple of Philae was built by the Ptolemaic dynasty and the Romans some 2,000 years ago.

Travelling on to Jordan, Petra, with its Roman colonnaded street and impressive Nabataean theatre, conjured up images of the Emperor Trajan in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD. Many hundreds of kilometres away and a century or so further on, we encountered the war for Palmyra between the remarkable Queen Zenobia and Emperor Aurelian in the Syrian desert, before moving into the 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD as we journeyed towards Istanbul, the great and majestic city of Emperor Constantine.

Marching down the Kings Hwy, or in our case riding on a public bus, it was easy to imagine the legions passing by. For modern travellers, a visit to Rome, southern France or Britain opens a window onto the world of the Romans but, if you want to step inside that world, travel to the Middle East! The breathtaking array of Roman sites, artefacts and history on display is truly mind-blowing.

The great city of Jarash, brought alive for RAG members by Prof David Kennedy in a number of exciting presentations and articles, is but one example. At seemingly every turn, we encountered another great city, each one different and unique. Petra, annexed by the Emperor Trajan in AD106, is very much a Nabataean construct but with distinctly Roman additions.

The remains of Philadelphia (Amman) looked, to tourists such as ourselves, more obviously Roman. Palmyra still proudly wears the trappings of wealth and multi-culturalism earned through its influential position on the caravan route and the Greco-Roman cities of Ephesus and Heliopolis, in modern-day Turkey, have an unmistakable Greek influence.

The Roman Empire was but one in a series of ancient, great, imperial influences on the Middle East, and an abundance of museums bears testament to this. There is, however, no shortage of Roman artefacts to be found in these great, and not so great, buildings. There is everything from complete Roman temples and tombs to a beautifully intricate, life-size bronze caste of a tiny Roman child's foot. The wonderful National Museum in Damascus tells the story of the region across 8,000-10,000



**Restored North Theatre, Jarash, Jordan**

years, so it is possible to learn just where the Romans fitted in to the overall history of modern-day Syria and its neighbours. Museums in smaller places, such as Palmyra, Aqaba, Aleppo, Jarash, Madaba and Mt Nebo (where Moses is said to have seen the Promised Land before he died) all contribute their own bit of the 'Roman story', while the huge Archeological Museum in Istanbul has so many statues of the Emperor Hadrian that you will even encounter one in the basement passageway when you go looking for the 'conveniences'.



**Tomb of Roman soldier, Petra, Jordan**

Succeeding civilisations have re-used Roman materials, as the Romans themselves made use of materials from Egypt and other places. Cultures have always overlapped and it is not unusual to find columns of Egyptian stone in distant places like Palmyra and majestic carved Egyptian obelisks in cities like Istanbul. Architectural styles have been copied and re-visited and architectural 'trophies' transported to far-off places. Modern cities have grown up around the ancient monuments and the remains of larger architectural sites cordoned off to stem the invasion of the urban sprawl. So, the Roman theatre in Amman (Philadelphia) has modern housing pressing at its edges, and the Roman main street in Damascus, known as Via Recta, is still there. Now known to English-speakers as Straight Street, it marks one boundary of the famous Souq al-Hamidiyya, or covered bazaar, and despite its Syrian market stalls and shops, still bears the unmistakable Roman trademark of a long, straight thoroughfare.



**Bath-house or sauna perched on a calcium terrace at Hierapolis hot springs, Pammukale, Turkey**



What we found more tantalising was the degree of architectural integration between the ancient Roman and the modern Islamic worlds. The little bits of architecture, left behind for new civilisations to build upon, are a revelation in themselves. The 10<sup>th</sup> Century Al-azhar Mosque (picture above) in old Islamic Cairo is constructed almost entirely from recycled Roman columns, and part of the Roman temple of Jupiter is now integrated into the wall of the Damascus Souq. In Cappadocia, Turkey, known as Anatolia in Roman times, underground 'cities', carved into soft rock by early Christians seeking to escape Roman persecution, were for many centuries after used for storage and stabling and are now a popular tourist site. And the calcium travertine terraces and hot springs of Pammukale, in south-western Turkey, are today as popular with modern tourists as they were with Roman ones. We noted with interest that one Roman bathhouse site is still used today by bathing tourists.

But it was the little, unexpected surprises that really personalised the travel experience and brought the Roman world to life in our imaginations. Like the Roman milestone tucked away in a dark corner of the Aqaba museum in Jordan, a museum focussed primarily on Lawrence of Arabia, the nearby Wadi Rumm and the Ottoman defeat in World War I. This milestone would have been one of hundreds erected along the Kings Highway, used across the millennia by traders, conquerors, and travellers. Or the manholes (picure above) in the main street of Jarash, and the stone water pipes at Palmyra and Troy, reminding us that not only were the Romans monumental empire builders but that they were people just like us, needing practical things like a reliable water supply and good drainage and sewage disposal.

