Welcome to the winter issue (2008.3) of the Asia Minor Report! AMR seeks to inform scholars and students of early Judaism and Christianity in Asia Minor about recent historical and archaeological activities in Turkey. Please circulate this newsletter to colleagues and friends who might also be interested in these subjects. All of the books and journals mentioned below are now part of the library that is being established at the Asia Minor Research Center in İzmir, Turkey. For more information about the center, or to receive subsequent issues of the AMR, please email me at: markwilson@sevenchurches.org.

**BOOKS**

*The Mysterious Civilization of the Phrygians (Frigerlin Gizemli Uygarlığı)* was recently published by Yapı Kredi Sanat Yayıncılık (İstanbul: 2007). The paperback volume has 295 pages, and the text is in Turkish and English. Its price is 60 lira, about $48. The noted Phrygian scholar Taciser Tüfekçi Sivas of Anadolu University in Eskişehir served as a consultant and editor for the volume and also contributed two articles and some photographs. The first 200 pages consist of an introduction and seventeen articles written by distinguished international scholars working on ancient Phrygia. The sites surveyed span the Phrygian heartland from Midas City to Gordion, Ankara, and Kerekenes Dağ. Other articles discuss Phrygian religion, language, inscriptions, terracottas, and pottery. The final one hundred pages comprise a visual catalogue of Phrygian artifacts. The photographs are subdivided into four sections of artifacts: terracotta, metal, bone, and stone. These artifacts were drawn from museums with major Phrygian collections in Ankara, Burdur, Afyonkarahisar, Gordion, and Eskişehir, and were part of an exhibition recently held in the Yapı Kredi Museum in Istanbul.

*Temple to Church* was recently published by Ege Yayınları (İstanbul: 2007). Subtitled “The Transformation of religious sites from paganism to Christianity in Cilicia,” the volume has 74 pages with the text in Turkish and English. The volume is richly illustrated with photographs and site plans and concludes with a bibliography. Specialists examine four important Cilician sites that show this transformation: Detlev Wannagat and Stephan Wetphalen on Zeus-Olbius/Diokaisareia; Emanuela Borgia and Ernesto Monaco on Elaiussa Sebaste; and Hugh Elton on Alahan (unattributed in the text). The final article on Corycus and Cennet ve Cehennem (“Heaven and Hell”) is also unattributed, although perhaps the author is E. Equini-Schneider who is a named author on the cover. Better editorial oversight would have clarified the authorship of these articles. The volume serves as a good introduction for scholars and students unfamiliar with these sites. However, the brevity of the articles makes the book less useful for specialists of Cilician archaeology.
Ilgi is a quarterly publication of the Shell Oil Company in Turkey released in both English and Turkish versions. Shell supports the excavations at Çatalhöyük. Each issue usually features an article on a Turkish archaeological site. Currently Ilgi is not available on Shell’s web site, but hopefully this will be a future addition. The Summer 2007 (114) had an informative article on Aphrodisias and its first excavator Kenan Erim. It also contained an article on the six water systems that supplied Ephesus — “Cura Aquarium in Ephesus” (pp. 22-29). Its author is Gilbert Wiplinger, a noted authority on Ephesian water systems. The article summarizes a paper that Wiplinger presented at an international symposium on ancient water systems that was held at Ephesus in 2004. The article, accompanied by a map and numerous photographs, is the most informative on the topic that I’ve read. Recently I met Prof. Wiplinger in Ephesus, and he said that the findings of his further research on Ephesian water systems will soon be published.

Arkeoloji Dergisi (Journal) began publication in 1993 under the editorship of Hasan Malay. After Prof. Malay’s retirement the journal ceased publication in 1998 after its sixth volume. The archaeology department of Ege (Aegean) University then resumed its publication in 2006. The journal is being distributed by www.zerobooksonline.com. Articles are published in Turkish, English, German, and French, and the Turkish articles have an abstract in English. The subjects covered range from Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology to Protohistory, Prehistory, Ancient History, and Epigraphy. Issue VIII (2006:2) contained a 13 page article on Colossae’s mound, remains, and findings (in Turkish) by Bahadir Duman and Erim Konakçı. The article is supplemented with 13 pages of photographs and drawings. The latest issue is IX (2007/1). Among the articles is one by Hasan Malay and Marijana Ricl (in English; pp. 117—21) on “A New Imprecation Against Desecrators of the Grave from Northwest Lydia.” This inscription, found near Thyatira and dating from the Roman imperial period, contains a mixture of elements pertaining to paganism, Judaism, and Christianity.

The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism will sponsor the 30th International Symposium of Excavations, Surveys and Archaeometry in Ankara on May 26—30, 2008. The symposium will be held on the Sıhiye campus of Ankara University, DTCF (Language, History, and Geography Faculty). Archaeologists, epigraphers, and museum directors will make their annual reports at the symposium. While most of the reports are in Turkish, they are usually accompanied by PowerPoint presentations. The sessions are open to interested observers, so a wealth of up-to-date information about archaeology in Turkey can be gained by attending these annual symposia.
**ON-SITE**

Although Aphrodisias is not a biblical site per se, increasing numbers of biblical groups are now visiting it (http://www.nyu.edu/projects/aphrodisias/home.ti.htm). This interest results in part from the mention of Aphrodisias in the book *In Search of Paul* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2004) by J. D. Crossan and J. Reed. Crossan and Reed provide an overview of the sculptures of the imperial sebasteion as well as a discussion of the theosebeis inscription from the synagogue (pp. 13–27). Needless to say, groups are interested in seeing these things during their visit; however, neither are presently on display. During a recent visit I saw the new museum addition scheduled to open in 2008 (see picture). I asked R. R. (Bert) Smith, one of the co-directors at Aphrodisias, about plans for exhibiting these objects. Bert writes: “The sebasteion reliefs will be on view in the large new museum extension from June this year. The theosebeis stele will not be part of this display but we hope to put it in a planned redisplay of the old museum on which we will start work after the sebasteion hall is open and operating properly.” Aphrodisias is already one of Turkey’s premier archaeological sites, and biblical scholars and students will especially appreciate these new displays.

Finding known sites in Turkey is sometimes not easy, but always an adventure. On a recent Saturday three friends and I tried to locate several Hittite and Lydian sites in the Manisa area. Armed with Bean (*Aegean Turkey*), Freely (*The Aegean Coast*), and Akurgal (*Ancient Civilizations and Ruins*), we followed their directions to the Akpinar spring east of Manisa, now a public park. There we hoped to see a Hittite relief called Taş Surved (left), supposedly the oldest Cybele relief in Turkey. The path was unmarked so we wandered on a wet and slippery hillside for over an hour before we found the relief. Later we discovered that the relief was visible from the parking lot, but once on higher ground it could not be seen. We next looked for an area nearby called Yarikkaya, which contained some ruins as well as an altar called the throne of Pelops. However, the cleft in the mountainside looked too dangerous to ascend in its wet condition so we left that for a future visit. We then looked for a Lydian rock-cut tomb termed the tomb of St. Charalambos. We followed Bean’s directions (1 mile; 1.61 km), but could not find the tomb. Finally, we gave up looking and started toward Karpel Pass to see the relief there. However, 2 miles (3.22 km) from Akpinar we suddenly saw the tomb above a gravel excavation and hidden behind olive trees. I had passed the tomb numerous times but did not know it was there because of the lack of a marker on the highway. The tomb (pictured right) is remarkably well preserved, and its double chamber is accessible through the unlocked metal door over its entrance.