Maria Aurenhammer (Ed.)

SCULPTURE IN ROMAN ASIA MINOR

Proceedings of the International Conference at Selçuk, 1st_3rd October 2013





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SERAP ERKOÇ – MUSTAFA KOÇAK

FOUR RELIEF-PEDESTALS FROM PATARA

ABSTRACT

In 2011 and 2012 the area immediately east of the so-called harbour bath in Patara was excavated. Contrary to an expected palaestra, a square hall with a large apse in the east and 14 niches on the sides came to the light. In the 3rd century A.D., this square hall must have been added to the main building consisting of *frigidarium*, *tepidarium* and *caldarium*. It continued to exist most likely until the end of the 7th century A.D., but its function was not always the same. The sculptural finds from this space are moderate as are those from the entire bath. Of interest are four pedestals showing male figures in high relief. The former setting of these sculptures in the hall can be easily determined. They formed at least the bulk of the sculptural repertory of the western façade, opposite the large apse. The following article deals *inter alia* with the question of the meaning(s) of this constellation.

ÖZET

Patara'dan Dört Kabartmalı Pedestal

2011 ve 2012 yıllarında, Patara'da Liman Hamamı olarak adlandırıla gelen yapının hemen doğusundaki alanın kazısı gerçekleştirilmiştir. Burada, hamama ait bir *palaestra* beklenirken, doğusunda apsisi, kuzey ve güney yüzlerinde toplam 14 derin nişi ile kare planlı büyük bir salon ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Söz konusu bu salon, MS. 3. yüzyılda, soğukluk, ılıklık ve sıcaklıktan oluşan ana binaya eklenmiş olmalıdır. Zaman içerisinde işlevinde değişiklikler geçiren bu alan, büyük olasılıkla en azından 7. yüzyılın sonuna kadar kullanılmaya devam edilmiş olmalıdır. Bütün hamam yapısında olduğu gibi, bu mekandan da ele geçen heykel buluntuları fazla değildir. Yine de, ön yüzlerinde yüksek kabartma halinde erkek figürleri yer alan dört adet kaide ilgiye değerdir. Bu kabartmalı kaidelerin, salonda oturdukları yerler kolayca tespit edilebilmiştir. Bunlar, büyük apsisin karşısındaki duvarın, yani salonun batı duvarının, heykel programının en azından önemli bir bölümünü oluşturmuş olmalıdırlar. Aşağıdaki makale, diğer kimi konuların yanısıra, bu kompozisyonun içerdiği anlam sorusu ile de ilgilidir.

During recent excavations in Patara four pedestals came to light that depict standing male figures in high relief (figs. 1–4). With regard to the discovery site, material, form, dimensions and content, they form a tightly closed ensemble. For the first time these interesting finds offer some insight into the sculptural program of one of the studied buildings in this Lycian city. However, they also present problems, which are presented below.

LOCATION

The pedestals were uncovered in the so-called Harbour Baths, which, as their name suggests, were constructed in the immediate vicinity of the harbour, in the northwest of the city, south of the Tepecik-Hill (fig. 5)¹. The whole complex is built on a ca. $75 \times 30/45$ m wide trapezoidal area². In the western part, three rooms from east to west, *frigidarium* – *tepidarium* – *caldarium*, form the core of the building complex. At a later date, from the east a representative hall was added to this core. It is a 40×40 m square hall. Its eastern wall includes a large apse with three rectangular

¹ In earlier literature: >north baths((Farrington 1995, 158 no. 41 fig. 18) or >hurmalık hamamı(, >thermae of date grove((Korkut 2003; Gülşen 2008; Işık 2011, 50–52). For the city plan, see: Bruer – Kunze 2010.

² In the east, that is, the spaces with mosaic floor, the excavation is still ongoing, so that we can not yet determine the exact extent of the building complex.

niches, which were probably intended for statues. On the northern and southern sides, 3.50 m deep and 2.80 m wide niches between eight projecting piers are located, four of them serving as entrances. Barrel vaults covered the individual niches, while the whole hall was covered by a huge barrel vault. The floor was laid with marble slabs. It is uncertain what lay under this hall. From a typological perspective, this hall is a *basilica thermarum*³. As in many other examples, this hall also communicates directly with the *frigidarium*. As with the others, also here we cannot determine the function with clarity; it is likely that it served a variety of purposes.

