



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

The assembled palace of Samosata: object vibrancy in 1st C. BCE Commagene

Kruijer, L.W.

Citation

Kruijer, L. W. (2022, May 24). *The assembled palace of Samosata: object vibrancy in 1st C. BCE Commagene*.

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from:

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

The Assembled Palace of Samosata.
Object Vibrancy in 1st c. BCE Commagene.

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof. dr. Ir. H. Bijl,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op 24 mei 2022
klokke 13:45 uur
door Lennart Wouter Kruijer
geboren te Amstelveen
in 1989

Promotiecommissie:

Promotor: Prof. dr. M.J. Versluys

Co-promotor: Prof. dr. M. Blömer

Overige leden: Prof. dr. J. Kolen (voorzitter)
Prof. dr. D. R. Fontijn (secretaris)
Prof. dr. E. Winter (Westfälische Wilhelms Universiteit Münster)
Dr. M. Pitts (University of Exeter)
Dr. M. Hoo (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg)

This PhD research was conducted within the framework of the NWO-funded VICI project '*Innovating Objects. The Impact of global connections and the formation of the Roman Empire (ca. 200-30 BC)*', directed by prof. dr. M.J. Versluys.

Foreword

I write this foreword sitting at a the balcony of my apartment of the Netherlands Institute in Turkey (NIT), looking out over the Bosphorus, where large cargo ships, on their way to the Black Sea or Mediterranean, are steered cautiously through the narrow waters. Not unlike these cargo ships, I have navigated this dissertation through a five year trajectory of sometimes dangerously shallow waters and treacherous shores. Like the helmsman who, still shaking, realizes he made it through, I now look back with sweaty hands and a combined sense of relief and disbelief about the fact that the manuscript is finally finished. This would not have been possible without a large amount of ‘crew members’ that assisted me throughout the years, and that I wish to express my gratitude to here.

First and foremost, my thanks go out to prof. dr. Miguel John Versluys, without whose critical guidance, creative force and unceasing enthusiasm this dissertation would not have existed. One could simply not wish for a kinder and more trusting *Doktervater*. The many inspiring conversations we had during our walks through Amsterdam, Leiden, Rome, Alexandria and Commagene I remember with great fondness and I look forward to the collaborations that lie ahead. My second supervisor, prof. dr. Michael Blömer, has also been of crucial importance to this PhD, providing many detailed and critical comments on the manuscript. I cannot thank him enough for his great generosity in sharing his profound knowledge of the archaeology of ancient Northern-Syria and I am excited to continue working together with him on the excavations of Doliche.

The ‘Innovating Objects’ VICI project within which this thesis emerged brought me in close contact with a range of wonderful colleagues and an eclectic mix of continental traditions from which I learned a lot. First of all, I am grateful to dr. Stefan Riedel, with whom I have spent long, warm days in the depot of the Archaeological Museum of Adiyaman, and whose archaeological expertise and kind heart I feel fortunate to have been accompanied by. Eleni Fragaki and Cécile Harlaut, who made up the ‘French-Alexandrian’ branch of our project, have been invaluable in their generous support and informed opinions throughout the years. I thank my dear colleague and friend dr. Rebecca Henzel for our joyful collaborations as well at the many stimulating conversations in the Van Steenis office. Her ‘predecessor’, dr. Sander Müskens, was of crucial help in the starting-up process of this PhD research; I am very grateful for his assistance.

The Commagene-branch of the VICI project relied entirely on its cooperation with the *Forschungsstelle Asia Minor* (Westfälische Wilhelms Universität Münster), to which I am greatly indebted. Prof. dr. Engelbert Winter has been crucial in setting up the framework of this dissertation and I have benefitted tremendously from his help, both in Münster and Doliche.

Furthermore, I cannot express enough my gratitude to Dilek Çobanoğlu, who has been indispensable in acquiring the permissions in Ankara and Adıyaman, and for teaching me a lot about Turkey in the meantime. Special thanks go out to prof. dr. Aliye Öztan and prof. dr. Tayfun Yıldırım for permitting Stefan and me to study and publish the documentation of Nimet Özgüç's Samsat excavations. I would furthermore like to express my profound gratefulness to the director of the archaeological Museum in Adıyaman, Mehmet Alkan, whose unceasing support, hospitality and friendly assistance have been of invaluable importance. I also thank the friendly staff of the museum for their important help and their patience with my very limited Turkish. A special word of thanks goes out to Muzaffer Özçiris, my good friend, who has been a crucial anchor and guide during all my activities in Adıyaman.

