The
SEVEN
WONDERS
of the
ANCIENT
WORLD

Peter A. Clayton
and
Martin J. Price

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THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS AT EPHESOS

BLUMA L. TRELL

In AD 1780, Edward Gibbon mournfully recorded the destruction in AD 262 of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus by the Ostrogoths. His eloquent description of the monument, sight unseen, is among the most elegant ever written:

The arts of Greece and the wealth of Asia had conspired to erect that sacred and magnificent structure. . . . Successive empires, the Persian, the Macedonian and the Roman revered its sanctity and enriched its splendour.

Gibbon depended on the stories, historical and mythological, written by the Greeks and Romans, which he knew very well. He also knew about the celebrated Wonders of the World. He was born, however, a century too early to know the wonders of archaeology. Even with his educated intuition, he did not anticipate that the temple which he believed was gone forever would some day be found.

No historian, historiographer or psychologist has ever been able to explain satisfactorily why it never occurred to anyone before the nineteenth century to dig beneath the earth to find a lost monument (Figure 39). The very first venture of this kind in the Hellenic world took place in the watery plain near the mouth of the Cayster river in Ephesus. In the 1860s, for seven years, a compatriot of Gibbon’s, John Turtle Wood, dug in the alluvial mud until he came upon a foundation block of a column of a temple (Figure 40). Wood’s pioneering work preceded the discovery of Troy in 1870 by Schliemann. Wood was followed almost continuously by other archaeologists. Now, approximately one hundred years later, Anton Bammer of the Austrian Archaeological Institute is still bringing forth wonders from the bowels of the sacred earth of the goddess Artemis, the Diana of the Ephesians.

It was the magnificent architecture of the great sanctuary of Artemis that won it a place in the canon of the Seven Wonders. ‘Graecae magnificae’ are the words used by Pliny the Elder to describe the temple and he was no less an historian than Gibbon. The Greek temple has been characterised as the house of the soul, different from the Egyptian temple, which was the house of the god, and the cathedral, the house of the people. The temple of Artemis could be described as an expression of Greek Ionic soul, but mixed in large measure with Near Eastern oriental spirit.

The Artemesium was more than a simple, over-sized, rectangular edifice surrounded on all sides by a colonnade (Figure 41). It was a vast gleaming marble building in a great courtyard open to the skies to be viewed from afar. For the view of the façade it was necessary to retreat as far back as the altar court, otherwise the decorated pediment could not be seen because it was so high up.
The altar court itself, decorated with columns and statues, was positioned at a distance and directly in the line of view of the centre of the façade. The small sacrificial altar within the altar court was, however, set asymmetrical. The priest involved in a ceremonial ritual could see the high places of the temple but he was obliged to turn away to attend to the small sacrificial altar (Figure 42). This arrangement is reminiscent of the Near East where temples were sometimes entered from the side, not front portals, or inner sacred rooms were approached by oblique passageways.

Access to the high terrace of the temple was by means of marble steps built around the whole building like a giant frame with reeding mouldings or embrasures laid flat on the ground. The high platform was approximately 78.5m (255ft) wide and 131 m (425ft) long. Pliny tells us that the columns were 20m (60ft) high, slender and beautifully fluted. Their elaborate bases consisted of mouldings like rings of marble supporting sculptured reliefs that 'ran around' the bottom drums, an architectural delight almost but not entirely without precedent in the ancient world. Exquisite Ionic capitals with their expertly and gracefully carved circular sides (volutis) protected the columns and supported the marble horizontal beam above (entablature). There were no figures on the frieze but huge dentils made up the very top moulding, supporting the triangular space above. In the pediment were three prominent openings or windows; the one in the centre was furnished with doors. Framing the centre door were the statues of two Amazons, with two more in the eaves. Antefixes decorated the roof.

Perhaps more dramatic than the view of the façade with its 'storied' drums was the sight that greeted the visitor as he entered between the central columns. Here, in front of the porch, was a 'forest of columns' resting on sculptured rectangular bases. These were matched by another 'forest' in the rear porch of the temple. Pliny counts 127 columns in all. In order to 'fit' this large number onto the ground plan, the modern archaeologist was obliged to propose nine columns for the rear façade. The cela or house of the goddess stood in the near centre of the edifice, backed and fronted by the two porches of columns. We have no proof that the cult statue of Artemis Ephesia dominated the sacred room, as did the statues of Athena at Athens or that of Zeus in the sanctuary at Olympia. We may speculate, however, that the cult
found in the sanctuary indicating that the food eaten there was hot off the altars. Artemis came to the rescue of Croesus, the last Lydian king who had helped to build the monumental temple (D) in her honour: a Sibyl intervened with Cyrus the Great, the conquering Persian king, at the very moment in 546 BC when he was sacrificing Croesus on a pyre.