We were on the road for over six weeks, travelling thousands of kilometres and to a different place almost every day. We had seen but a small portion of the sites and sights on offer in the Middle East, but it was amazing to realise that, with all that, we had never left the Eastern Roman world and that, in fact, the Roman Empire was still there, all around us on every day of our journey.



# An Australian in Jerusalem and *Déjà Vu*

## Kevin O'Toole

The following is a modified extract from the writer's *Muslim Man, Western Man—Conviction and being Greek*, Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University, Melbourne, 2007 and *Islam and the West—the Clash of Values, Global Change, Peace & Security*, Volume 20, Issue 1, 2008, Routledge, London.

Of the many temples in Jerusalem today, there are two in particular, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Al-Aqsa mosque, whose respective histories connect the Roman Empire and Islam. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is some 400 metres to the West of Al-Aqsa which is located on Temple Mount.

### 1. Temple Mount

Temple Mount, known to the Islamic world as *Haram al-Sharif*, is the site of what had been Solomon's Temple first built by King David, and after its destruction in 586 BCE rebuilt on a larger scale by Herod in c. 19 BCE. Herod's reconstructed Temple of Solomon was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE and all that remains today of Herod's construction are the great walls making the rectangular circuit of Temple Mount.

There is a rock outcrop on top of Temple Mount that Muslims believe marks the place where Mohammad ascended with the Angel Gabriel to Heaven during his celebrated Night Journey in 629. In c. late 7th century Caliph Abd al-Malik of the Umayyad Dynasty ruling from Damascus commissioned the construction over the rocky outcrop of a mosque which today is known as the golden domed 'Dome of the Rock'.

### 2. Al-Aqsa

Another mosque on top of Temple Mount, the al-Aqsa, had its first incarnation as a wooden structure after it was commissioned in 638 by Umar (or Omar) when he took control of Jerusalem from the Patriarch Sophronius. Islam's name for Jerusalem would become 'Al-Quds Al-Sharif'.

On 21 August 1969 an Australian, Dennis Rohan, a member of the Californian based and fundamentalist Worldwide Church of God, had been in Israel for some months. Ostensibly he was there to learn Hebrew and work as a volunteer on a Kibbutz. In the two weeks or prior to 21 August he made a reconnaissance of Temple Mount visiting the sites there and lying on the carpet at Al-Aqsa. On that day he was inside Al-Aqsa near an 800 year old *minbar* or pulpit, a celebratory gift of the Kurdish general Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin) who in 1187 led the Arabs in defeating the Third Crusade and reclaiming Jerusalem. The *minbar* was a priceless artwork redolent in its importance to the Islamic world as famous pulpits in Europe such as the nearly contemporaneous pulpit (1260) of Nicola Pisano in the Baptistery at Pisa. Rohan set fire to a kerosene soaked scarf that he had laid across the stairs of the *minbar* and fled. The fire caused major damage to Al-Aqsa amid unproven accusations by Muslims that the Israeli fire-fighters and officials had deliberately exacerbated the fire. In due course Rohan was apprehended and put on trial. The Israeli judges found him to be a paranoid schizophrenic and committed him to a mental hospital. He believed that he had been appointed by God to build the Third Temple and that there-

fore it was fitting that he should destroy Al-Aqsa. Rohan was a chiliast; when he had built the Third Temple Christ could then return.

Rohan's motive was different therefore from the usual motive for the destruction or adaptation of cultural symbols. The usual motive is symbolic, to announce the arrival of a new power with different and supposed superior doctrines. Recent history recalls the demolition in 1992 of the Islamic Babri Masjid (Mosque) at Ayodhya in India by Hindus and the destruction in 2001 of the Buddhas of Bamiyan by the Taliban. In 2002 the Saudis demolished the historic Ottoman fortress of Ajyad in Mecca. However the tradition is not a modern invention—it is age old.

For example, after their astonishing defeat of the Persians (Iranians) under Darius I at Marathon in 490 BCE the Athenians gave in to hubris and commenced the construction of a new temple on the summit of the Acropolis in celebration of the victory. The Athenians should have known, and probably did, that they had not seen off the Persians for good. Persia was after all a hyper-power and the Greek city states were as minnows on Persia's western margins. The Persians and their allies returned in 480 BCE under Xerxes. Athens was sacked and the Persians demolished the temples on the summit of the Acropolis including the then part-constructed temple, now often referred to as the pre-Parthenon, commenced after Marathon. The destruction wrought by the Persians was strategically pointless. It was pure symbolism bespeaking the superiority of the divinely providential Persian palace over the pagan Greek temple. The Athenians would recover Athens and would build the Parthenon. Some 2000 years later the Turks would convert the Parthenon, then a Christian church, into a mosque.