Before thanking the rest of the Doliche team, I would like to especially express my gratitude to dr. Werner Oenbrink, who has assisted me tremendously with critical remarks and suggestions for the descriptions and discussions of the pieces of architectural decoration presented in chapter 5 of this dissertation. The fantastic *kazı ekibi* furthermore consists of Uli, Eda, Sophie, Fynn, Eva, Katharina, Laura, Veronika, Julia, Birgül, Katinka, Constanze, Margherita, Gönülner, Gamze, Günay, and my *arkadazzo* Torben. Without exaggeration, I can say that standing in the sunlit trenches of Keber Tepe, eating *Antep Fıstık* while excavating *Ausbruchgruben*, and working together with this team has been one of the greatest gifts that this dissertation gave me. The fantastic Turkish team of excavators from nearby villages has taught me much, and I thank them from the bottom of my heart for their hospitality and mildness.

At the Faculty of Archaeology of Leiden University, I have been incredibly fortunate to have shared an office with my dear friend and colleague Suzan van de Velde, with whom I shared the struggles, insecurities, frustrations and, also, joys of PhD life; I am very grateful for the many laughs, drinks and conversations that we had over the years and look forward to those that are still to come! I would furthermore like to thank my dear Leiden colleagues dr. Marike van Aerde, dr. Aris Politopoulos, dr. Mark Locicero and Riia Timonen for the many stimulating conversations and delightful distractions. A special word of thanks goes out to Josephine Say, whose kind assistance has been of invaluable importance through the years.

During my PhD, I had the great pleasure of visiting the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology (Brown University) for a short-term visiting scholarship in March 2018. I want to thank prof. dr. Peter van Dommelen, prof. dr. Yannis Hamilakis and dr. Felipe Rojas for their stimulating input and their hospitality in welcoming me to their inspiring research environment. I received a generous Byvanck Grant and an OIKOS travel grant, which enabled me to go to Turkey and the USA; for both, I am very grateful. Lastly, I was granted a fellowship at the Netherlands Institute in Turkey in November 2021; I wish to thank dr. Fokke Gerritsen for his hospitality and generous

support. My journey in Mediterranean archaeology started at the University of Amsterdam, where prof. dr. Marijke Gnade, dr. Gert-Jan van Wijngaarden, and Jitte Waagen were important and inspiring teachers. The Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome greatly supported me throughout my studies and thereafter; I wish to express my thanks to prof. dr. Gert-Jan Burgers, dr. Jeremia Pelgrom and dr. Arthur Weststeijn for their advice and support.

I wish to thank my paranympths dr. Eva Mol and Rogier Kalkers, who have been guiding lights in terms of my archaeological and academic 'path' but who, moreover, have been incredibly loyal and reliable friends ever since those mythical days in the sweaty trenches of Satricum. Other friends have been crucial in the process of writing this dissertation, either by their critical and sympathetic ear, their moral support, their musical distraction or their creative inspiration: Tim, Tijm, Laurien, Marleen, Elmar, Merijn, Maria, Suus, Bastiaan, Bart, Niels, Anastasia, Boudewijn, Wouter, Julia, Kate and Eva. I lack the space here to thank them all individually; I hope they will forgive me for this and know that I treasure their friendships and value their support immensely.

I want to thank my girlfriend Fotini for her sweet patience, help and all the joyful moments of distraction; finishing this dissertation would not have been possible without her being close by. This dissertation furthermore owes very much to the warmest, most stable and loving family one could wish for. I thank my sweet and wise late grandmother Jo, to whom I dedicate this dissertation, my auntie Joke, whose creativity and artistry continue to be an inspiration, and my brother, Thomas, who is not only an intellectual exemplar but also my final confidante. Finally, of course, my parents, Arda van Eikeren and Bert Kruijer: I would need another dissertation to express all the ways in which your unconditional love and care, your knowledge and wisdom, and your passionate and curious natures are at the very root of this dissertation.

To Jo van Eikeren, in loving memory

*'Never think the earth void or dead –
It's a hare, awake with shut eyes:
It's a sauce-pan, simmering with broth –
One clear look, you'll see it's in ferment.'*

Jalal al-Din (Rumi)

'Where are we to put these hybrids? Are they human? Human because they are our work. Are they natural? Natural because they are not our doing. Are they local or global? Both.'

Latour 1993, 50

'People are no longer the driving forces of history; instead they are one element of a set of relationships of swirling materials and forces that come together in the world, and allow for certain kinds of action and not others. Archaeological sites are excavated not just to understand the people who lived there but to look at the materials that were transformed there as historical actors in their own right.'