The goddess herself failed to intervene when disaster threatened her sanctuary. The Croesus building (D) was burnt to the ground by a man named Herostratus who thereby hoped to make his name immortal. This weird character ironically made a contribution to world history: ‘Herostratan’ became a synonym for the word ‘infamous’. For Plutarch, writing in the second century AD, Herostratus provided an opportunity to make a good story better. The goddess, wrote Plutarch, was too busy taking care of the birth of Alexander the Great which occurred on the very night of the fire (21 July 356) to send help to her threatened temple.

Alexander the Great was only twenty-two when he came as victor to Ephesus. He knew that only a few years before a statue of his father Philip II had been set up in the newly restored temple of Artemis (called E by the archaeologists). He also knew that Croesus’ name in Greek and Lydian had been inscribed on the decorated columns of the earlier temple (D). He would certainly have known that contributions to a building entitled the donor to an honorific plaque. He tried to ingratiate himself with the Ephesians, supplying a sacrifice and procession for a festival in honour of Artemis. But when he offered to pay for the completion of the temple on condition that his name be inscribed on the building, a diplomatic and discreet citizen suggested to him that it was not fitting for one god to make gifts to another.

The law of asylum of the temple of Artemis added to its fame and to its treasury. Like many ancient temples it served a dual capacity in being a banking as well as a religious institution. Of all the suppliants who sought sanctuary at the temple, the most fascinating were the legendary Amazons. Their request for asylum must have been granted since they gained the reputation, amongst others, as founders of the temple and their statues were set up within the pediment (Figure 43). The generally accepted historical founder of the first monumental marble temple (D) was Croesus, the Lydian king. During an armed struggle between him and a nephew, the Ephesians tied a rope from the endangered Acropolis to one of the columns of the temple and thus provided asylum to
the entire city. Later in the sixth century a brutal tyrant, Pythagoras, unable to capture a young woman, kept her imprisoned in the temple, where she had fled for sanctuary. Unfortunately, she hanged herself in desperation. The Persian king Xerxes, after he was defeated by the Greeks, sent his children to the temple of Artemis. There they were guarded by one of the most colourful women in Greek history, Queen Artemisia, who took part as an admiral in the sea battle against the Greeks.

Alexander the Great showed his well-known intemperate character by following the rules of sanctuary in one case, politely asking the chief priest for a fugitive slave, and breaking the rules when he had two suppliants removed by force to face death by stoning. In one of the tragedies of the Egyptian Ptolemies, Ptolemy Physcon, half-brother of Ptolemy Euergetes, fled in 259 BC with his consort Eirene to the asylum of the temple, where they were both murdered. In another tragedy, Marc Antony forced the chief priest to bring out of the temple the sister of Cleopatra, Arsinoe. He then murdered her, thus assuring Cleopatra (and himself) the throne of Egypt.

The temple of Artemis also attracted philosophers, poets and artists. The sixth-century BC philosopher Heraclitus compelled himself to take up sacred residence in the sanctuary to escape, it is said, not men but mankind. Chersiphron, the troubled architect of the early temple (D) mentioned above, had the help not only of the goddess but also of his architect son, Metagenes, and that of a third architect, Theodoros, who, we can assume, had already experienced similar structural problems at nearby Samos. Praxiteles, the famous sculptor, fashioned statues for the altar of the Croesus temple (D) and the later Scopas decorated the column bases of the late classical building (E).

Of all the contests held by the Greeks, in athletics, poetry, plays, music, the contest in sculptural art in the fifth century BC was in many respects unique. Sculptors were invited to exhibit their bronze statues of Amazons. Four statues judged the best (they were by the sculptors Pheidias, Polycleitus, Kresilas and Phidias) were chosen to decorate temple D. This artistic event was held to celebrate the Peace of Callias in 450 BC as well as the

43 (Opposite)  A typical Roman copy of the classical statues of the Amazons which decorated the pediment of the temple of Artemis. This example is possibly after an original by Polycleitus. (Capitoline Museum, Rome)
completion of the Croesus temple. No better symbol than the Amazons could have been chosen to celebrate a conflict between east and west. Amazons were not an army of fighting women with one breast. They symbolised some Eastern peoples, perhaps the belligerent priestesses of Ma, an oriental mother-goddess of east Anatolia, or an invading army of Hittites, or some other peripheral tribes of the east. Represented on the temple in the fifth century BC (Figure 43), they symbolised the Persians who came from the east and seized the temple after defeating the Lydians.