### 3. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

In his efforts to Christianize Jerusalem (it had been 'Aelia Capitolina', it was now 'Aelia') the emperor Constantine in the late 320s/early 330s had a church built by a rocky cave site identified by Constantine's mother, Helena, as the site of Christ's tomb, and near where it is said she had discovered Christ's cross. It is said the church (to become known as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) was built to house the cross. It was three centuries later that Islam burst onto the scene emerging suddenly as it did from the Hejaz on the Western margins of modern Saudi Arabia. Under the Caliph Umar (the first successor to Muhammad) the Arabs took Jerusalem in 638. Thereafter the city lived essentially in peace under Islam for the best part of four centuries and through most of that period received Christian as well as Muslim pilgrims. It was the Fatimid Caliph Al-Hakim (996–1021) who brought that peace to an end. Al-Hakim decided that it was time to speed up the conversion of Jews and Christians to Islam. He ordered the destruction of churches and synagogues and the imposition of various gross humiliations on Christians and Jews. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was demolished and that ignited a fire in Europe. Pope Sergius IV (reign: 1009–1012) is said to have issued an encyclical:

**Let all Christians know that news has come from the east to the seat of the apostles that the church of the Holy Sepulchre has been destroyed from roof to founda-**

**tion by the impious hands of the pagans. This destruction has plunged the entire Church and City of Rome into deep grief and distress. The whole world is in mourning and the people tremble, breathing deep sighs. . . With the Lord's help we intend to kill all these enemies and restore the Redeemer's Holy Sepulchre. Nor, my sons, are you to fear the sea's turbulence, nor the dread fury of war, for God has promised that whoever loses the present life for the sake of Christ will gain another life which he will never lose. For this is not a battle for an earthly kingdom, but for the eternal Lord.**

It may be that this encyclical is apocryphal but undoubtedly there was some such sentiment as that contained in the alleged encyclical prevalent in Europe at the time. Such events generate strong sentiment. Compare for example the response of the Islamic world to the conduct of Denis Rohan

**The grievous event of 21 August 1969 which caused extensive damage by arson to the sacred Al-Asqa mosque, has plunged over six hundred million followers of Islam throughout the world in the deepest anguish. This sacrilege against one of humanity's most venerated shrines and the acts of destruction and profanation of the holy places which have taken place under the military occupation by Israel of Al-Quds – the Holy City of Jerusalem, sacred to the followers of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, have exacerbated tensions in the Middle East and aroused indignation among peoples throughout the world.**

#### 4. Rome and Persia

When Al-Hakim destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre it was not the first time that the Church had been destroyed. The Sassanid Persians destroyed the Church in 614 and stole the cross. In about 630 the Roman/Byzantine Emperor Heraclius rebuilt the Church and the Persians returned the cross. Rome and Persia were at peace again; another interruption in a 700 year war.

By 630 Rome's epicentre was Constantinople, the Empire's lingua franca was Greek and its emperor was called the *basileus*. But the empire was still a Roman Empire. The people of Byzantium did not know themselves as Byzantines—they were *Romanioi*—Romans. The Byzantines and the Persians (more accurately the Iranians) were superpowers dominating their respective spheres of influence. But what these two superpowers did not know was that in the year 570, just before a prior 50 year peace between the two superpowers had ended, a man was born in the Hejaz (on the eastern margin of the Arabian peninsula) who would in due course set in train a process that would entirely bring down both empires, the Iranian by 634 and the Byzantine Empire by 1453 (progressively depleting it in the meantime). And as if to ensure that Mohammad's destiny would be fulfilled, the Roman and Iranian Empires saved some of their best efforts in the direction of mutual destruction for the period leading up to the Islamic expansion out of Arabia which took place in the 630s.

Had the Romans and the Iranians not fought with each other for some 700 years thereby engaging in a gradual mutual enervation they may each, or at least in alliance, have repressed the rise of Islam in the first half of the 7th century .

#### 5. Rome and Jerusalem

It was not just by its dealings with Iran that Rome contributed to

the 7th century successes of Islam but also by its dealings with the Jews in their ancient homeland.