Cipolla and Harris 2017,
148.

Table of Contents.

Introduction.....	13
Chapter 1. Research history and archaeology of Samosata and Commagene.....	21
1.1 Introduction.....	21
1.2 Geographical Setting.....	22
1.2.1 Geology and climate.....	22
1.2.2 Land use.....	25
1.2.3 Urban connections and routes	26
1.2.4 Site topography.....	29
1.3 Research history.....	31
1.4 The Özgüç campaigns (1978-1989): history, methodology and publications.....	37
1.5 The history and archaeology of Samosata; a brief overview.....	41
1.6 Introduction to the history and archaeology of the kingdom of Commagene (ca. 2 nd c. BCE – 1 st c. CE).....	47
Chapter 2. State of Research. New approaches to ‘Hellenism in the East’ in Commagenean scholarship.....	55
2.1 Introduction.....	55
2.2 Making sense of culture styles and perceived hybridity in acculturative approaches.....	55
2.3 Understanding the Antiochan program in the context of 1 st c. BCE dynastic self-representation of ‘client kings’ in the Near East.....	60
2.4 Towards a globalizing perspective: universalized culture styles in a local context of dynastic ideology construction and strategies of cultural bricolage.....	63
2.5 ‘Doing Greek’ in the palace of Samosata? The limits of Hellenism.....	67
Chapter 3. Towards vibrant objects. Theory and methodology.....	71
3.1 Introduction.....	71
3.2 New Materialism, assemblage thinking and its application in archaeology and the study of the ancient world.....	72
3.2.1 New Materialism.....	73
3.2.2. The application of Assemblage Theory in archaeology.....	79
3.2.3 From ‘power over’ to ‘power to’: New Materialist archaeology and its ethical implications.....	82
3.3 The Assembled Palace. Towards a post-anthropocentric and post-representational understanding of Hellenistic courts and their vibrant elements.....	84
3.3.1 Material vibrancy.....	87
3.3.2 Sensorial vibrancy.....	88
3.3.3 Vibrancy through radical alterity.....	90
3.3.4 Vibrancy through glocal relations.....	90
3.4 Methodology: vibrant objects and glocal genealogies.....	93
3.4.1 Vibrant objects.....	93
3.4.2 Glocal genealogies.....	95
Chapter 4. Archaeological description and discussion.....	97
4.1 Introduction.....	97
4.2 Description of archaeological features in sector i-n/13-19.....	99
4.2.1 Walls.....	99
4.2.2 Floors.....	155
4.2.3 Installations.....	170
4.3 Discussion.....	177
4.3.1 The palatial lay-out.....	177
4.3.2 Height differences.....	184
4.3.3 Staircases and multiple floors.....	185
4.3.4 Roofing.....	186
4.3.5 Evidence for later additions and reparations.....	191
4.3.6 Identification as the Commagenean royal palace.....	193
4.3.7 Chronology.....	195

Chapter 5. Fragments of architectural decoration from Samosata (2nd c. BCE-1st c. CE)	201
5.1 Introduction	201
5.2 Corinthian Capitals	202
5.2.1 Corinthian Order I	202
5.2.2 Corinthian Order II	212
5.2.3 Corinthian capitals (miscellaneous)	216
5.3 Ionic Capitals	219
5.4 Door lintels	222
5.5 Column bases	226
5.6 Column drums	228
5.7 Entablature fragments	232
5.8 Small decorative fragments	244
Chapter 6. Hellenistic and early Roman sculpture from Samosata (2nd c. BCE-1st c. CE)	249
6.1 Introduction	249
6.2 Portraits	250
6.3 Statue fragments	270
6.4 Figurative reliefs	285
6.5 Stelai pertaining to the Antiochan ruler cult	290
6.6 The sculptural evidence for Hellenistic and early Roman Samosata in its Commagenean context	302
Chapter 7. Transforming <i>Objects</i>capes of Samosata (4th c. BCE - 1st c. CE)	307
7.1 Introduction: four vibrant objectscares of Samosata	307
7.2 Objectscape 1 (4 th -2 nd c. BCE; pre-palatia)	308
7.2.1 The 'torus-base structure' in sector d-g/15-17, layer VI	309
7.2.2 The 'altar structure' in sector f-g/17, layer VI	315
7.2.3 'Curved step structure' in sector k /16, layer VI	321
7.2.4 Pottery finds in sector u/9-10, layer VII	322
7.2.5 Analysis	324
7.3 Objectscape 2 (early 1 st c. BCE; early palatia)	329
7.3.1 Architecture	329
7.3.2 Mosaics	330
7.3.3 Architectural decoration	335
7.3.4 Wall painting	337
7.3.5 Ceramics	344
7.3.6 Analysis	349
7.4 Objectscape 3 (mid-late 1 st c. BCE; later-palatia)	355
7.4.1 Architecture	356
7.4.2 Mosaics	357
7.4.3 Architectural decoration	357
7.4.4 Wall painting	358
7.4.5 Sculpture	362
7.4.6 Ceramics	363
7.4.7 Analysis	365
7.5 Objectscape 4 (1 st c. CE; post-palatia)	370
7.5.1 The structure in <i>opus reticulatum</i> in sector m-r/14-15	370
7.5.2 The citadel wall in <i>opus reticulatum</i> in sector g-h/2-3	372
7.5.3 The city walls and Urfa Gate in <i>opus reticulatum</i> in the Lower Town	373
7.5.4 The structure in <i>opus reticulatum</i> in the Lower Town	375
7.5.5 Ceramics	377
7.5.6 Analysis	383
7.6 From objectscares to glocal genealogies	386
Chapter 8. Case study 1: The glocal genealogy of the satyr-like mosaic mask	389
8.0 Introduction	389
8.1 Description and discussion	390
8.1.1 Description	390
8.1.2 Identification and connotation of the mask mosaic: a discussion	395

