



Summary :

The so-called Round Building on the southwest slope of the mountain Panayır Dağ is considered to be a victory monument and has been dated to the mid-1st century BC. It is an impressive two-storey building, exhibiting an innovative architectural design.

Date

Mid-1st century BC

Geographical Location

Ephesus

1. Site - History of research

On the southwest slope of Panayır Dağ, far away from the center of [Ephesus](#) and the busy area of the [Embolos](#), stands an extraordinary structure, believed to be a 'victory monument'.

The so-called 'Round Monument' on Panayır Dağ (no. 34), as it is usually called today in literature, was discovered in 1897 by R. Heberdey. In the early 20th century, a detailed study of the monument's surviving architectural remains was published in the first volume of the Austrian Institute's excavation reports from Ephesus, accompanied by a reconstruction suggestion by G. Niemann.¹ In 1974 it was described in brief by W. Alzinger in his work on the architecture of the [Augustan](#) era at Ephesus,² while the morphological elements of the monument's architectural design have been examined by F. Rumscheld.³ Parts of its superstructure are today on display in the Ephesus Museum of Vienna.

2. Architectural description

The monument was solid – its interior featured no chamber, and it was built employing the [opus caementicium](#) technique with unworked stones, surrounded by an imposing two-storey architectural composition. It was arranged into four successive structural levels: 1. The square base, which was shaped like a *podium*; 2. The first storey with the cylindrical bathron, which supported [Doric order](#) [semicolumns](#); 3. The second storey with the [cella](#)-like round core and the [Ionic order](#) [peristasis](#); 4. The (Attic) parapet which supported a roof, probably of a conical shape.

More specifically, the building rested on a base with a square ground plan (2.05 m. in height, 7.84 m. in width), which comprised one step, three rows of convex stone blocks, and the euthenteria of the superstructure.⁴ The architectural form of the base of this building is reminiscent of the tall *podium* at [Memmius Monument](#).

The first storey of the superstructure comprised a cylindrical structure measuring 6.04 m. in height. This structure rested on a limestone circular base, whose cross-section formed a spiral (*torus*). Next followed a bathron made up of marble [orthostatai](#) (0.77 m. in height). At their upper and lower sides these orthostatai culminated in [cymae](#), which allowed a smooth transition to the overlying section. Between the two levels of the first storey⁵ a step intervened; this functioned simultaneously as a [toichobate](#) and a [stylobate](#). This supported a wall, made up of three layers of marble cornerstones.⁶ [Doric order](#) [semicolumns](#) measuring 2.65 m. in height (their total number remains uncertain)⁷ and arranged in regular intervals decorated the wall of the first storey. The [entablature](#) consisted of an [epistyle](#), a [frieze](#) with [metopes](#) and [triglyphs](#) and an [Ionic type cornice](#).⁸ The spouts of the [sima](#) had the shape of relief lions' heads, alternating with cornucopia horns.

A two-step [crepidoma](#)-like structure followed, which supported the [Ionic peristasis](#) of the second storey, whose columns did not correspond exactly to the [semicolumns](#) of the lower storey. The total height of the columns is estimated to 3.15 m. These rested on



unusual bases, differing radically from the Attic and Asia Minor type bases.⁹ Their capitals were also peculiar: on one side we have helices, over the echinus, which bore relief decoration, while on the main side the helices are replaced by floral patterns. Winding shoots and anthemias were arranged in place of the helices, while relief anthemias adorned the volutes.¹⁰ These are 'baroque' morphological elements revealing the influence of Roman aesthetics.¹¹

The entablature, with an S-shaped profile, comprised a three-fascia epistyle, an undecorated frieze and a cornice with corbels.¹² Floral patterns adorned the cornice and the sima.¹³ The roof of the peristasis was covered with coffers decorated with anthemias and geometric patterns.¹⁴ The outer wall of the cella-like core was made up of marble slabs, possibly in the pseudo-isodomic system of rectangular masonry. It is believed that the decoration of the wall's surface was completed by corbels. However, the position of the corbels -two of which have been discovered in situ- remains uncertain; nonetheless, in the pictorial reconstruction of the monument they are shown on the section of the outer wall of the 'cella', between the intercolumnal spaces.¹⁵

