



The Wonders of the Ancient World

The Temple of Artemis

What is the Temple of Artemis?

- The **Temple of Artemis**, also known less precisely as **Temple of Diana**, was a temple dedicated to Artemis completed in its most famous phase, around 550 BC at Ephesus (in present-day Turkey) under the Achaemenid dynasty of the Persian Empire. Nothing remains of the temple, which was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The Temple of Artemis was not the first on its site, where evidence of a sanctuary dates as early as the Bronze Age.



Location



- The Temple of Artemis was located near the ancient city of Ephesus, about 50 km south from the modern port city of İzmir, in Turkey. Today the site lies on the edge of the modern town of Selçuk.

- Synthesizing Artemis of Ephesus: an 18th-century engraving of a Roman marble copy of a Greek replica of a lost Geometric period *xoanon*.



- Artemis was a Greek goddess, the virginal huntress and twin of Apollo, who supplanted the Titan Selene as goddess of the Moon.



Cult and influence



- The Temple of Artemis was located at an economically robust region, drawing merchants and travellers from all over Asia Minor. The temple was influenced by many beliefs, and can be seen as a symbol of faith for many different peoples. The Ephesians worshiped Cybele, and incorporated many of their beliefs into the worship of Artemis. Artemisian Cybele became quite contrasted from her Roman counterpart, Diana. The cult of Artemis attracted thousands of worshipers from far-off lands.

Architecture and art



- *Most of the physical description and art within the Temple of Artemis comes from Pliny, though there are different accounts, and the actual size varies.*
- *Pliny describes the temple as 377 feet (115 meters) long and 180 feet (55 meters) wide, made almost entirely of marble, making its area about three times as large as the Parthenon. The temple's cella was enclosed in colonnades of 127 Ionic columns, each 18 meters (60 feet) in height.*
- *Pliny tells us that Scopas, who also worked on the Mausoleum of Mausollos, worked carved reliefs into the temple's columns. Athenagoras of Athens names Endoeus, a pupil of Daedalus, as the sculptor of the main statue of Artemis in Ephesus.*

Herostratus

- The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus was destroyed on July 21, 356 BCE in an act of arson committed by Herostratus. According to the story, his motivation was fame at any cost, thus the term herostratic fame.
- A man was found to plan the burning of the temple of Ephesian Diana so that through the destruction of this most beautiful building his name might be spread through the whole world. The Ephesians, outraged, announced that Herostratus' name never be recorded. Strabo later noted the name, which is how we know it today.





The ruins of the Temple



- The temple was restored in 323 BCE.
- This reconstruction was itself destroyed during a raid by the Goths in 262, in the time of emperor Gallienus. Respa, Veduc and Thuruar, leaders of the Goths, took ship and sailed across the strait of the Hellespont to Asia. There they laid waste many populous cities and set fire to the renowned temple of Diana at Ephesus. The Ephesians rebuilt the temple again. Over the course of the fourth century, perhaps the majority of Ephesians did convert to Christianity; all temples were declared closed by Theodosius I in 391.
- In 401, the temple was finally destroyed by a mob led by St. John Chrysostom, and the stones were used in construction of other buildings. Some of the columns in Hagia Sophia originally belonged to the temple of Artemis.

Rediscovery

- After sixty years of patient searching, the site of the temple was rediscovered in 1869 by an expedition sponsored by the British Museum led by John Turtle Wood; excavations continued until 1879. A few further fragments of sculpture were found during the 1904-06 excavations directed by D.G. Hogarth. The recovered sculptured fragments of the fourth-century rebuilding and a few from the earlier temple, which had been used in the rubble fill for the rebuilding, were assembled and displayed in the "Ephesus Room" of the British Museum.
- Today the site of the temple which lies