In the first century AD St Paul came from Corinth to Ephesus, a rich and flourishing city. Ancient writers describe the oriental luxury, the golden pillars, the paintings by artists in the temple, yet ancient critics describe the city as full of bordellos, singers, actors, playboys and whores. The well-known confrontation between Paul and the crowd goaded by Demetrius the silversmith took place not in the temple but in the theatre. When St Paul spoke against the silver idols, the crowd made its hostile feelings known by shouting ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians’ (Acts 19: 24–34). That St Paul was shocked by the vulgarity of Artemis’ cult image can certainly be assumed. A vivid description of the cult image comes from another saintly man (or men?), John, who also visited Ephesus in the first century AD. John is reported to have had more success with the crowd than Paul, but the truth is the Ephesians did not forsake Artemis until the end of the fourth century AD. As John walked about the city he saw a painted statue of Artemis with gilded lips and a veil over her face. He also visited the theatre during the festival of the goddess where the sacrificial smoke was so thick that it veiled the sun. He had a good view of the procession with the priests blowing horns as it moved to the temple.

British archaeologists discovered an inscription, to be dated after the visits of the saints, which provides a splendid portrayal of a procession in honour of Artemis. A benefactor, C. Vibiuius Salutaris, provided for a procession in a festival in honour of Artemis’ birthday. It seems as though the whole city of Ephesus took part, administrators, magistrates, priests and priestesses of the temple, musicians, dancers, young people, some carrying instruments for the sacrifice, others leading animals to the sacrifice, some people on horseback and, most important, others carrying statues of the goddess. The main purpose of the procession was to carry the cult image of the goddess out of the temple in order that she might attend the performance in the theatre, consisting mainly of games and then, on the return, to watch the sacrifices in the sanctuary. Artemis Ephesia was epiphanes, a divinity who ‘appeared’ in order that her worshippers could behold and revere her. She might take a place in a sacred window or be transported in a processional vehicle, a kind of chariot. This ritualistic appearance of the goddess is an Oriental convention centuries-old in Anatolia, Syria, Mesopotamia and Egypt. High in the gable of the temple Artemis had a large opening at which she could be seen by the worshippers below. Such a ‘window of appearance’ came from the temples of Phrygia, an empire which lost its power when it lost its last king, Midas (c. 700 BC), but the influence of its religious ritual was handed down from generation to generation.

The Phrygians also worshipped a goddess who made a ritual appearance, Cybele, the great mother-goddess. She emerged from the stone mountainsides; sometimes, although she had no visible form, she was present in the stone itself. At other times she was represented as a stone pillar protected by her lions or in human form between her animals. A niche framing her carved in the natural rock virtually made a window of appearance. Two such windows are actually carved in a temple pediment in the rock, each window enclosing a celestial symbol. Artemis Ephesia had almost the same attributes as the mother-goddess of Phrygia, Kybele. In fact, Artemis was named Kubaba (Cybele) in several Anatolian dialects. The frequent use in the Greek of megale—great—, with her name suggests she was magne mater, the great mother-goddess, and in this the great goddess of Ephesos differs from the huntress goddess of purely Greek mythology. Her origins lie in the east, not in Greece itself.

The peculiar many-breasted statue of Artemis Ephesia represents a mother goddess, the breasts symbolising the fertility of woman (Figure 44). The statue is rigid, the lower portion like an Egyptian mummy case. The decorative elements, stags, bulls, lions, griffins, sphinxes, sirens and bees, are creatures originally of the east. Scholarly curiosity has produced strange questions: are the breasts really breasts? Or are they palm-dates, acorns, eggplant, ostrich-eggs, scrotum of bull, bags to hold amulets or other decorations? The correct answer, if it were possible to arrive at one, does not help to solve a more important problem. There is no doubt that the polymaste Artemis was the cult image from
stories have come down about early cult images in the form of a branch, a tree or a stone fallen from the heavens. Xenophon said
he saw a golden xoanon figure in the temple, a primitive statue
similar in form to the figures found in the excavations. The
archaic figurines of the Foundation Deposit show a delightful
mélange of Oriental features, Lydian, Persian, Phrygian, Hittite,
Assyrian, Egyptian. Some believe they represent the early cult
image. Others see priestesses in some of the figurines. One of
these which until recently was considered a priest is now
identified as a priestess, so great is the problem.