Over the Ionic entablature of the second storey stood a three-step base, with two circular steps and one polygonal, believed to have twelve sides. On this base rested a cylindrical (Attic) parapet, which was carefully framed, culminating in a fillet (taenia) below, while its crowning was accentuated with cymae.¹⁶ The reconstruction of the roof remains tentative, for we lack sufficient evidence about the monument's roofing. The excavators have supposed that the monument featured a stepped conical roof, whose apex supported a sculpture, probably a trophy or a statue.¹⁷

When describing the architecture of the Round Monument it becomes clear that this was a structure of unusual and innovative design. It preserves elements of the Hellenistic architectural tradition, while one can also discern certain Roman influences. More specifically, the masonry systems, the construction using stone blocks with clamps and dowels, and the decorative architectural elements, austere rendered, are based on the principles of Greek architecture; on the other hand, the flowing masonry of the structure's solid core, the absence of a stepped crepidoma at the monument's base and certain stylistic elements of the Doric and Ionic order capitals suggest the influx of Roman standards.¹⁸

Typologically, the monument belongs to the category of 'commemorative-honorary monuments', which were very popular during the Late Hellenistic and mainly in the Roman period.¹⁹

3. Dating and Interpretation

The Round Monument has been dated by the excavators to the second half of the 2nd century BC and has been identified as a dedication of the Ephesians following their victory at Cyme in 132 BC against Aristonicus, probably an illegitimate son of king Eumenes II and a contender to the throne of the Pergamum kingdom which was controlled by Rome.²⁰ Later it was suggested, albeit with some reservations, that this was a heroon dedicated to proconsul P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus (47/6-44 BC).²¹ W. Alzinger, however, considered this interpretation problematic, while he also left open the question of whether this monument was erected in the Classical era (Xenophon mentions the Ephesians built a monument to celebrate their victory over the Athenians in 409 BC) and was reconstructed in the Imperial period.²²

A dating to the mid-1st century BC appears more convincing, as it relies on typological and morphological elements of the edifice, especially on its similarities to the Memmius Monument and the Octagon, buildings at Ephesus that have been dated to the 1st century P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus BC.²³

1. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), pp. 145-



180.

2. Alzinger, W., *Augusteische Architektur in Ephesos* (Wien 1974), pp. 37-40.

3. Rumscheid, F., *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994), pp. 165-169.

4. According to W. Alzinger the first step formed the euthentaria; three courses of cornerstones followed. These bore a protruding unadorned crowning, which served in fact as the euthentaria of the superstructure, See Alzinger, W., *Augusteische Architektur in Ephesos*, (Wien 1974) p. 37.

5. By different levels of the first storey we mean the orthostata bathron and the round 'bathron' of the semicolumns.

6. The height of each block differed, ranging from 0.85 to 0.88 m. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), p. 146.

7. The pictorial representation of the monument's first level features 12 columns. Cf. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), p. 148, fig. 82.

8. For more details on the stylistic features of the Doric semicolumns and the entablature see F. Rumscheid, *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) pp. 165-166.

9. On the unusual shape of the bases of the Ionic columns see F. Rumscheid, *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) p. 166.

10. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), pp. 150-152, fig. 86, 87.

11. F. Rumscheid expresses a different opinion; he believes that they reflect earlier types of Asia Minor, cf. F. Rumscheid, *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) pp. 166-167.

12. Cf. Rumscheid, F., *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994), pp. 167-168.

13. For more details on the decoration of the sima see Rumscheid, *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) p. 168.

14. The horizontal surfaces of the coffered slabs rested over the epistyle, and in fact constituted the front of the entablature's frieze on the second storey. For more details on the coffers see Rumscheid, F. *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) pp. 167-168.

15. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), table V.

16. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), p. 153.

17. According to Fedak, I., *Monumental Tombs of the Hellenistic Age: A Study of Selected Tombs from the Pre-Classical to the Early Imperial Era* (Toronto 1990), the Round Monument was roofed with a dome.

18. Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), pp. 156-



167.

19. The Round Monument is examined under the category of honorary monuments, “Memorialbauten”, in handbooks and specialized studies of Hellenistic architecture. It is believed that this type draws inspiration from the monuments donated by benefactors of the Late Classical period. Cf. H. Lauter, *Die Architektur des Hellenismus* (Darmstadt 1986) pp. 207-212. H. von Hesberg, *Formen privater Repräsentation* (Wien 1994) (Arbeiten zur Archäologie) pp. 14-19.

20. The absence of an internal chamber means the structure cannot be interpreted as a place of worship or a funerary monument. Thus the excavators have identified the round building as a victory memorial which would have featured a trophy. For more details on this issue see Benndorf, O. – Heberdey, R. – Karabacek, J.v. – Kukula, R.C. – Niemann, G. – Schindler, W. – Winberg, W., *Städtegeschichte, Rundbau auf dem Panayır Dağ, Viersäulenmonument auf der Arkadiane, Bronzeathlet, Seldschukische Bauten, Artemision, antike Quellen* (FiE 1, Wien 1906), pp. 162-165.

21. Keil, J., *Ephesos, Ein Führer durch die Ruinenstätte und ihre Geschichte* (Wien 1964), pp. 115-116.

22. Alzinger, W., *Augusteische Architektur in Ephesos* (Wien 1974), p. 40.

23. On the dating of the monument to the mid-1st cent. BC on the basis of its stylistic features cf. also Rumscheld, F., *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994) pp. 165-168.

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	Alzinger W. , <i>Augusteische Architektur in Ephesos</i> , Wien 1974, SoschrÖAI 16
	Rumscheid F. , <i>Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus</i> , Mainz 1994
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	Hesberg H. von , <i>Formen privater Repräsentation</i> , Wien 1994, Arbeiten zur Archäologie

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	Ephesos- Gesamtplan http://homepage.univie.ac.at/elisabeth.trinkl/forum/forum0897/04plan.htm
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Glossary :

	anthemeion (Palmette) A floral decorative motif in the form of a palmette, very widespread in the Greek art and architecture.
	architrave or epistyle The lowest part of an entablature resting on the columns capitals and supporting the frieze.
	attic-ionic base Base of an Ionic column, consisting of an upper and lower torus, separated by a scotia and fillets



