



The Byzantine Dark Ages at Aphrodisias

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The classical city of Aphrodisias was badly damaged by an earthquake, probably around AD 620. Contrary to earlier assumptions, occupation of the city centre was resumed immediately thereafter and apparently on a significant scale. Recent excavations and re-examination of older finds have gathered a wealth of information about interventions that can be ascribed to the so-called 'Byzantine Dark Ages' (second quarter of the seventh to mid-ninth century). The picture which emerges is one of a population intensely re-using surviving structures and material culture from previous centuries. Most of these activities appear to be very modest and pragmatic in nature. Nevertheless, a sizeable multi-roomed complex, including a heated bath, was also constructed in and on top of the earthquake debris. In this paper I will provide a first overview of Dark Age interventions in the city centre and offer a reconstruction of life at the site immediately after Antiquity.