Herod's rebuilt Temple of Solomon on Temple Mount was destroyed in 70CE by the Romans under the command in Judaea of Titus. Like the Persians vis-à-vis the Athenians the Romans believed that if you destroy the temple you destroy the culture. But the destruction on Temple Mount was not enough, even in Jerusalem. It would take a Rome under Hadrian to all but destroy Judaism in Jerusalem. The Jewish revolt lasting 3 years from 132 CE led by Simon bar Kokhba ended, according to Cassius Dio, with the deaths of 580,000 Jews and what in effect was the excision by decree of Judaism from Judaea. Hadrian proscribed Jewish law and the Hebrew calendar. 'Jerusalem' became the officially pagan polis '*Colonia Aelia Capitolina*' (Aelia Capitolina) marking the erection of a statue of Jupiter on Temple Mount, and Aelia Capitolina was made forbidden to entry by Jews.

Jewish survivors of the Romano/Jewish wars left their ancestral homeland and resettled elsewhere in the Fertile Crescent and in the Arabian Peninsula (including in the Hijaz and Yemen) where they would play a role by default in the formation of Islamic doctrine. Hence Mohammad's reputed dealings with Jewish tribes in Medina had the effect both of shaping his doctrines and sharpening his and his followers' conduct—the Medina Jews did for Muhammad what the Jews of Jerusalem did for Hadrian.

Furthermore the Diaspora Jews elsewhere in the Roman territories overrun by Muslims in the early 7th century were for obvious reasons ready allies on the whole of the new force from Arabia.

But the Diaspora seen as an indirect contribution by Rome to the rise of Islam cannot be equated in importance to the other factors that made the Muslim conquest relatively easy. The Byzantines were riven by religious factionalism centring on a frequently vicious debate about the nature of Christ. For example, did Christ have one nature with two manifestations or two natures with separate manifestations. The Muslims overrunning Roman territory often confronted a divided enemy and Islam had some time to go before it was similarly to be riven by factions.

Even more important though was that both Roman and Persian lands had been devastated and their populations decimated by years of war and plague; they were simply too weak to offer serious resistance to the small but highly organized and disciplined Arab armies, spurred on as those armies were by a fanatical self belief and a general sense (partly illusory) of cultural solidarity.

#### 5. Islam's Succession Crises

Upon the Prophet's death in 632 the issue arose as to who would lead the *umma* (the community of Muslims), or to put it another way, who would rule over the lands of the Muslims, the *dar al-Islam*. Classical Arabic culture followed a practice of hereditary succession, although not a system of primogeniture, with the leader chosen from male descendants. Had the new doctrines changed this practice?

Muhammad had not left any male offspring. Perhaps that was a factor in the decision of the majority of the Prophet's followers to adopt the view that the successor, the caliph, should be elected. The minority view was that hereditary succession should continue to be the practice, and so great was the esteem in which the Prophet was held that it was the male descendants of his daughter, Fatima, who in the minority persuasion should

be the favoured candidates for leadership. These two positions, the elective (or republican) and the hereditary (or monarchical) would later become one of the distinctions between Sunni and Shiite. In any event, the first four caliphs were elected in the sense that accession to power in each case was not based on hereditary title. These were the *rashidun* ('the right minded caliphs') who extended the empire such that by the death of the last of them in 661CE, Islam's empire extended from Libya in the West to most of what had been Sassanian Persia in the East. However, the caliphal system represented by the *rashidun* was a failure. Abu Bakr ruled for two years from 632 CE and died peacefully, however the reign of his successor Umar referred to above in relation to the Temple Mount was cut short by his murder in 644 CE. He was succeeded by Uthman who was in turn murdered in 656 CE. Then, finally, there was Ali, who was assassinated in 661 CE. The system was a failure because it could not absorb the rapid expansion of the empire and it left an ultimately disastrous legacy of dynastic caliphates and sultanates and, along with them, a fractured and self-destructive *umma*.

