

Arnd Hennemeyer, **Das Atheneheiligtum von Priene. Die Nebenbauten – Altar, Halle und Propylon – und die bauliche Entwicklung des Heiligtums.**

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Since the late nineteenth century German archaeologists have been at the forefront in the investigations of important sites in the area now covered by modern Turkey. One important site, Priene near Miletos, was investigated in the years before and around 1900 with an excavation lasting for five years after some preliminary work by British travellers, and their results were promptly published in 1904. The work was carried out after the best standards of the period, although the publication in just one volume hardly did full justice to the importance of the site. Nevertheless it has ensured that in later years constant attention was given to the town, which had been founded in the mid-fourth century B.C. and is an unusually well-preserved, complete and intact urban complex established in the Late Classical period and living on until the end of antiquity; ever since the publication of 1904 it has been a main feature in any discussion, even quite superficial, of ancient urbanism. Two of its buildings appear in every manual of ancient architecture: the temple of Athena, which according to Vitruvius was planned by the renowned architect Pytheos in the fourth century and was considered a model for all later developments of Ionic temple architecture, and the theatre which has served as a key example of important developments in Hellenistic theatre architecture.

It can hardly be a surprise that the early publication was not at the level of modern standards, and the treatment particularly of the sanctuary and temple of Athena was not felt as satisfactory. For that reason the German Institut at Istanbul has been working again at Priene since the nineteen-sixties, and the results are presented now in a new series dedicated to the site, included in the series Archäologische Forschungen from the German Archaeological Institute. After a first volume dedicated to the figural terracottas from Priene, published in 2006, we now have the second volume, discussed here, which gives us the results of the reconsideration of the secondary buildings and the general development of the sanctuary of Athena. A thoroughly updated study of the temple is expected in a further volume by the scholar who since the nineteen-sixties has been in charge of that part of the program, Wolf Koenigs.

In addition to the 1904 publication, which is frequently referred to but not treated as a sacred text, the author had to deal with a tangled lot of earlier work. The British expeditions of the nineteenth century saw some monuments in a better state of preservation than is possible now, and their documentation, which to a large extent consists of photos, is for that reason often useful; it is skillfully used, and important parts of it

are reproduced in the tables. Some material from the buildings was then brought to the British Museum, and has been studied there.

The reconstruction of the altar, with its delicate column architecture and an ambitious relief decoration on the exterior, has been discussed repeatedly since 1904, and the text on the altar provides a full account of that discussion. The author rather closely follows the conclusions of the American scholar Joseph Coleman Carter who in 1983 studied and published the fragments of the reliefs, and also discussed the architecture of the monument. A new research on the reliefs would have been superfluous here, but Carter's architectural conclusions are accepted with minor corrections.

General interest for the other buildings – the long southern hall with the terrace and its retaining wall in front, and the propylon east of the altar – has been rather modest, and they did not receive much attention in the 1904 publication either. But the author had at his disposal the preliminary documentation from an unpublished project concerning these buildings (including the altar), carried out from 1977 until his death in 1991 by the former director of the German institute at Istanbul, Wolfgang Müller-Wiener. In addition to a stock of descriptions, drawings and other illustrations of building material, he left a manuscript with preliminary suggestions concerning reconstructions, dates and chronological phases. The author could use this material as a point of departure for his own work, has apparently found most of these proposals reliable and useful and publishes them for the first time, always with adequate care to make their origin clear. It is evident everywhere that with his own work at the site he has by far outstripped the results reached by Müller-Wiener. Much of the catalogue of building blocks and the accompanying apparatus of architectural drawings of selected building blocks is clearly to be understood as a continuation and completion of the material left by Müller-Wiener, in many cases with only small adjustments. The author's more recent field-work, including a precise topographical surveying (eliminating errors up to one meter of previous mappings) and descriptive analyses of the buildings and the sanctuary, was carried out through several seasons. The author has also made a few limited excavations at particular points where it seemed that more precise evidence concerning problems of date or reconstruction could be obtained in that way. A short account of these soundings is provided towards the end of the volume, and the results obtained from them are duly considered in the relevant texts.

The bulk of the text is almost equally divided between the three principal secondary buildings of the sanctuary: the altar, the terrace with the hall to the south, and the propylon in the east. Of these three buildings only the altar has been the object of extensive, previous discussion. It is one of the principal examples in the group of Ionic altars decorated with columns and sculptures and with monumental preten-

sion. The author, as already mentioned, has here with minor adjustments accepted the results of earlier research by Carter and Müller-Wiener; thus there is no lengthy discussion of the earlier proposals of a colonnade based on a high podium, in the manner of the Pergamon altar, beyond a few lines in the review of earlier research. That the decoration of the exterior used half-columns rather than full columns is one result of Müller-Wiener's preliminary work which the author can now confirm with additional material evidence. That the tongues of the screen wall in the west were longer than previously assumed, with two intercolumniations rather than just one, limiting the width of the stair between them, is one new result which is entirely the author's own; it more clearly defines the monument as a »Hofaltar«, an altar court encircled by a four-sided wall.

