

THE ANCYRA PROJECT: THE TEMPLE OF AUGUSTUS AND ROME IN ANKARA

Paula Botteri* , Gabriele Fangi**

*Università di Trieste botteri@univ.trieste.it

** Università Politecnica delle Marche fangi@univpm.it

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ABSTRACT:

Following Caesar Augustus' conquest of Galatia (Asia Minor) in 25 BC, a marble temple was built in Ancyra, the administrative capital of the province, to day the capital of the Turkish Republic, Ankara. This monument was consecrated to the Emperor and to the Goddess Rome: a Memorial of Augustus and of the Roman hegemony. On Augustus' death the temple was adorned with coloured carved letters to glorify his *res gestae*. This political celebration of his achievements, the honours he received and the undertakings he made to reach power, were copied from the original one engraved, at the behest of a clause in his will, on two bronze pillars at the entrance to his mausoleum, in Rome. The University of Trieste in 1997 began the so-called Ancyra Project for the survey and the safeguard of the monument worldwide known as Monument Ancyranum. This paper is a report of the interdisciplinary research (history, archaeology, photogrammetry and architecture) on the most important Roman monument still standing in Ankara, the temple of Augustus. The team of experts, coming from many Italian universities, led by P.Botteri, carried out the interdisciplinary project. Here the results are briefly described, mainly as far as surveys are concerned. The tachometric and photogrammetric survey has been carried out in two different phases, the first one in 1997 limited only to the epigraphs, the second one in 2000 dedicated to the entire temple.

1. INTRODUCTION

In historical times, the region, which extended across the interior of modern Turkey, is, in one sense, "a land without history", as Stephen Mitchell says ¹. This is real, even if several centres of prehistoric civilizations lie in the Anatolian upland plain, from Çatalhöyük, Hacilar etc., to (Boğazköy) Hattusa, the capital of the Hittite state. After the Bronze Age, the Phrygians created a kingdom during the Iron Age. One of the well-known centres of this civilization is Gordium.

From the second quarter of the 3rd century, the Galatians, a Celtic people migrating from Northern Europe, occupied the Anatolian plateau. The Galatians came into conflict with the Hellenistic kings, who lived in the western satrapies, after the death of Alexander the Great. From the early third century B.C. the history of Anatolia reflects the culture and life of the Hellenistic world until the Roman rule in Asia Minor. Ankyra was the capital of the Galatian tribe called Tektosages, but in 25 B.C., Augustus annexed Galatia to the Roman Empire. The creation of the province Galatia transformed Ankara into Roman Ancyra, the administrative capital of the new dominion. Only three Roman cities in central Asia Minor have been fairly digged till now: Pessinus (Ballıhisar), Pisidian Antioch (Yalvaç) and Ancyra (Ankara).

This paper is a report of the inter-disciplinary research (history, archaeology, photogrammetry and architecture) on the most important Roman monument still standing in Ankara, the temple of Augustus.

From the beginning of the principate the cult of Augustus and his family spread at once in Asia Minor ². The first emperor

of Rome induced the provincial people to build a temple honouring himself and the goddess Roma in several centres (at least 50 of which date to his lifetime ³). The most notable sanctuary of emperor worship (*Augusteum* or *Caesareum*) is the temple of Ankara, being unique for its historical value.

After the death of Augustus the temple was adorned with an inscription to glorify his *res gestae*, the deeds of the deified Augustus. This text, dealing with the political celebration of the main achievements of the Prince, the honours he received to reach the power, was copied from the original one engraved on two bronze pillars at the entrance to his *mausoleum* in Rome. Up till this time, two other copies of the *res gestae Divi Augusti* were also discovered in Asia Minor. Excavations carried out at Pisidian Antioch (present-day Yalvaç) have brought to light some fragments of the Latin text (figure 4); whereas a Greek version was discovered at Apollonia in Phrighia (present-day Uluborlu).