Hence, Islam like Christianity fractured early. By the death of Ali, the last of the *rashidun*, a mere 29 years after the death of Muhammad, the questions that had split Christianity were beginning to split Islam. Who are the legitimate custodians of the faith? Who can be relied upon as true interpreters of doctrine? What is correct doctrine? Ali had died in a civil war. His followers believed him to be the first *imam*, the first true source of doctrine after Muhammad. After the death in 680 of Muawiyya, Ali's successor, Ali's second son Hussein attempted but failed to assume the caliphate. He and his followers were killed. The *Shi'a't Ali*, today generally referred to as 'Shiites', then broke away and would in due course form three sects, the twelvers, awaiting the return of the twelfth successor of Ali, Muhammad al-Muntazar (c. late 9<sup>th</sup> century – the Twelfth Imam) who did not die but went into 'occlatation', the Ishmailis (or Seveners), who believe that the legitimate line of Ali ended with Isma'il (d. 760) and who refer to Isma'il as the Seventh Imam, and the Zaydis, for whom it was Zayd (d. 740) who was the last legitimate successor of Ali. Another group the Khariji who conspired in the murder of Ali, and who are today followers of the small Ibadist sect, also split off from mainstream Islam. Another 'chiliastic' sect, the Druze, would be formed in the 11<sup>th</sup> century by a man called Darazi who had to flee from his Muslim brethren to the Lebanon after declaring the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim (referred to above: infamous for the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) to be God. The Druze await the return of al-Hakim. A mere forty-eight years after the death of the Prophet there were two major Islamic sects, the Sunnis and the Shiites and there would be more fractures ahead.

## 6. The Crusaders

To Muslims, a people who had God's revelation and who were the custodians of His Holy City, Al-Quds, it defied logic that in 1967 Israel would take possession of Jerusalem. But this was not the first time that Muslims had lost custody of Al-Quds. In 1099 the members of the First Crusade were indiscriminate in their massacre of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Muslim men, women and children, sought sanctuary at Al-Aqsa. They were slaughtered without mercy. The Jews sought sanctuary in their chief synagogue; they were burnt alive. Over a three day period, thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of Muslims and Jews were murdered in the name of Christ. After the 'victory' the crusaders chose Godfrey of Bouillon to be overlord of the city. He declined to be called 'king' but assumed the title '*Advocatus Sanc-*

*tus Sepulchri*' ('Defender of the Holy Sepulchre'). Godfrey chose for his palace the Al-Aqsa Mosque. He turned the Dome of the Rock into a church which he called '*The Temple of the Lord*'. Godfrey died of typhoid fever within a year. Baldwin, his successor, less restrained even than Godfrey, crowned himself '*King of Jerusalem*'.

When Rome as Constantinople suffered its final defeat in 1453 at the hands of the Turks the event would soon be marked by the conversion of Justinian's masterpiece Hagia Sofia, the Church of Holy Wisdom, into a mosque. The conversion, another of those symbolic acts of conquest, seems mild however, even palatable, when compared to what the 4th Crusade of Christians did to Justinian's Christian temple in 1204. Thus, Runciman (*A History of the Crusades*):

**Neither monasteries nor churches nor libraries were spared. In St Sophia itself drunken soldiers could be seen tearing down the silken hangings and pulling great iconostasis to pieces, while sacred books and icons were trampled underfoot. While they drank merrily from the altar vessels a prostitute set herself on the patriarch's throne and began to sing a ribald French song.**

It is contended by some historians of the period that Constantinople never recovered from the murder, rapine, theft and vandalism of 1204 and that the 4th Crusade so weakened Constantinople that the Turkish conquest of 1453 was inevitable.

By the time in 1453 that the Turks had breached the great walls of the city many Constantinopolitans had sought refuge in St Sophia expecting rescue by an angel of the Lord. But their hopes were unavailing. Hence, Gibbon (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*):

**While they expected the descent of the tardy angel, the doors were broken with axes; and as the Turks encountered no resistance, their bloodless hands were employed in selecting and securing the multitude of prisoners. Youth, beauty, and the appearance of wealth, attracted their choice; and the right of property was decided among themselves by a prior seizure, by personal strength, and by the authority of command . . . Of these unfortunate Greeks, of these domestic animals, whole strings were driven through the streets; and as the conquerors were eager to return for more prey, their trembling pace was quickened with menaces and blows. At the same hour a similar rapine was exercised in all the churches and monasteries, in all the palaces and habitations, of the capital; nor could any place, however sacred or sequestered, protect the persons or the property of the Greeks.**