A clue to the identity of the early figurines comes from the
inscription of Salutaris. Some of the statues which this generous
citizen ordered to be set up in the sanctuary were not the many-
breasted image; they were representations of Artemis as the
Huntress goddess with the bow and as goddess of the underworld
with a torch. We know for certain that the cult image was not
changed in the second century AD: the coins of the Roman
Imperial period clearly display the many-breasted Artemis. The
statues ordered by Salutaris did not (nor were they intended to)
represent the cult image of the sanctuary, as some have assumed.
They represent different aspects of the deity more agreeable to the
changing population of the Graeco-Roman period than that of the
Oriental goddess. Like these Roman statues, the archaic figurines
showed different aspects of the goddess in the sixth century BC.
The goddess with spindle and with falcon, for example, comes
close to Kubaba (Cybele) the Hittite-Phrygian-Syrian maga mater.
The connection with Phrygia is underlined by two Phrygian
fibulae (pins) that were found in the area of the Croesus temple.

Even more important for the identity of the cult image in the
early period is the fact that the late classical temple (E) is similar in
design and other details to the Croesus building (D). Why did the
Ephesians decide to retain the appearance of the lost temple and
even preserve some drums from its broken columns below the
raised platform of the new building? In Athens, the defeated
Greeks buried the statues and buildings that were damaged by the
Persians so that they were completely hidden, and built an entirely
new complex of sacred buildings above. In Rome, after an
earthquake destroyed the great temple of the Capitol (Figure 83),
a law required that the new temple of Jupiter be an exact copy of
the one that had been damaged. Today it has become the practice
to preserve as a visible memorial some part of the destruction, as

44 Statue of the goddess Artemis, a Roman copy of the cult statue worshipped in
the temple of Ephesus. Artemis displayed her nature as a great mother-goddess in
the elaborate decorations added to her rigid form. (Museo Nazionale, Naples)

about the third century BC until the temple was destroyed by the
Goths in the third century AD. The question is: what was the cult
image before that time?

In the so-called Foundation Deposit (c. 600 BC) of the earliest
level in the excavation area were found primitive-looking, rigidly-
formed statuettes made of gold, wood, ivory or clay. Legendary
at Coventry and Hiroshima. The Ephesians obviously took great care to imitate the earlier temple. It is difficult to accept the theory that they introduced an absolutely new type of cult image. Such a change seems more impious than altering the style of architecture.

Until better evidence is available, it is more reasonable to assume that there was no change of image in the fourth century. The investigation of the sanctuary is still going on today. It is believed that in the seventh and early part of the sixth centuries the sanctuary consisted of an altar-like structure at the west end which was changed several times (called A-B-C) and of two other monuments, the Hecatompedon, a hundred-foot structure, and the Ramp altar, at the east end. All of these were covered by the construction of the D temple by 550 BC and of an altar-court by 500 BC, the latter being an elaboration of the earlier Ramp altar. The sacred area with its altar-like structures open to the skies was similar to early cult-places of the Oriental world, particularly Semitic shrines. Here, often, there were no cult images because the altars were considered the dwelling place of the divinity, and thus the focus itself of worship. That may have been the situation in the earliest period at Ephesos.

Because the early shrines at the east end of the sanctuary faced cast and those of the west end faced north, some believe that more than one cult was celebrated in the sanctuary, even as many as eight deities. It is more reasonable to assume only two, the related cults of Artemis and Cybele, who later by syncretism became one goddess with a dual nature, Artemis. It is a common phenomenon in the Near East that Graeco-Roman gods imposed themselves on the Oriental. At Baalbek, for example, the Jupiter who occupied the main temple was a Roman version of the native Semitic god, Hadad, just as he was of the Greek god. In Alexandria, in one and the same temple, there was a deity with a dual nature, Sarapis/Zeus Helios. It is no coincidence that the Baalbek Jupiter had a cult image and temple similar in some respects to the cult image and temple at Ephesos.