1.1 The Monumentum Ancyranum

In Ankara, all that remains today of the original majestic *Augusteum* (measuring 36 x 55 m.) is the pronaos and the lateral walls of the cella, one of which is badly holed. The temple faces west like all Greek sanctuaries based on an ancient Anatolian tradition (above all from the model of the architect Hermogenes, 2nd century B.C.). Inside the pronaos survives the Augustan text in Latin, while a Greek translation has been carved on the exterior of the southwest wall of the cella. Alongside the notable remains of the temple (almost 12 meters high and 32.5 meters long), there is a 15th-century mosque, which adjoins the north wall of the cella (figure 1). The Turkish mosque, the Hacı Bayram Veli Camii, with its minaret, is still today one of the most important place of the Islamic worship in Turkey.

¹ *Anatolia. Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor*, Oxford, 1993, vol. 1, p. 1.

² S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power: the Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, Cambridge, 1984.

³ S. Mitchell, n. 7, p.100.

At present, the Augustan monument is dangerously enclosed in a cage of metal scaffolding, evidence of attempts at restoration going back about fifteen years, while few ruins of the original peristasis are placed lower than the present walkway. The site has been radically changed by the modern urban development. Heavy, concrete paving surrounds the mosque and part of the temple. A modern, busy road flanks the lateral wall of the temple. The building, which bears the exceptional Augustan document, must be saved, whatever the cost. The dramatic deterioration of the engraved marble is threatening this unique historical heritage, which is evidence of the transition from the Republican Age to Principate. These extraordinary inscriptions, cultural heritage of mankind, are undergoing irreversible deterioration caused by pollution, seismic disaster and climatic factors as well as man-made damage.



Figure 1. The temple with the Haci Bayram Veli Camii mosque on the background

2. THE ANCYRA PROJECT

After the appeal made in the press by Professor Ekrem Akurgal, the most famous Turkish archaeologist, for saving the memory of Augustus, the University of Trieste approved a programme of research on the temple of Augustus at Ankara, in 1997. The programme, named Ancyra Project (from the Roman name of Ankara) started in the Department of Classics in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Trieste. The University has granted three years' financing for the mission, which has been supplemented by a contribution from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Department of Classics, the GeoMaticLab, Architecture and Engineering Faculty of the University of Trieste, are participating in the project along with individual researchers and other professionals from a range of various centres and universities in Italy and abroad.

The main scientific objective of our project was originally an examination of the epigraphic content of the monument with a view to the publication of a new critical edition of the Greek text of the *Res gestae Divi Augusti*, and a metrical and topographic survey of the remains of the temple. Following the initial inspection in Ankara, together with the Director of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations and the General Directorate of Turkish Ministry of Cultural Heritage, the complete degradation of the whole site has produced agreement on the following needs:

- a) to protect the inscriptions;
- b) to make a meticulous petrographic survey to establish the measures necessary to stop degeneration and to restore the epigraphic surface;

- a) to draw up a plan for an intervention to ensure the stability of the monument, which is the support of the epigraphs.

3. THE SURVEY OF THE MONUMENT

3.1 The photogrammetric survey of the epigraphs

The preliminary planimetric survey, carried out by a team on May 1997, confirmed the need for a more careful in-depth examination since the last measurements known to us are to be found in *Der Tempel in Ankara* by M. Schede and D. Krencker, published in Berlin in 1936.

In the course of several missions in Ankara, we have been able to carry out a photogrammetric survey of all the engraved walls, covering an area of approximately 46 square meters. The survey was performed by G. Fangi. The total amount of the photogrammetric models has been 211, say 76 for the two Latin inscriptions and 136 for the Greek one. For the assessment of the control network, we designed and realized special equipment allowing the theodolite measurements to be taken from the shaking scaffoldings (figure 3). A thorough photographic documentation of the monument complex was also produced with special regard for its architectural features with a view to publishing a much-needed new interpretation of the complex (archaeologist B. Pinna Caboni); architect Paolo Marconi gathered the preliminary data necessary for drafting a project for protecting the epigraphs and the existing structure.