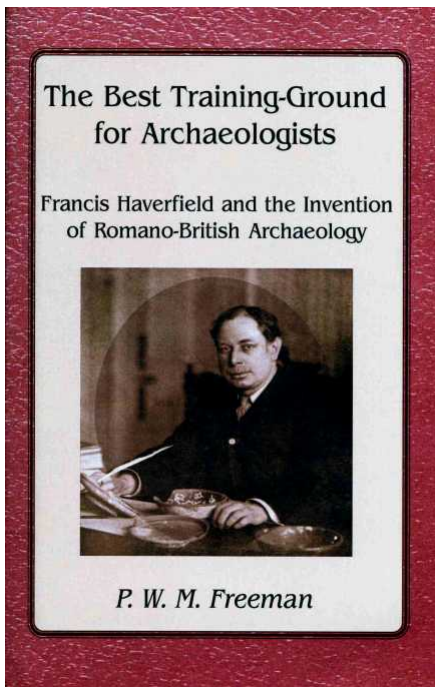
## 7. History's Tedious Familiarity

When in February 2006 Sunni Muslims blew up the 1200 year old Shiite Iman Ali Al-Hadi Mosque in Samarra in Iraq there should have been no call for surprise (nor was there in fact). The attempt by Dennis Rohan to destroy Al-Aqsa ought not to have been a surprise either. His attempt had it been successful would have added to the tedious familiarity of destruction born of fanaticism, greed or delusion. The razing of the capitalist temple of the twin towers was on a vastly greater scale of course but it also is a case evoking a sense of *déjà vu*.



## Book Notices—David Kennedy

This month I want to bring to your attention to three very different books - spread from Britain to the east coast of India.



First off the stocks is a blockbuster by a former student of mine 25-30 years ago at Sheffield. Phil Freeman is a lecturer at the University of Liverpool and pursues a remarkable range of research interests from Roman Jordan through battlefields of the Crimean War to Roman Britain. In this huge biography, he has tackled one of the most influential figures in the study of the most intensively researched provinces of the Roman Empire. Francis Haverfield (1860-1919) was

Camden Professor of Ancient History at Oxford a century ago, holding a chair of archaeology founded by William Camden in 1622. Camden's objective was to "...restore antiquity to Britaine, and Britaine to its antiquity." It was the first endowed lectureship at a university anywhere and it has continued to be held by the leading figures of Roman history. The current holder is Prof. Alan Bowman, best known to us as an expert on Roman Egypt and papyri but also as the leading reader and interpreter of the Vindolanda Writing Tablets from northern England. Haverfield was most famous for his *Romanization of Britain* (1905). It was a brief book but went through several editions and transformed the study of Roman Britain from antiquarianism to a serious subject capable of using the archaeological evidence to interpret and explain the nearly four centuries of Roman rule.

When one thinks of papyri in the Greek and Roman world one thinks automatically of Egypt. As the home of the papyrus plant and with an arid climate well-suited to preserving organic material on its rubbish heaps, it is the ideal source of such documents. It is true as well that the use of papyrus to record all sorts of written information from tax returns through personal letters to religious tracts and imperial statutes increased dramatically in the Roman period. Keith Hopkins - late Professor of Ancient History at Cambridge - estimated the increase between the period of the pharaohs and the Roman to be twenty-fold! Although Alexandria was the "capital" of Roman Egypt and one of the three great cities of the Roman Empire, few papyri have come from there. Most have been found in the great desert oasis of the Fayum and the collections take their names from the small towns and villages of the province - Antinoopolis, Karanis, Philadelphia, Tebtunis .... and the splendidly-named Oxyrhynchus, the "City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish" - beat that for a placename. The discoverers of the rubbish heap of

this little town on a branch of the Nile draining into the Fayum depression, occupied by the Greek descendants of Alexander's time, recovered c. 500,000 whole or fragments. Publication began immediately in 1898 and in 2006 they published volume 70 with tens of thousands of texts still to be published. It is one of the most important collections of papyri and as Peter Parsons, a leading papyrologist and the author of this delightful book puts it, from the mass of diverse papyri we get an insight into the everyday life and the people of this Roman town:

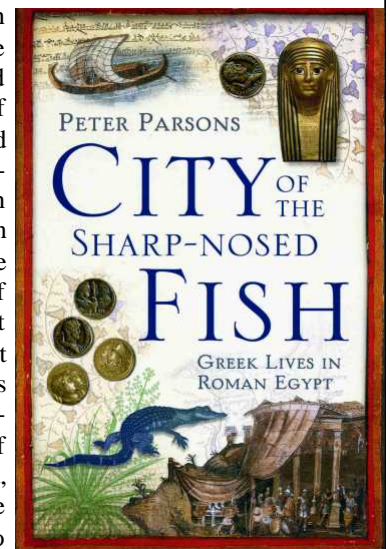
*"We know where Thonis the fisherman lived, and Aphynchis the embroiderer, and Anicetus the dyer, and Philammon the greengrocer. We know how much farmers had to pay when they brought in dates and olives and pumpkins to market. We know that on 2 November, AD 182, the slave Epaphroditus, eight years old, leaned out of a bedroom window to watch the castanet-players in the street below, and slipped and fell and was killed. We meet Juda, who fell off his horse and needs two nurses to turn him over; Sabina, who hit Syra with her key and put her in bed for four days (ancient keys are good solid objects); Apollonius and Sarapias, who send a thousand roses and four thousand narcissuses for the wedding of a friend's son."*

Start with the website and see if you can resist the book: <http://www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/POxy/oxyrhynchus/whereis.html>

Far to the east we find Roman consumer goods turning up on the east coast of India.