All the four pedestals come from this *basilica thermarum*. A few other sculptural finds also come from this hall, whereas from the bath complex as a whole, statue fragments of nude youths and an over life-size torso of Heracles of the Lenbach-Type were found. We cannot be sure, however, if these statues were actually part of the original sculptural decoration – with the possible exception of the Herakles due to its size. Among the finds are, e.g., fragments from an *ostotheke* with reliefs or very small statuettes (Aphrodite Fréjus type), which would not be expected in a bath context. Moreover, not a single statue base was discovered in the Harbour Baths.

It is therefore only these pedestals which can undoubtedly be assigned to this hall, and their exact location in it can even be defined. Each of the pedestals is about 1 m high and preserves two holes for dowels on the top. On the outer wall of the *frigidarium*, which also forms the west wall of the *basilica thermarum*, there are six large consoles. About 1 m above the consoles are pairs of mounting holes. The distances between the individual pairs of holes on the wall correspond to those of the pedestals so that we can easily assign each pedestal to a certain console. Unfortunately, two of the formerly six pedestals are missing, one in the south and one in the centre (fig. 6).

FUNCTION

Were these pedestals part of a columned, multi-storeyed façade, as in the examples in Sagalassos or in Corinth⁴? There is clear evidence against such a façade construction in the Harbour Bath of Patara. For static reasons the consoles need to be supported from below if they are to carry pedestals and additionally columns. This, however, was not the case, because on the one hand the bottoms of the consoles are rounded, and on the other hand some of the consoles are located over doorways. In addition, the dowels, at least in one piece clearly traceable (P1, fig. 1), were not embedded into the stone surface, which means nothing more could be placed on the pedestal. Hence, the pedestals must have stood alone on the consoles; they could not have been used to support anything.

Yet, some factors indicate that they were not originally intended for the consoles of the Pataran *basilica thermarum*. First of all, the placing of statues on consoles was not an unusual practice, especially in the East⁵. However, we could not find any other example which is comparable with the Pataran case: a sole relief-pedestal on a console. Furthermore, the upper surfaces of the two pedestals show anathyrosis, which only makes sense if they were once used to support some further elements (columns etc.). Moreover, the lower parts of the relief-figures, the feet in particular, are carefully modelled, even though these parts were not visible from below. This indicates that the pedestals were originally intended for eye level, not for the consoles three metres above the floor. And, even if clearly observable in only one case, it seems that the back part of the cornice has been chiselled away so that it could be moved closer to the wall. We therefore assume that these

³ For basilica thermarum see Nielsen 1990, 162; Yegül 1992, 414–416 fig. 501; Steskal 2008, 298–299.

⁴ Sagalassos: Mägele 2011, fig. 21, 13; Dorl-Klingenschmid 2001, 238 no. 98. At the Hadrianic nymphaeum in Sagalassos the projecting pilasters serve as pedestals; they are not free standing. Corinth: Stillwell 1941, esp. 73–75 figs. 40. 51; von Hesberg 1983. Further examples are the pedestals of the Arches of Septimius Severus and of Constantine in Rome.

⁵ The next example can be found in Patara itself: on the consoles of the Arch of Mettius Modestus statues were placed, which is evident from the inscriptions (see Işık 2011, 45–46). Further examples in the East: Højte 2005, 39–40 fig. 8.

relief-pedestals must have been placed here after their first use in another context. But what was this context? For this it is necessary to discover what the original function of these pedestals was.

As is known, the present form (profiled base – square shaft – profiled cornice) appears in many contexts in Greek and Roman antiquity, such as altars, statue bases, supports for votive offerings (column monuments, etc.), or very commonly in architecture as a base for columns and pillars. In the present case, we can easily rule out several possibilities mentioned above. These were not altars firstly because any attachments or traces for an altar are missing, and secondly it would be very unusual to set up four (or even six) similar-looking altars⁶. They also did not serve as statue bases, since they lack any traces (for dowels, etc.) for attaching bronze or marble statues⁷.

Pedestals have been used as socles in votive contexts since the Classical period⁸. Occasionally such pedestals are decorated with reliefs, such as a Hellenistic example in Cyrene, the Colonna di Pratomede⁹. However, even this interpretation is not applicable to the Pataran finds, because these votive offerings, column monuments, etc., usually do not appear in large groups, but instead they are in general individual monuments. It is therefore difficult to connect our finds with such a context.