8.1.2.1 Identification.....	395
8.1.2.2 Three reductions: the mask mosaic as a representation of Greekness, theatre and Dionysos.....	400
8.2 The glocal genealogy of the mask mosaic.....	404
8.3 Exploring a more-than-representational capacity of the mask mosaic: the 'satyr/mask/mirror-assemblage'.....	413
8.3.1 The 'satyr/mask/mirror-assemblage'.....	414
8.3.2 Modes of visuality in Commagene.....	422
8.4 Conclusion.....	425
Chapter 9. Case study 2: The glocal genealogy of the crenellation motif.....	427
9.1. Introduction.....	427
9.1.1 Description of the crenellations in Samosata.....	428
9.1.2 Earlier scholarship on the crenellation motif.....	429
9.2 The glocal genealogy of the crenellation motif.....	431
9.2.1 The glocal genealogy of mosaics with crenellation.....	431
9.2.2 The glocal genealogy of painted crenellations.....	435
9.3 More-than-representational capacities of the crenellation motif on three scales.....	437
9.3.1 Achieving visual coherence on a local scale.....	437
9.3.2 Joining a global network of motifs and concepts.....	439
9.3.3. Achieving distinctiveness on a regional scale.....	447
9.3.3.1 Hellenistic floor mosaics in Asia Minor and the Near East: different selections on a regional level.....	447
9.3.3.2 The absence of floor mosaics in 'palatial' contexts of the Near East.....	453
9.3.3.3 'Rare selections' in the royal Commagenean visual program.....	456
9.4 Exploring relational capacities of the crenellation motif genealogy.....	456
9.4.1 The crenellation motif as a representation of architectural fortifications.....	457
9.4.2. The crenellated mosaics as representations of carpets.....	462
9.4.3 The crenellation motif as a celestial representation with divine connotations.....	469
9.4.4 The crenellation motif as a form of Persianism.....	471
9.5 Conclusions.....	476
Chapter 10. Case study 3: The glocal genealogy of the symmetrical suite.....	477
10.1 Introduction.....	477
10.2 Description of symmetrical suite(s) in Samosata.....	478
10.3 Scholarly debate on the cultural designation of the symmetrical suite in Samosata.....	479
10.3.1 A 'Greek' reduction.....	480
10.3.2 An 'Oriental' reduction.....	482
10.4 The glocal genealogy of symmetrical suites.....	486
10.5 Exploring the capacities of the symmetrical suite in Samosata.....	498
10.6 Conclusions.....	503
Chapter 11. Conclusions.....	505
11.1 Assembling legacy data.....	505
11.2 Assembling vibrant objectscaapes.....	507
11.3 Assembling glocal genealogies.....	511
11.4 Assembling Afro-Eurasian localities.....	512
Curriculum Vitae.....	515
Summary in Dutch - Nederlandse Vertaling.....	515
Bibliography.....	519
Appendix A Excavation photographs (Özgüç Archive).....	567
Appendix B Maps and sketches (Özgüç Archive).....	693
Appendix C Excavation report campaign 1984 (Özgüç Archive).....	703
Appendix D Maps.....	719
Appendix E Catalogue of mosaic crenellations.....	729
Appendix F Catalogue of painted crenellations.....	737