*"This little book first took shape on a hot May morning in 1945, when an Indian student of mine emerged excitedly from a deep trench beside the Bay of Bengal waving a large slice of a red dish in his hand. Removal of the slimy sea-mud revealed the dish as a signed work of a potter whose kilns flourished nearly 2000 years ago and 5000 miles away, on the outskirts of Arezzo in Tuscany."*

That is Sir Mortimer Wheeler introducing his *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (London, 1954: v). At a stroke he has captured the drama and excitement of archaeology. Wheeler had a flare for purple prose but his excavations were continued at the little Indian town of Arikamedu most recently by the Indian-American archaeologist Vimala Begly whose results are here published posthumously. Although the grand total of fragments of Mediterranean pottery is modest - several dozen pieces - they still suggest that this place - the Poduke of ancient sources - was one of a number of places along the east coast of India to which Roman traders penetrated, probably sailing from the Red Sea coast of Egypt but transporting goods from the great Inner Sea - red-glazed pottery from northern Italy (Arretine) and wine jars from the Aegean (Kos).



## Full-size Reconstructions of Roman Buildings

*Martina Mueller*



**Martina Müller** — Classics and Ancient History, UWA

In recent years an increasing number of full-scale reproductions of lost buildings has been attempted, ranging from Iron-Age houses to Medieval forts, but also including Roman villas, bath-houses, forts, watchtowers, temples, potteries, breweries and wineries. Replicas of Roman buildings can be found in Great Britain as well as in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands and France. Rebuilding excavated structures in their original dimensions, as 1:1 reconstructions, is one means of presenting and explaining the excavated evidence to the public. As only a small fraction of the original building is usually still visible, such reconstructions can tell us what the originals would have looked like and what their purpose would have been. They also create a sense of space and an ambiance which reconstruction drawings, small-scale models or virtual reconstructions cannot provide. In addition to being a didactic and visual aid, reconstructions can also give new insight into ancient building technology. Especially in Great Britain experimental



**Reconstructed granary and gyrus at the Lunt Roman Fort, Baginton (UK).**



**Arbeia Roman Fort, South Shields (UK), reconstructed west gate**

archaeology is one of the driving forces behind full size reconstructions.

The desire to reconstruct and rebuild the past has existed for a long time. The Bavarian King Ludwig I., for example, enthusiastically commissioned a full size reconstruction of a Roman villa in 1840, after he had visited the recently excavated sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum. His villa in Aschaffenburg (Germany) is loosely designed after the 'House of Castor and Pollux' in Pompeii, but, rather than being a copy of the Pompeian building, it is a simulation of an ideal Roman house.



**King Ludwig's Pompejanum in Aschaffenburg (Germany)**

**Photos: ACAM**

The 1955 reconstruction of a Roman house in Augst (Switzerland) was made with a more academic approach. It recreates the dimensions and arrangement of the rooms of an urban villa based on the plans of excavated examples in Augst. For parts where there was no evidence in Augst, the reconstruction was based on finds from other places – mainly Pompeii and Herculaneum, as a wealth of information can be gained about Roman houses from these sites. However, the use of southern Italian models as prototypes for buildings in the northwestern





**Reconstructed Roman house in Augst (Switzerland)**

provinces of the Roman Empire can be contentious.

One of the main questions regarding reconstructions is their accuracy in reproducing the ancient original. Full-size reconstructions of Roman buildings can never be exact copies of the original structures, as they always reproduce buildings that are lost or have survived only in fragments. Addressing this problem, the International Council on Museums and Sites ICOMOS has recently published a 'Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2006)', which recommends that visual reconstructions of any kind 'should be based upon detailed and systematic analysis of environmental, archaeological, architectural, and historical data, including analysis of written, oral and iconographic sources, and photography.' In order to build a reconstruction that is as close to an ancient original as possible, it is important not only to look at the remains themselves, but also to examine excavation reports, recent research publications on ancient buildings, ancient literary sources and depictions of buildings on ancient artefacts.

