

3.2 CONFLICT – ROME AT WAR



Type: Marble relief of Claudius defeating Britannia
Findspot: Aphrodisias (Turkey)
Chronology: C 1AD
Actual location: Museum of Aphrodisias
Website: <http://aphrodisias.classics.ox.ac.uk>

The relief is part of a building honouring the emperors and members of the Julio-Claudian dynasty (Sebasteion). The inscription below the relief (not visible in the picture) indicates that the emperor Claudius is portrayed while subjugating Britannia. Claudius is naked, as at the time of the creation of the relief he was already dead and had been divinised. He wears a short Greek military cloak (chlamys), a helmet and a sword belt. Britannia is portrayed as a half naked woman with loose hair and raising her right hand.

Check the story and function of the Sebasteion and the role of the reliefs in celebration the Julio-Claudian family (<http://aphrodisias.classics.ox.ac.uk>).

MY RESEARCH

How were Rome's enemies portrayed? Why do you think Britannia is portrayed half naked and with no hairdo? Why is it portrayed as a woman? What did the position of Claudius and Britannia in the relief tell the viewer?