

In ampiṭatru Carthaginiis: the Carthage amphitheatre and its uses

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The exploration of the amphitheatre¹

The amphitheatre at Carthage lies on the W edge of the ancient city just south of the *decumanus maximus* as it heads inland (fig. 1). Modern investigation dates back to the late 19th c. when A.-L. Delattre spent several years (1894-96) excavating the building, but, apart from a handful of inscriptions and minor objects recovered, few details were ever published.² In the decades following, parts of the amphitheatre were reconstructed but no further archaeological work was undertaken (fig. 2).³ It was not until the 1980s that a

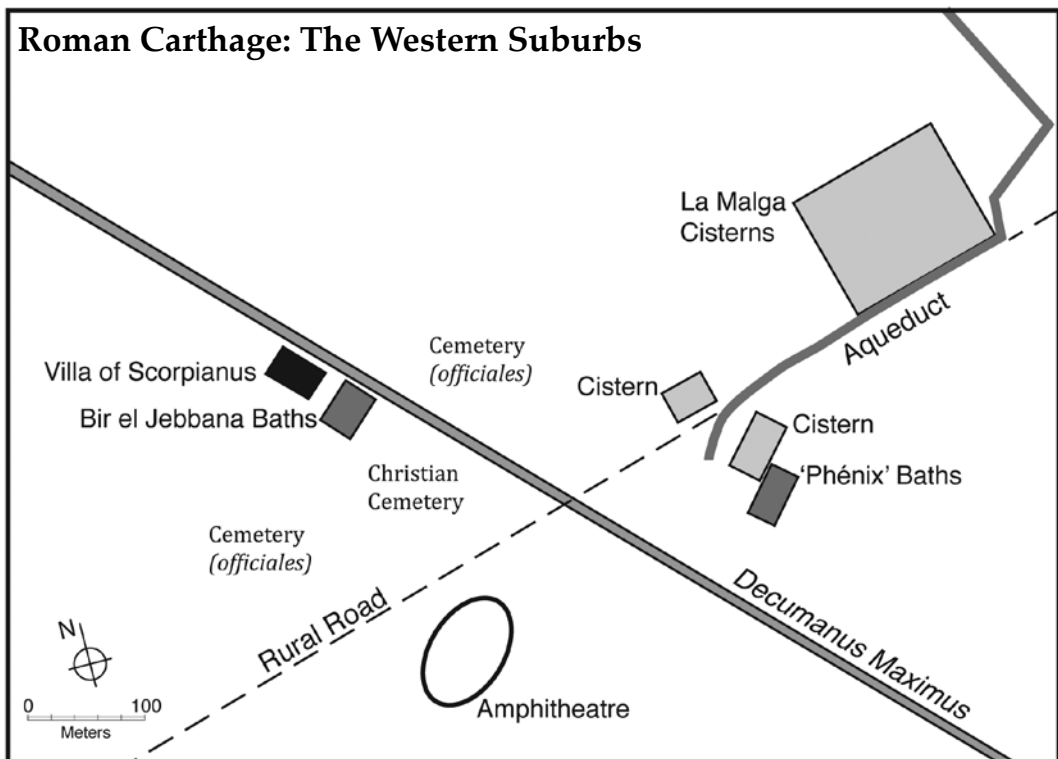


Fig. 1. Map of the W suburbs of Carthage, showing the amphitheatre in relation to the La Malga cisterns (drawn by S. Gouglas).

- 1 The Latin phrase in my title is taken from A. Audollent, *Defixionum tabellae* (Paris 1904) 351, no. 253, ll. 17-18 (henceforth cited as *DT*).
- 2 For an account of Delattre's excavations of the Carthage amphitheatre and of the inscriptions recovered from the site, see C. Hugoniot, "Les noms d'aristocrates et de notables gravés sur les gradins de l'amphithéâtre de Carthage au Bas-Empire," *AntAfr* 40-41 (2004-5) 205-58. For the original publication of the inscriptions, see A.-L. Delattre, "Fouilles dans l'amphithéâtre de Carthage (1896-1897)," *MemSocNatAntFr* 57 (1898) 135-87; "Rapport sur les fouilles exécutées dans l'amphithéâtre romain de Carthage pendant les années 1896 et 1897," *CRAI* 41.6 (1897) 694-96; cf. "A l'amphithéâtre de Carthage," *Bull. Sousse* 1 (1903) 45-49.
- 3 A short account of the amphitheatre's history is included in A. Lézine, *Architecture romaine d'Afrique* (Paris n.d. [1961]) 60-64. According to Abbé Chabot (*CRAI* 76 [1932] 25-31), the wall around the arena was rebuilt in 1926.