It would be misleading to ignore the great difference of opinion that exists among scholars, not only about the cult image and the archaic figures but also about dates, ground plans and elevations of the sanctuary. Bammer charmingly suggests the need for a firmly dated inscription. Given the difficulties of digging in metres of mud, and the disappearance of portions of the temple into churches and mosques at Ephesos and even into buildings in

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45. Coins of Ephesos struck in Roman times showing the statue of Artemis and her temple. Centre: a bronze coin of Maximinus (AD 235–238). Note the detail of the pediment with its four sculpted figures of Amazons framing three windows. Below: silver cistophoric tetradrachms minted in the reigns of Claudius (AD 41–54) and Hadrian (AD 117–138). Both show the statue of Artemis which is also known from Hellenistic copies. The central window of the pediment seen on the coin of Claudius played a part in the ritual performed at the sanctuary (see Figure 42). Part of an ancient window frame was discovered in an early Christian building at Ephesos.

Constantinople (Istanbul), it is no wonder that more problems have been raised and remain unsolved since the discovery of the remains of the famous temple than existed before.

It is surprising how belatedly the best evidence for the appearance of the façade of the temple was recognised. The great temple (E) appears on coins that were minted in Ephesos at the very time when the sacred building was standing, intact and in use during the first three centuries AD (Figure 45). The evaluation of the evidence was made by such architectural historians as Bernard Ashmoole, Karl Lehmann, Hugh Plommer, William Dinsmoor and
Charles Picard. In one of the few instances where the coins were considered before the twentieth century, only one coin was used in the reconstruction of the temple. Not realising that the coin, which shows only four columns on the façade, was an abbreviation of the correct number, eight, shown on other coins, the eighteenth-century artist produced what looked like a church with a four-columned porch (Figure 46). Even today, the convention of abbreviation, well-known and acceptable in all other forms of art, seems to trouble some scholars.

It is not only the abbreviation that puzzled them but also what seemed to be arbitrary differences on the coins that represented the same building. A full appreciation of the die-makers’ art makes it clear that the monument must be considerably abbreviated to be accommodated on a miniature coin-picture. It is also inevitable that different die-makers representing the same building would choose different details of the monuments to emphasise.

Fortunately, no one has questioned the importance of the coins discovered in the so-called ‘foundation deposit’. They play an important part in another of the temple’s problems – the date of

**46** Reconstruction of the late classical temple of Artemis with a line-drawing of a coin in an engraving by Johann Fischer von Ehrich, 1721. The porch of four columns is based on a misunderstanding of the coin types

**47** Sculptured column drum from the late classical temple of Artemis at Ephesus. Contemporary coins establish that such decorated drums formed the lower course of the columns of the façade and were not set on great rectangular pedestals as suggested by some early writers. (British Museum)

the very earliest building on the site. In the foundation of the Croesus building (D) were found 87 of the earliest coins known, many in the foundation deposit itself. There are still questions about the actual date of the deposit, but it must certainly fall no earlier than 625 and possibly as late as 575 BC. It is clear that there can have been no great temple on the site prior to that built under Croesus.

The architectural coins show that sculptured drums decorated the bottom of the façade columns (Figure 45). We are fortunate to have the evidence of Pliny who reports that 36 of the columns were decorated with sculpture (called columnae caelatae), a most
unusual feature for a Greek temple. The excavations produced round sculptured drums (Figure 47) and rectangular sculptured bases belonging to both great temples, D and E, but Pliny did not indicate where the sculpted pieces were positioned. A surprising suggestion was made recently that the sculptured drums were not at the bottom but at the top of the columns, as decoration of the 'neck' immediately below the capitals. As supporting evidence was cited a decorated drum recently found in the excavation of the temple of Apollo Smintheus at Alexandria Troas. In that case a very small section of a fluted column was found attached to the underside of the drum; this would indicate that the drum was positioned above, not below the column. But the coins of Alexandria Troas, like those of Ephesus, show the drums at the base of the columns. It must also be pointed out that there is no evidence as to when the fluted column fragment was attached to the drum; it may have happened long after the temple was in ruins. It is hard to believe that the architect, Chersiphron, who worried about the weight on the columns, would have added to the pressure by placing the heavy drums above. Some believe that the pediment was pierced by three openings in order to relieve the weight on the columns. The convention of placing decorated bases below the columns (found earlier amongst the Hittites), is paralleled by a later use at Ephesus in the sixth century AD when similar decorated drums were placed at the bottom of the columns of the Arcadiane.