The only possibility remains to seek a use in the field of architecture. D. Wannagat has demonstrated that since at least the 4th century B.C. pedestals were used as support elements for columns or pillars¹⁰. This practice became very common, especially in Roman architecture. Those decorated with reliefs are, however, extremely rare, although a comprehensive study of such material is still lacking (perhaps because of this rarity [?]). Only a few examples are known such as the pedestal with relief from the probably Augustan façade in Corinth¹¹. The other examples are later in date, such as the North Façade of the Odeion in the Athenian Agora¹², the above-mentioned arches in Rome and the Nymphaeum in Sagalassos. Possibly the anathyrosis of the Pataran pedestals speaks for a primary use in such an architectural context, but we cannot connect them with any known building in the city. However, this option too presents problems. As is known, clamps and dowels linked the stone architectural elements of ancient buildings. Our pedestals, however, lack the expected traces of such construction methods.

In sum, we can only state that these pedestals were moved into the Harbour Baths after an unknown primary use. From this time on they functioned not as architectural elements, but only as image carriers.

DATES

When were they moved into the bath? A *terminus ante quem* suggests itself. Above the first console to the south, a pair of mounting holes is still visible, so a pedestal must have been mounted on it. But this console was either largely destroyed and was no longer visible after the construction of the *basilica thermarum*. It is therefore likely that the pedestals had already been placed on the consoles before the erection of this hall. According to the pottery findings from the test trenches in the *basilica thermarum* and the mosaic floor in the adjacent rooms, the hall cannot be dated earlier than the first half of the 3rd century A.D.¹³. The previous observations suggest that the main building (the three rooms) must have been constructed at the end of the 1st or at the beginning of the 2nd century A.D.¹⁴. Therefore, the pedestals were moved to their final position

⁶ Cf. Schraudolph 1993.

⁷ Cf. Schmidt 1995, in particular the drawings figs. 205–213.

⁸ Wannagat 1995, 17-48.

⁹ Wannagat 1995, figs. 39-40. 43.

¹⁰ Wannagat 1995, 49–93.

¹¹ See n. 4.

¹² Thomson 1950, 110–124.

¹³ The excavation is not yet completed, see Erkoç 2015.

¹⁴ See Alanyalı 2009, 139.

sometime during this period (100-250 A.D.). Since they were used secondarily in the baths, it is more than likely that they were already made before the construction of the baths, that is, during the 1^{st} century B.C.

For this postulated production time for the pedestals stylistic comparisons may be adduced. However, their state of preservation makes such an analysis difficult. Nevertheless, some observations can be made: under the headgear of one of the figures (P4, fig. 4), short curls of hair fall over the forehead. The pointed ends of the curls are curved like a sickle, while each individual curl is divided obliquely by a cutting line. Similarly modelled curls appear on the head of Emperor Claudius from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias¹⁵. The Sebasteion provides more possibilities for comparisons, especially regarding the wings of other figures (P1, fig. 1). These are, namely, a Nike, a Pegasus and an eagle¹⁶. At first it can be noted that the border of the wings, both on Nike and on the Pataran figure, is strongly accentuated. The feathers of our figure terminate in pointed ends, as do those of the Pegasus and the eagle. So it is stylistically possible that the relief-pedestals were produced around the middle of the 1st century A.D. Probably after an earthquake, maybe that of 141 A.D., they were moved into the Harbour Baths¹⁷.

The pedestals remained in the Harbour Baths until their rediscovery, even though not all in the same way. The pedestals P2, P3 and P4 were reused in various late walls in the converted *basilica thermarum*. Initial research suggests that these walls must have been constructed first after the first half of the 5th century A.D., that is, at the time when the bath was abandoned and workshops were established¹⁸. The pedestal P1, on the other hand, stood on its console most likely until the 7th century A.D., if not even to the 13th century. Its two broken pieces were discovered together, almost on the surface of a 3 m thick deposit. The layer immediately below it dates to the 7th century A.D. It must have fallen down following an earthquake which destroyed the building completely, in the location where also the limekilns from the 12–13th centuries were buried. However, the figures were manipulated most probably before the construction of late spolia-walls. On pedestal P1 (fig. 1), it can be clearly observed that the genitals and breasts were deliberately chipped away.