	capital
The uppermost part of a column or pillar crowning the shaft and supporting the entablature. The decoration of the capital characterizes the ancient Greek orders of architecture. In Doric order the capitals are decorated with abacus and echinus, in Ionic with spiral scrolls (volutes), while the Corinthian capitals are composed of small corner volutes and a basket-shaped body decorated with rows of acanthus leaves.	
	cella
Interior enclosed part - nucleus of a temple or other temple-shaped building.	
	coffer
Recessed ornamental square or octagonal panels sunk in the ceilings of buildings. They were decorated with relief or pictorial, usually floral, designs.	
	cornice
1. (Antiq. and Byz.) Member of the entablature or the architrave that projects in the elevation of a secular or religious building. As a horizontal member it may run along a wall. The cornice may also be the projecting part of the roof, protecting the building from rain. 2. (Byz. archit.) Decorative architectural element used to articulate the walls of a church, both on the inside and on the outside, by marking the division between the vertical wall and the spring of the vaults. It usually bears painted or sculptural decoration of vegetal or geometric motifs.	
	crepis / crepidoma
The solid mass of stepped masonry serving as the visible base of a building. The crepidoma usually consists of three steps. The top step from which the columns spring is called the stereobate.	
	cyma / cymation
Moulding decoration with ovals or tri-cusps alternating with lotus flowers. It was meant to separate or to lay stress upon two surfaces. In ancient architecture we distinguish Doric, Ionic and Lesbian cymation, according to their decoration and section form.	
	doric order, the
One of the three orders or organizational systems of Ancient Greek originated on the mainland and western Greece. It is characterized by short, faceted, heavy columns with plain, round capitals (tops) and no base. The capital consists of a necking which is of a simple form. The echinus is convex and the abacus is square. Above the capital is a square abacus connecting the capital to the entablature. The entablature is divided into two horizontal registers, the lower part of which is either smooth or divided by horizontal lines. The upper half is distinctive for the Doric order. The frieze of the Doric entablature is divided into triglyphs and metopes. A triglyph is a unit consisting of three vertical bands which are separated by grooves. Metopes are plain or carved reliefs. The Doric order comes without an individual base. They instead are placed directly on the stylobate. The capital consists of a necking which is of a simple form. The echinus is convex and the abacus is square. Above the capital is a square abacus connecting the capital to the entablature. The entablature is divided into two horizontal registers, the lower part of which is either smooth or divided by horizontal lines. The upper half is distinctive for the Doric order. The frieze of the Doric entablature is divided into triglyphs and metopes. A triglyph is a unit consisting of three vertical bands which are separated by grooves. Metopes are plain or carved reliefs. The Doric order comes without an individual base. They instead are placed directly on the stylobate.	
	echinus, the
The part of the Doric column, below the abacus, which resembles a sea-urchin and has a curvilinear shape.	
	entablature, the
The upper part of the classical order, that rests on the columns, it consists of the architrave, frieze and cornice.	
	frieze (1. architecture), (2. painting)
1. The part of the entablature resting on the architrave and below the cornice. In the Doric order the frieze is decorated with two alternative motives, namely the triglyph and metope, while in the Ionic order the frieze is a decoratively carved band. 2. Decorative horizontal band that sweeps parts of a vessel or the highest part of the walls in a room.	
	intercolumnnar space (or intercolumniation)
The space between two adjacent columns.	
	ionic order, the
An architectural order devised in Ionia and developed in Asia Minor and the Greek islands in the 6th century BC. Its columns have elaborately moulded bases, fluted shafts (with fillets, ending in fillets), and volute capitals. The entablature consists of an architrave, a continuous frieze, usually richly decorated with reliefs, and a cornice. The Ionic order was more elaborate in dimensions, comparing with the Doric.	
	metope (1. architecture, 2. painting)
1. Rectangular element separating the triglyphs on a Doric frieze. Metopes often have figurative relief representations. 2. rectangular area, usually at the height of the vessel's handles, depicting figural or non figural ornamental representations.	
	opus caementicium
Roman technique of constructing structures using concrete. It was spread in the east part of the Roman Empire after 50 BC.	
	orthostate



A course of blocks laid on edge, normally in the lower part of the wall of a building.

 [peristasis](#)

The collonade surrounding a building.

 [proconsul, -lis](#)

A quite high ranking official, vir spectabilis according to the rank of the senate, who was inequable only to the Domestikos of the Scholae and to the Magister Militum per Orientem. The proconsul usually served as a governor of the Imperial provinces (i.e. in Asia Minor the provinces of Asia and Cappadocia). The office was demoted from the 9th century onwards and the term was in use until the 12th century meaning a dignity.

 [pseudo-isodomic masonry](#)

Masonry built of blocks of the same height within each course , but each course varying in height.

 [semi-column, the](#)


Half column projecting out of the surface of a relief structure.

 [sima, sime](#)

Part of architectural sculpture made of marble or clay. Its bears a meticulous appearance and it has a decorative character crowning the entablature. Its section is semicircular and it was used to channel water.

 [stylobate](#)

The top step of the crepidoma (the stepped foundation of an ancient Greek building) from which the columns rise.

 [triglyph](#)

One of the vertical blocks separating the metopes in the Doric frieze.