However, in almost every case reconstructions include a hypothetical aspect. Even a reconstruction that is based on the most recent research may become outdated tomorrow by new findings and knowledge. And although excavations can reveal the floor plans of Roman houses, surviving evidence for the reconstruction of a possible second floor or the roof is limited. The reconstruction of the Romano-British villa at Butser near Petersfield



**Butser Roman villa, Chalton near Petersfield (UK)**

(UK) is one example where the appearance of the exterior, especially of the front corridor and roof, is still debated, even though the reconstruction was based on the plans of an excavated villa in nearby Sparsholt near Winchester. Differing archaeological interpretations of the appearance of the upper level of the front corridor had to be addressed. One question was whether the corridor should be enclosed or, rather, be built like a half-open verandah. The decision to enclose the corridor was partly due to practical reasons – that way it could also be used during the cold winter months.

The fact that reconstructions show only one possible solution, which might even be historically and archeologically incorrect, is one of the reasons that make reconstructions a controversial issue amongst professionals involved in the preservation and conservation of historic monuments. That full-scale reconstructions cannot easily be reversed and in some cases – if built over excavated structures – even destroy authentic originals, are additional concerns.



**Reconstructed Gallo-Roman house in Aubechies (Belgium)**

Nevertheless, the Butser project, among others, has demonstrated that there are positive sides to reconstructions. It was only during the process of creation that the archaeologists gained more information about the length of time it would have taken to build a villa in antiquity – it was much longer than initially expected. The team worked out how to slake lime and discovered how easily frescos could be painted directly onto lime washed walls. This provided valuable insights into materials and construction techniques. In the end, the Butser Roman villa even gained publicity. Its completion had only been possible with the resources of Discovery Channel, and the 10 part series *Rebuilding the Past*, which showed the trials and tribulations of reconstructing a Roman villa in 2003, has hopefully raised interest in, and understanding about, Roman archaeology.



**Butser Roman villa, Chalton near Petersfield (UK)  
reception room**



# Roman Archaeology at UWA

# Membership of RAG

## *New Archaeology Magazine – Online*

David Connolly works for Scotland's Midlothian county as a professional archaeologist. He is a keen user of the internet and of communicating archaeology freely through that medium. Several years ago he established BAJR – the British Archaeological Jobs Report, an inexpensive way for archaeologists to advertise and find jobs. It was a fraction of the cost of the national newspapers and has been a huge success. Now David and his wife Maggie Struckmeier have founded a free online archaeology magazine, *Past Horizons*. The second issue is just published and it is impressive in its presentation and the quality of content. (PS David and Maggie will both be joining the Jarash Hinterland Survey in Jordan (RAG 3.2) again this coming September).

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/2946326/Past-Horizons-Magazine-May-2008-350>.

## *Everyday Life in the Roman Army*

David Kennedy will give a course through University Extension on "Everyday Life in the Roman Imperial Army".

The course will be once a week beginning on Thursday 5 June 2008 (6.30-8.30).

**RAG Members can request a \$10 discount on the fee. See the website: <http://www.extension.uwa.edu.au/>**

## *Winter Programme 2008*

**Saturday 21 June 2008**

### **Roman Judaea/ Palaestina**

*Jerusalem/Aelia Capitolina/Al-Quds Al-Sharif: Rome and the Rise of Islam.*

Kevin O'Toole

*Masada and the Dead Sea Caves - Parchments and Papyri from Around the Dead Sea*

David Kennedy

**Saturday 26 July 2008**

### **Julius Caesar**

1.00-1.10: *Introduction* (Prof. David Kennedy)

1.10-1.50: *Caesar: Man of Letters* (Dr Judith Maitland)

1.55-2.30: *Caesar's Portraits: Coins and Statuary* (Prof. John Melville-Jones)

2.30-3.00: *Tea break - refreshments provided*

3.00-3.45: *Caesar's German and British Expeditions* (Prof. David Kennedy)

3.45-4.00: *Caesar's Legacy* (Dr Bill Leadbetter)

Finish

**(A session open to TEE students of Ancient History)**

**Saturday 23 August 2008**

### **Food and Diet in the Roman World**

*Archaeology of Roman Food*

David Kennedy

*Preparation of Roman Recipes*

*Sampling*

Marg Dorey

**Where: Social Sciences Lecture Theatre at University of WA**

**When: 1.30 pm**

**Cost: Free**

Refreshments will be available at the mid-session break for a small charge (reduced in the case of Members).

**Please RSVP for yourself and friends to Maire Gomes by telephone 9439 2828**

**or email [gomescm@bigpond.com](mailto:gomescm@bigpond.com)**

\$25.00 Ordinary membership  
\$35.00 Family membership 1 (2 adults; 1 copy of RAG magazine)  
\$50.00 Family membership 2 (4 family members; 1 copy of RAG magazine)  
\$50.00 School membership (2 copies of RAG magazine)  
\$10.00 Student membership  
Complete and post the form enclosed with this edition of the RAG or contact The Treasurer at the address below.

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