Briefly stated, neither the primary context of these pedestals nor their function is yet known (maybe this will always be the case). Sometime in the 2nd century A.D. they were moved into the bath, possibly after an earthquake. With the growth of Christianity, these figures were reworked, as so often occurred at that time¹⁹. After this damage came a period (the establishment of workshops), in which the reliefs were simply ignored. Whilst one of them was left in its place, the others, which had perhaps fallen down in an earthquake, were treated as raw material and installed in walls alongside other stones.

IDENTITIES

Now let us turn to the figures. Who are they? Three of them are relatively easy to identify. The first figure (P1, fig. 1) with large wings stands with crossed legs on the plinth. His hands disappear behind his back. The figure wears a tunic-like dress²⁰, exposing the genitals. On his head, he

¹⁵ Smith 2013, pls. 61-62.

¹⁶ Smith 2013, pls. 25. 143. 152.

¹⁷ The very destructive earthquake from 141 A.D. is well known. So *inter alia*, Opramoas from Rhodiapolis provided extensive funds for the reconstruction and reparation of the Lycian cities. In Patara, he funded a double stoa at the harbour (Bruer – Kunze 2010, 55 n. 10). Maybe as part of these rebuilding works major changes took place in the city: the colonnaded street was reoriented, now towards the harbour (Aktaş 2013). It is possible that the relief-pedestals were brought into the bath at this time.

¹⁸ See Alanyalı 2009, 125.

¹⁹ A not unusual practice in Late Antiquity: see Hannestad 2001; for further late ancient methods of treating statues in Asia Minor, see Jacobs 2010 with further literature.

In the literature the term *tunica manicata* or *anaxyrides* is applied to these clothes (Vermaseren 1987, no. 864 and no. 883, once refers to this clothing as *tunica manicata* and at another time *anaxyrides*). However, the *tunica manicata* is a long-sleeved, knee-length closed shirt, used in particular for the representations of >Barbarians<

wears a >Phrygian cap‹ (or so-called tiara). The iconography is very clear: the wings, the specific clothes, the exposure of the genitals, and the disappearance of the hands identify him clearly as the Enchained Attis. Several examples exist which conform to this scheme, e.g. one from Cyzicus in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul²¹.

In many ways, the Patara Attis (P1) differs from the other known exemplars of this motif. This concerns first of all the garment: in the majority of examples, the upper part looks like an open shirt (as with the Attis from Cyzicus), which is held only with a medallion or knob on the chest. Its sides then billow outwards (like sails) to make a bow and lead to the lower part of the garment. Sometimes these >sails< are doubled with a belt at the waist marking the separation²². Only in a few examples, the upper part resembles a closed shirt with v-neckline (similar to a Roman tunica); this is the case in the Patara Attis and some other examples²³. Some of these examples, however, combine the closed upper part with v-neckline, with the billowing side areas like sails, which the Patara Attis does not.

In the Patara Attis, however, the part of the garment on the abdomen is rolled into a band, which describes a wide arc on the body leaving the genitals free. This manner of depiction evokes the late Hellenistic Hermaphrodites of the *anasyromenos* schema²⁴. Perhaps this was done on purpose, as an allusion to the hermaphrodites. In this sense the emphasis on breasts is interesting. This is particularly evident on the right breast, where the drapery folds are disposed radially, thus accentuating the breast below.

From the next figure (P4, fig. 4), only the upper body is preserved. Most probably a standing figure is represented here. As with P1 it has also large wings, which cover nearly the whole background. The figure wore a garment which is not clearly identifiable. On its head it wears a tiara or a >Phrygian cap< as does the figure P1. This figure must also be Attis. However, the shape of the wings differs from the other one: the upper ends are rolled inwards, and they are not arched as in P1. Furthermore the wings of P4 are more asymmetrically arranged (both in width and in height) in contrast to the symmetrical wings of P1. This is not the only difference between the two figures. The head and the face of the P4 figure are more rounded, and the neck is shorter and fatter. There are also differences in the pedestals: the cornice behind the head of P4 is not profiled. Therefore, this figure probably represents a child in a pose of active movement. Very likely this is a dancing Attis, as in a terracotta example from Myrina²⁵.

