

Anemurium Excavations

What eventually turned into a full-scale excavation at Anemurium began with some general surveys of Roman cemeteries, a project initiated by Elisabeth Alföldi-Rosenbaum in 1962. The first season was undertaken between 2 and 26 September 1962, at the Cilician sites of Adrassus (Balabolu) and Anemurium (Eski Anamur). The cemetery at Adrassus was found to be well-preserved, featuring rock-cut tombs and free-standing limestone sarcophagi. 110 groups of tombs were surveyed, many were photographed, and a plan of the necropolis was made. Two or three buildings, likely churches, were found but not explored. At Anemurium they found mostly built tombs and a building complex. Some of the halls in the building featured well-preserved floor mosaics, though there were very few inscriptions at the site. Approximately 300 tombs were photographed or drawn, and added to the plan.

In 1963 work continued at the same sites, as well as at sites along the coast to the west of Anamur. At Adrassus and Anemurium the team created topographical maps of the sites, studying Anemurium's city buildings in more detail this time. They also visited the following sites in Antalya Province: Antiochia-ad-Cragum (Güney), Selinus (Gazipaşa), Iotape (Aytap), and Syedra (near Alanya). They found many middle-Byzantine remains at these sites, and created sketch plans of the sites as well as plans of some tombs.

In 1964 work continued during August and September. This year, special emphasis was given to the cities surrounding the cemeteries. At Anemurium, Antiochia-ad-Cragum, Selinus and Iotape, topographical maps were created or completed, and buildings and tombs of significance were recorded and photographed. At Selinus, a building complex (Biçkeci Kalesi) assumed to hold both a monastery and a church was surveyed, and a small Byzantine church with adjoining baths was explored. East of Anemurium, another site with tombs and roof mosaics was investigated.

Beginning on 16 August 1965, the team worked together to wrap up the survey and restoration work at Anemurium. They added all possible major monuments to the city plan and completed cleaning and restoration work on the baths and one of the tombs. Between 20 and 25 September the survey work on sites in the Gazipaşa area (Antiochia ad Cragum, Selinus, Iotape, lower town of Syedra) was also completed, with details added to maps and plans prepared of building previously omitted. Four more churches or chapels were found and recorded in Selinus. It was realised that much was left to discover about Anemurium, and that for their purposes survey work was insufficient and excavation would need to be undertaken.

Excavation began in the summer of 1966. They focused first on constructing a wall to protect the site, then on completing the restoration of Tomb II 14 (begun in 1965), clearing a bath building, and excavating some rooms of a complex that seemed to be a bath building.

In 1967 excavation work continued in July and early August, with Leonard Smith (from the University of Fredericton) directing on Alföldi-Rosenbaum's behalf.

The project moved out from under the auspices of the BIAA after 1967, and switched from Alföldi-Rosenbaum's direction to that of James Russell, of the University of British Columbia, in 1971.