The photogrammetric line plotting made in a stereoplottor by an expert operator, have been superimposed to a photomosaic (see figure 2). The radiometric differences between adjacent images have been equalized by the application of the Wallis filter (Bacigalupo et al, 1999).

The photogrammetric survey provides a complete systematic frame of reference not only of the original elements making up the Latin and Greek texts, but of the subsequent traces of alteration of the inscriptions and the walls bearing them owing to a range of natural and anthropic phenomena. This intervention has provided a virtual cast of the complex, obtained by non-aggressive and non-intrusive techniques. This work was already presented in many occasions (Botteri et al., 1997, 1999, 2000).



Figure 2. A sample of the plotting of the epigraph.



Figure 3. During the surveying operations. The theodolite and the targets are visible

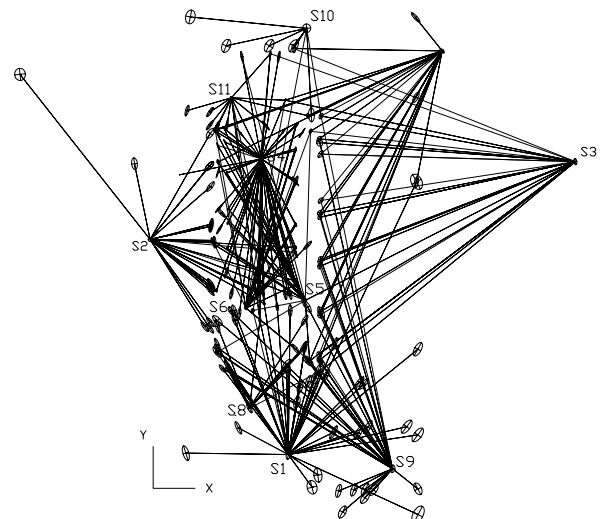


Figure 5. Layout of the tachymetric network



Figure 4. The plotting of a fragment of the copy in the Yalvaç museum

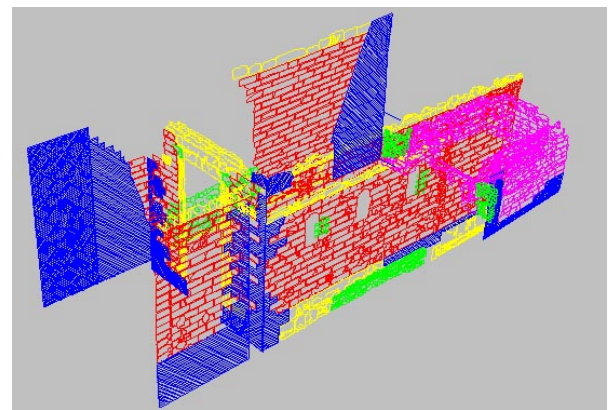


Figure 6. The 3d plotting of the exterior walls of the temple

3.2 – The tachymetric and photogrammetric survey of the temple

A complete survey of the whole complex both tachymetric and photogrammetric has been carried out in 2000. We used a technique capable to reduce volume and weight of the equipment, figures 4, (Fangi et al., 1999, 2002). The plotted photogrammetric stereomodels were 46. In figure 5 the plotting of the walls limited to the exterior side. The updated plan was then derived, the 3D line plotting of the walls, including the portal of the temple, has been carried out and a wire-frame model of the monument has already been set up, figures 5, 6, 7, 8 (Botteri et al. 2002 a, b).

The photomosaic of the walls has been added as texture to the plotted walls. This will allow a complete knowledge of the monument regarding the deterioration mapping in order to prepare the restoration of the inscriptions. The animated visualisation of the temple allows a better understanding for researchers and for the possible restoration project (Fangi et al 2002); the WRML interactive virtual tour displays a related GIS for the complete knowledge of the monument (Malinverni et al. 2002).