The precise presentation and discussion of building material which can be ascribed to the architecture ensures that the reconstruction which is now presented is probably as close as we can ever expect to reach a precise reconstruction of the monument. Some problems have to be left open, such as the precise height of the half-columns and certain details in the entablature, but such a nicety as the very limited change of plan and metrological system during the construction was discovered and is convincingly explained.

Much attention is devoted to the connections with the temple, which go far beyond the repetition of six per eleven columns in the columnar decoration. But the altar is clearly later than the main building, and the author follows Carter's date in the late third or early second century; it has been controversial, but is now supported with additional arguments. An earlier altar must then be supposed to have existed in the same position, but it has left no trace. As architects of the building both Pytheos and Hermogenes are considered, but only as »hypothetische Zuweisungen« and as mutually exclusive alternatives. Actually, both may be possible; it stands to reason that Pytheos could have left a plan not only for those parts of the temple which he did not manage to build, but also for the altar as an essential part of the complex, and that it could only have been executed more than a century later by an architect (possibly, but rather more hypothetically, Hermogenes) who updated it with contemporary formal details, such as the Attic bases under the columns. Such a possibility might have been considered.

The altar is a small jewel of Hellenistic Ionic architecture, but the next building in the publication (and in the chronological sequence), the hall to the south and the terrace with the retaining wall in front of it, is an ordinary and not particularly refined structure. Nevertheless, it occupies even slightly more space in the text than the altar, which is logical since it has left a good deal of not previously studied building material and since so little research has been done on it before.

While previous scholars (including Müller-Wiener) have seen it as a unitary structure, built at one single

occasion, it has now – also thanks to some of the small excavations – been possible to demonstrate that there are three chronological phases in the retaining wall and two in the hall, which can be connected with various expansions and additions to the area of the sanctuary. The dates are convincingly established as the late second and early first century B. C. The preserved material is sufficient to allow a complete reconstruction of almost all important parts of the building, and it is presented and discussed with a wealth of details. Anyway, it is slightly disturbing that nowhere I could find information in meters and centimetres about the reconstructed total length of the hall in its two phases, only for the terrace wall (p. 57); the lengths of the terrace walls and the halls do not coincide exactly.

The hall turns its rear wall toward the temple and opens to the south and the city below the terrace wall, and this is not normal. Probably it was applied here to follow the model of other late Hellenistic sanctuaries built in similar slopes (Kos and Lindos, the Roman sanctuary for Fortuna at Palestrina could also have been mentioned in that context); but the result was not altogether lucky, since the stoa is at the same level as the temple and partially covers rather than emphasizes it, and it hinders some of the views from north-south streets to the front colonnades of the temple which were an unusual and interesting feature of the original plan for the sanctuary. For those reasons it does not seem likely that these elements were parts of the original plan; they reveal a desire to establish the view from the south as equally impressive as the more fundamental east-west axis, in competition with it. The colonnade then could not turn inwards to the sanctuary in the normal way; having only its rear wall in view from the south, above the terrace, would not have been an acceptable solution.

On the whole, the building is more interesting for the way it changes the visual relations between the sanctuary and the city below than for the details of its construction. The problem of its practical function within the sanctuary is only briefly treated and is hardly accessible to analysis; probably it was not very clearly defined, as is so often the case with stoas. More could perhaps be made out of the strongly limited access from the sanctuary to the building, through only one not very large opening in the centre of the rear wall. The hall is long and spacious, but it may not have been equally accessible as an all-round service building for the visitors to the sanctuary as the stoas framing open squares, including sanctuaries, normally are.

Formal comparisons are made only with two earlier stoas at Priene itself, one at the agora and one near the stadium; they are approximately contemporaneous and closely related, but their individual differences are for that reason illuminating for the space that was allowed to the architects for variations over a generally applied basic conception. Since the epistyle of the elevation is well documented, and the column height

could be established within fairly narrow limits, an interesting comparison can be made with Vitruvius and his rules for the construction of a stoa; it is convincingly demonstrated, with drawings, that even such a pedestrian building as the stoa at Priene has been conceived with a far more refined and complicated proportional system than the plain and rigid, raster-based lay-out recommended by the Roman architect.

The last item in the series of secondary buildings is the propylon in the eastern end of the sanctuary, which provided the temenos with a monumental entrance from the east at a moment when the sacred space had extended all the way up to an important north-south road – an extension marked also by the final addition to the southern hall and to the terrace in front of it, bringing them up to the same line. The propylon is aligned not with the axis of temple and altar, but with an important east-west street which leads toward the sanctuary; in this way a refined general view of the entire complex was created for those who approached the sanctuary from that direction. It can be appreciated on the drawing plate 144.