The outflange of the steps of the platform seen on the coins can be interpreted as indicating the presence of columns on all four sides. Evidence was discovered for a colonnade with a double row of columns on the sides. To accommodate the 127 columns described by Pliny, rows of columns were proposed in addition to the colonnade, in the porches and inner halls, front and back. The correct number of columns and the position of all of them is questioned, but there is no doubt that the Artemision was the second earliest example in the ancient Hellenic world (preceded only by the temple of Samos), of the use of what is described as a forest of columns. There can be no doubt that the forest of columns was inspired by the great temples of Egypt which Chersiphron, who came from Crete, could have easily known and brought to Ephesus in the sixth century BC.

The Ionic capitals found in the excavations are shown on the coins. These are also eastern in origin, a development from the earlier type, the Protoeolic, examples of which have been found in Israel. An early ivory disk, recently discovered in Ephesus, is decorated with palmette-volutes, one of the acknowledged steps in the historical development from Aeolic capitals to Ionic. Because of other finds, fragments of decorated reliefs, etc., a continuous figured frieze has been suggested for the D temple and a frieze that includes lion-head spouts for the E temple. Some of the coins picture cornices with conspicuous dental mouldings, a convention legitimised by rock-cut monuments near Ephesus. Other coins show a moulding like a string of beads on the architrave which may represent the frieze suggested for the D temple. Some of the decorated reliefs may have belonged to the altar court. Later famous altar courts were certainly modelled after the Ephesus monument, such as the Zeus altar at Pergamus and the Ara Pacis at Rome, and they were also decorated with sculptured relief.

The coins indicate that the temple was roofed and had a decorated pediment (Figure 45). Vitruvius wrote that un-roofed temples (hypaethral) were constructed with ten columns front and back. By his definition, the Artemision, which had eight columns on the main façade and, apparently, nine at the back, was not hypaethral, yet some scholars propose that the temple was open to the rains; a drain drawing off water was found in the cela area. On the other hand, the discovery of clay roof tiles and water spouts implies that the temple was roofed. Another solution for the roof was offered for temple E: a truncated roof covering only the surrounding colonnade, slightly pitched and ending in gables or pediments; in other words, with a centre section open to the sky. A wooden roof was suggested for the Croesus temple (D). Some scholars could not conceive of a conflagration powerful enough to burn so much marble without sufficient timber. They even suggested the wooden roof was decorated with hanging fabrics. It is obvious that they did not consider Pliny's mention of a wooden stairway that led to the roof, thus providing an ideal passage for the fire to flare up through the building. Others could not conceive of the conflagration under any circumstances: no man could commit such a crime! The story of Herostratus' destruction of the temple in 356 BC, it was theorised, was an aetiological and romantic fabrication for a real, violent conflict with neighbouring Carians who could have easily destroyed the temple in a fire. The object of many ancient wars was to destroy the enemy's main
edifice (a modern example of this is the firing of the White House in Washington in 1812). The trouble with this theory is that there is no evidence of a Carian invasion. More important, the Carians were ruled at that time by Maussollos whose affection for and admiration of the Greeks would make such an attack as inconceivable as the crime of Herostratus.

That the temple had pediments pierced by openings or windows is confirmed by the coins, by a fragment of the tympanum found in the ruins and a section of a window frame found in the church of St John. The windows pictured on the coins of Ephesos are exactly like those on the coins of Magnesia where there is even more archaeological evidence for the convention. The goddess of Magnesia was also epiphanes, like Artemis Ephesia. For many centuries numismatic publications described the windows as tables or altars; one amazingly perspicacious numismatist of the sixteenth century guessed right and drew them as windows.

Two examples of the Ephesos coin series show a female figure making a ritualistic appearance in the central window of the pediment. In one, the figure looks like Artemis Ephesia, in the other, the figure is more like that of a priestess. There is a very similar priestess who stands before a small shrine of Ephesian Artemis on the scene wall of the Roman theatre of Hierapolis, a city not far from Ephesos. A drawing offered by Bammer demonstrates the ritualistic use of the temple window vis-à-vis the altar court which had unusually high columns and an atypical entrance, as if the altar had little relationship with the temple. At Baalbek, the window of appearance must have served a similar ceremony. The tall altar – it was more like an independent shrine – blocked the view of the façade of the temple from most places in the courtyard.