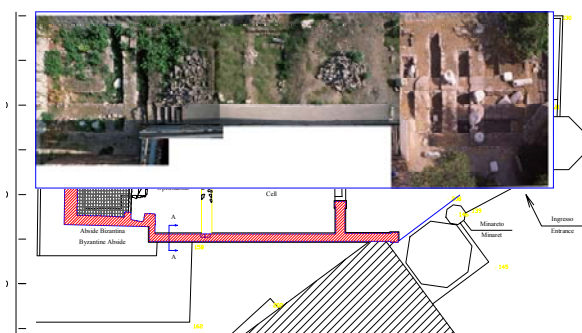


Figure 7. The plan of the temple

We studied and pointed out the static problems of the structure, i.e. the left lateral wall being out of vertical by more than half of the width of the wall.

A synthesis of this preliminary work and an autoptic survey have already yielded valuable results: a design for a vertical protective barrier to be placed close to the epigraphs and an overarching cover to channel away rain and snow, both in light-absorbent and temperature-insulating material. A design has also been drafted to restore the bottom wall of the cella and install a high girder to link its two longitudinal walls after repairing the hole in the northwest wall. Architect Sergio Pratali Maffei of the University of Trieste is now working out a project to cover the entire temple.

On the basis of the marble analysis conducted by Professor C. Gratzu of the Department of Earth Science at the University of Pisa, restorer B. Zanardi has drafted two possible working projects and a programme for the delicate preliminaries to the operational phase of the restoration of the engravings. Dr. Zanardi's proposals are part of the project documentation and will be published as soon as possible.

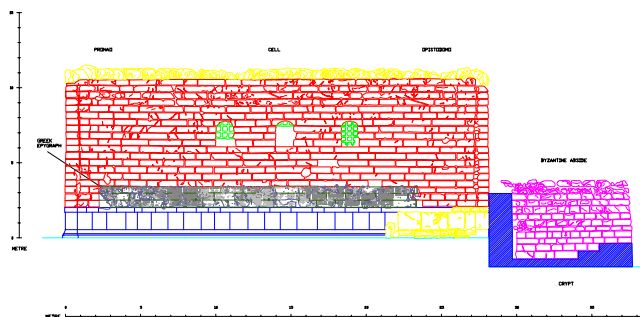


Figure 8. The outer side of the eastern wall with the inscription of the Greek text. Photogrammetric line plotting

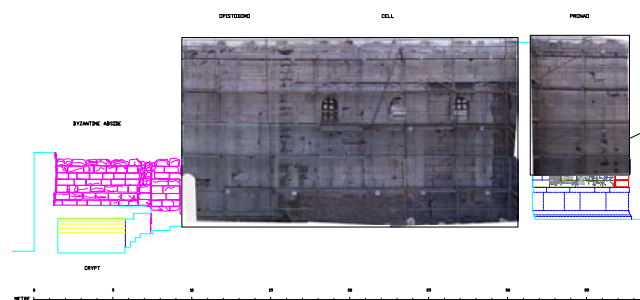


Figure 9. The interior side of the eastern wall with the rectified photomosaic

4. THE RESULTS

The overall results achieved so far may be summed up as follows:

1. Plans of the site as a whole.
2. Petrographic and mineralogical analysis.
3. Photogrammetric survey of the Latin and Greek epigraphs.
4. Tachometric and photogrammetric survey of the temple of Augustus.
4. Preliminary plans for external protection of the engraved surfaces.

5. Preliminary plans for the minimum intervention necessary to ensure the stability of the existing structures for the protection of all the building.

While the photogrammetric virtual reconstruction may now be considered a target of the Project Ancyra met, much still needs to be done to prepare the protection and consolidation work necessary to respond to prof. Akurgal's dramatic appeal "we must save the memory of Augustus in Ankara". The survival of this unique monument, which has been declared one of 100 most endangered sites by the World Monuments Watch, is the survival of the memory of the whole human history.

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