

Ephesus

Ephesus (Turkish: Efes) was an Ionian Greek city in ancient Anatolia, founded by colonists from Athens in the 10th century BC. The city was located in Ionia, where the Cayster River (Küçük Menderes) flows into the Aegean Sea, and was part of the Panionian League. Today's archaeological site lies 3 km south of the Selçuk district of İzmir Province, Turkey. The ruins of Ephesus are favorite international and local tourist attractions, partly owing to their easy accessibility from Adnan Menderes Airport and via the port of Kuşadası. Scholars believe that Ephesus was founded on the Hittite settlement of Apasa (or Abasa), a Bronze Age-city noted in 14th century BC Hittite sources as the capital of the kingdom of Arzawa. The city of Ephesus itself was founded as an Attic-Ionian colony in the 10th century BC. The mythical founder of the city was Androklos, a prince of Athens, though later Greek historians such as Pausanias and Strabo reassigned the city's mythological foundation to the Amazons. Androklos was said to have maintained friendly relations with the native Carian and Lelegian inhabitants of the land. The Greek goddess Artemis and the great Anatolian goddess Kybele were identified together as Artemis of Ephesus. The many-breasted "Lady of Ephesus", identified with Artemis, was venerated in the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the World and the largest building of the ancient world according to Pausanias. The Temple of Artemis: In Greek mythology, Artemis was the daughter of Zeus and Leto and the twin sister of Apollo. She was usually depicted as the maiden goddess of the hunt, bearing a bow and arrows. Later she became associated with the moon, as her brother was with the sun. She was one of the most widely venerated of the gods and manifestly one of the oldest deities (Burkert 1985:149). In later times she was associated and considered synonymous with the Roman goddess Diana. In Etruscan mythology, she took the form of Artume. Deer and cypress are sacred to her. Young Athenian girls between the ages of five and ten were sent to the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron to serve the Goddess for one year. During this time the girls were known as arkttoi, or little she-bears. Pergamon or Pergamum (modern day Bergama in Turkey) was an ancient Greek city, in Mysia, north-western Anatolia, 16 miles from the Aegean Sea, located on a promontory on the north side of the river Caicus (modern day Bakırçay), that became an important kingdom during the Hellenistic period, under the Attalid dynasty, 282–129 BC. The Attalid kingdom was the rump state left after the collapse of the Lysimachian Empire. Three kilometers south of the Acropolis was the Sanctuary of Asclepius (also known as the Asclepeion), the god of healing. In this place people with health problems could bathe in the water of the sacred spring, and in the patients' dreams Asklepios would appear in a vision to tell them how to cure their illness. Archeology has found lots of gifts and dedications that people would make afterwards, such as small terracotta body parts, no doubt representing what had been healed. Notable extant structures in the Asclepeion include the Roman theater, the North Stoa, the South Stoa, the Temple of Asclepius, a circular treatment center (sometimes known as the Temple of Telesphorus), a healing spring, an underground passageway, a library, the Via Tecta (or the Sacred Way, which is a colonnaded street leading to the sanctuary) and a propylon. In ancient Greece, an asclepeion (or asklepieion) was a healing temple, sacred to the god Asclepius. Starting about 300 BC, the cult of Asclepius became increasingly popular. Pilgrims flocked to asclepieia to be healed. They slept overnight and reported their dreams to a priest the following day. He prescribed a cure, often a visit to the baths or a gymnasium. Since snakes were sacred to Asclepius, they were often used in healing rituals. Non-poisonous snakes were left to crawl on the floor in dormitories where the sick and injured slept. Pausanias remarked that, at the asclepieion of Titane in Sikyonia (founded by Alexanor, Asclepius' grandson), statues of Hygieia were covered by women's hair and pieces of Babylonian clothes. According to inscriptions, the same sacrifices were offered at Paros. Hippocrates is said to have received his medical training at an Asclepeion on the isle of Kos. Prior to becoming the personal physician to the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius, Galen treated and studied at the famed asclepieion at Pergamon. The oldest known asclepieion was at Trikke (now known as Trikala) in Thessaly. The asclepion at Epidaurus, traditionally regarded as the birthplace of Asclepius, is both extensive and well preserved. There is an asclepion located on the south slopes of the Acropolis of Athens which dates to around 420 BC. Acropolis literally means the edge of a town or a high city. For purposes of defense, early settlers naturally chose elevated ground, frequently a hill with precipitous sides, and these early citadels became in many parts of the world the nuclei of large cities which grew up on the surrounding lower ground. The word "Acropolis", though Greek in origin and associated primarily with Greek cities (Athens, Argos, Thebes, and Corinth with its Acrocorinth), may be applied generically to all such citadels (Rome, Jerusalem, Celtic Bratislava, many in Asia Minor, or even Castle Hill at Edinburgh).