The window-pediment, Oriental in origin, continued throughout the Christian period right up to the present. A thirteenth-century French manuscript shows St John destroying the temple and the statue of Artemis (Figure 48). The temple has been metamorphosed into a medieval Christian building but the windows still remain. In Romanesque Spain, on the west entrance of the church of St Vincent in Avila, there is an amazing miniature of an authentic classical temple with columns and with three windows in the pediment. Echoes of Ephesos are found in the bull-headed Persian capitals in the middle of the entrance, a type of capital that was found in the excavations of several buildings at Ephesos and at Greek colonies in Spain. A famous legend says that a copy of the cult image of Artemis and of her temple was brought to Marseilles and from there to sister temples in Greek colonies in Spain. It hardly seems realistic to assume that the echoes from ancient Ephesos could directly persist until the twelfth century AD in Spain. However, there is a fascinating historical link between Spain and Ephesos in the medieval period. As early as the eleventh century, Crusaders from Spain travelled to the Near East and, in the thirteenth century, a Spanish group called the Catalan Grand Company actually ruled in Ephesos. Through these pilgrims the architectural conventions of Ephesos and of the famed temple of Artemis could have come to Spain, via manuscript illuminations or woven into oriental textiles.

The unique evidence that four female statues decorated the pediment is found on the coins. The manner in which they frame the windows is in the Oriental tradition of some beautiful monuments carved in the natural rock of ancient Turkey. It is no coincidence that the figures are four in number and female.
prize-winning statues destined for the temple were four in number and represented the female fighting Amazons. Here, however, they are shown in their role as suppliants seeking sanctuary within the temple. Their presence on the coins of the Imperial Roman period which represent temple E confirms the fact that E was made in the image of D. It was on the D-temple that the statues were placed in 450 BC.

One detail of the reconstruction, the gorgon head, is to be accepted on circumstantial evidence. The gorgon appears in the early temple of Corfu. It occupies exactly the same place as on the temple coins on an early relief from Locris, Italy. Gorgon heads are mentioned as among the precious pieces taken from the temple area which Justinian sent to Constantinople (Istanbul) in the sixth century AD. At this time, the temple of Artemis was no longer extant. After the Goths destroyed it in AD 262 some rebuilding was undertaken at the end of the third century but the use of the building was hardly tolerated in the fourth century. In AD 401 it was completely destroyed by St John Chrysostom. Legend has it that people still worshipped at stones taken from the sacred area. The very earliest, most sacred, image was said to be a stone fallen from the heavens, probably a meteor. Worshiping stones was not strange. Many of the sister goddesses of Artemis Ephesia looked quite like stones. Artemis of Perga, for example, as shown on the coins of that city, is no more than a slab of stone with a head. Besides stones, thanks to the image of Ephesos on the coins, the pagan could continue to worship at his temple in their hands right up to the advent of Christianity.

In the centuries that followed, Ephesos had its ups and downs, nothing more down than the temple under the mud of ages. By the seventeenth century Ephesos was a deserted, poverty-stricken, squallid village, but the temple of Artemis was not completely lost to humankind. The many-breasted statue of Artemis Ephesia of Naples and similar statues have survived to this day. They served as models for Raphael’s paintings in the Vatican in the sixteenth century and for Tiepoldo’s paintings in the eighteenth century. A sculptured copy made for the Villa d’Este at Tivoli in the sixteenth century was still there at the time of the Second World War. The architectural elevation of the temple of Ephesos, reconstructed on the basis of the coins and published after the Second World War, served as a model for the contemporary painter, Salvador Dali. He made an exact facsimile of the elevation and added some dancing devotees of the goddess Artemis (Figure 49).

Shakespeare has preserved the memory of Ephesos for all ages since neither the poet nor the temple of Artemis, in Horace’s immortal prediction, can ever entirely die. The Comedy of Errors was admittedly a copy of Plautus’ play but instead of using the Latin poet’s Greek town of Epidamnus, Shakespeare, poet that he was, made his rich, sophisticated, metropolitan characters entangle and disentangle themselves in the city of Ephesos. Why did he make this change? Because he knew that Ephesos was one of the richest banking centres of the ancient world, with a magnificent temple that was truly one of the Wonders of the World.