Just like the hall the propylon was built in two phases, respectively in the transition from the Hellenistic to the Augustan period or at a not easily defined moment in the Roman imperial times, second century A. D. or later. There are also vague indications of a still earlier building or building project, perhaps contemporary with the extension of the hall. That there had been two phases in the building was observed by Müller-Wiener, but their precise definition was obtained by the author, and their dates were established by an extremely thorough formal analysis of the Corinthian anta capitals from the east front and a couple of useful soundings nearby. The eastern front with the entrance from the road, with Corinthian columns, was built in the first phase, but the project was abandoned before the western front could be built, and the Ionic capitals prepared for that front were probably left at the site and used later when that front was put up in the second phase; but also that phase, which essentially consisted of an extension of the building further into the sanctuary, may not have been completely finished.

This more than usually complicated building process has been untangled thanks to a painstaking analysis of the remaining architecture (for which some of the documentation from the earlier nineteenth century had provided essential information), carried out with all the intellectual tools at the author's disposal. But the principal interest of the building lies in its position and its function as an architecturally explicit transition between the grid net of the streets and the lay-out of the sanctuary, giving emphasis to that east-west axis which continued the direction of the road, touched the south side of the altar, and crossed the temple in the southern pteron. This axis, different from the principal central axis through temple and altar, seems to have been a backbone of Pytheos' original plan for the connection between the sanctuary and the grid net

of the city, and its importance was re-emphasized perhaps as a reaction to the introduction of a second monumental axis from the south with the southern stoa and terrace.

These are reflections which can be made now, thanks to the author's thorough work not only with the various building projects after the initial establishment of the sanctuary with the temple in the fourth century, but also with the successive additions to the sacred area. These results are presented in a fairly short final section, where the dates of the secondary buildings and their various phases are connected with extensions in different directions of the temenos; several pages are devoted to tracing how the borders of the sanctuary developed in the four directions, through time. The results remain somewhat vague toward the west, but otherwise they are precise and convincing. There are also interesting analyses of the geometrical principles and urbanistic intentions behind the various developments, where also the visual function of the temple within the general context of the sanctuary as well as the town can be seen changing through the centuries.

Thanks to the meticulous analysis of ornamental details in the decoration of the temple, it now has been known for some time that only the naos was constructed in Pytheos' own time; the peristasis was added at different occasions during the following centuries, but closely respecting Pytheos' original plan. This development will certainly be discussed in the volume devoted to the temple, but it can be followed in the plans and CAAD-reconstructions of the sanctuary included in this volume. It will probably be easier then to compare more precisely the phases of the temple with the development of the sanctuary. It should also be possible to discuss how far those developments respected or disregarded the plans that Pytheos may have had not just for the temple, but for the entire temenos which was founded anew at a site where no sanctuary had existed before and which was chosen because of its qualities in the urban structure. The author's analysis in this volume goes only some way to face these questions, perhaps they will also be treated in the volume dedicated to the temple.

There is not much to criticize in this publication, it is a pleasure to state that it fully meets those high expectations that German publications of ancient architecture have to face and very rarely disappoint. The volume is based on a doctoral dissertation and was written by a fairly young scholar, who clearly wanted to pull as much information out of his allotted material as possible. He has done so successfully, although readers perhaps will find some of his long-winded descriptions and analytical comparisons somewhat big mouthfuls. But the language is always precise and professional, and the final part of each section normally provides an account of the principal results. A condensed presentation of the entire work on two pages is also included at the end of the text (also in a Turkish version).

Typographical or editorial blemishes are very few, but do exist; the reference to plate 146 on page 179 is obviously wrong. Almost half the volume is occupied by illustrations, where drawings clearly (and wisely) are given priority over photographs.

The illustrations include some taken from earlier publications and from the nineteenth-century investigations, where they provide relevant information, and some of comparative material found elsewhere. Reconstructional drawings of the buildings and details of them in various phases are plentiful and useful, and are supported by instructive CAAD-reconstructions. There are also excellent general plans and CAAD-reconstructions of the sanctuary in the different stages of development, which usefully demonstrate how the building complex developed and expanded along with the progress of the temple's peristasis; but for the relation between the temenos and the town a general plan of the latter in addition to the plan plate 169 of the sanctuary with its immediate surroundings could have been useful, and I do not quite see the necessity to produce the plan of the sanctuary in its final phase twice (plates 3 and 158).

The author Arnd Hennemeyer as well as the publisher and the German Archaeological Institute are to be warmly congratulated on this first-class publication. With this book and the expected volume on the temple, the sanctuary of Athena at Priene will be published to a level one might desire for many other Greek sanctuaries. It leaves space to further discussion and analysis, which is no disadvantage, but any future debate will have to build on the wealth of factual information which is the real strength of the book. It is an obvious need for any research library with an interest in ancient Asia Minor, and a worthy addition to the long tradition of German archaeological work in that area. Hopefully more such publications from other parts of this rich and exciting site can be expected in the future.

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