The third naked figure (P2, fig. 2) displays the well-known Lykeios posture with one hand resting on the top of the head. In this pose, we usually find Apollo or Dionysus. In the present case, it must be the god of wine: on the left side of the figure, on the profile, the rest of an object in high relief is preserved. Its cone like form and the bumpy surface evoke a bunch of grapes

⁽Cleland et al. 2007, 31). In contrast, the *anaxyrides* are not so clearly defined as the *tunica manicata*, but they can be understood more or less as trousers (Cleland et al. 2007, 6). This, too, is commonly found among the >Barbarians< or >Orientals<, e.g. on a figure from Ephesos (according to Karwiese 1967, 87 this figure is Attis, yet Feuser 2013, 144–146 no. 111, now rightly identifies it as an >Oriental<). But what Attis wears here, and in many other cases, are not *anaxyrides* and much less a *tunica manicata*, because it is only one piece (comparable but not identical clothing worn by Amazons or other >Barbarians
is often to be found in Greek vase painting). Either it was a garment which actually existed, which was interpreted by Greeks and later Romans in visual arts, or it was totally a Greco-Roman fantasy gown. In our opinion the latter is true in the case of Attis: the knobs on the legs are completely impractical for actual pants.

²¹ Vermaseren 1987, no. 284. For an enchained Attis without wings: Korkut 2000, 171-178.

²² Vermaseren 1986, nos. 126-128.

²³ Vermaseren 1986, nos. 86. 137; Vermaseren 1982, no. 662 pl. 194; Vermaseren 1987, no. 495 pl. 109 and no. 883 pl. 194; Nikoloska 2010 figs. 101. 116; Korkut 2000, figs. 1–3.

²⁴ See Oehmke 2004, nos. 56. 69. 76. 77 and 88. Might this also be considered as an indication for the early production of the Pataran reliefs? Also cf. Karwiese 1967, 91.

²⁵ Vermaseren 1987, no. 495 pl. 109.

or a thyrsus²⁶. Most probably, the other plant parts such as leaves and stems (for grapes) or rod (thyrsus) as well as the support²⁷ under the left arm were rendered in colour.

The poor state of preservation of the last figure (P3, fig. 3) makes identification difficult. However, it is clear that a child with a plump body is presented. Since wings are lacking, it cannot be Eros. Close to this piece a fragment of a right hand holding a cylindrical object was found (fig. 7). The material is identical to those of the pedestals and the size is also suitable; the hand must belong to this figure. On the basis of the finger position (the index finger pointing upwards) and the cylindrical shape one might suppose a sceptre or rod-like object. If this is so, the person depicted here must be also Dionysus, or rather Dionysus as a child, as a bronze figure from Pompeii demonstrates²⁸. However, some unusual design elements are of interest for the interpretation of the figure. A comparison of the sides reveals an interesting difference: while the left side of the figure is explicitly pressed against the background, the other side is freed from the relief background. This must mean that the figure clearly pivots on the left leg to the left. So here again we are dealing with a >child

Thus, we have the following figures in following sequence on the consoles from south to north: enchained Attis – resting Dionysus – Dionysus as child – Attis as child. How can the present constellation be interpreted?

MEANING

First of all some particularities should be emphasized: to our knowledge, a representation of Attis in a bath context is not documented until now, while other oriental figures such as Ganymede or Paris occur relatively often. Furthermore, the mythological connection between the two deities is relatively weak. Dionysus plays a role in the castration of Agdistis, but this was never a subject in ancient visual arts²⁹. It is also not common for Attis and Dionysus to appear together in the same sculptural context. Only one later example is known in the West, namely in Ostia³⁰. Finally, the cult of Cybele and Attis is not common in Lycia, nor are images of Attis³¹. Here, too, the two Attis figures from the Harbour Baths are accordingly rare.

The special features mentioned above do not simplify an interpretation of the present composition. If Attis or Dionysus appeared alone, an interpretation might be easier: one particular aspect of these figures, e.g. the erotic, might have been emphasised³². In fact, it is not unlikely that many ancient spectators saw these figures from an erotic perspective. The allusion to the Hermaphrodite (Attis) is not without grounds. Of course, the associations which each single figure and the entire composition may evoke in the spectator vary greatly, as they are recruited from quite different fields of myth and religion. The interpretation would have depended on the level of education of the spectator. The architectural context must also not be forgotten, as this played a vital role in the interpretation³³.

If the identifications and reconstructions proposed above are correct, we have two gods (formerly three), each of them in two different representations. Moreover, they form two clearly distinguishable groups, each of them on one side of the facade. What can be seen in the groups? Seen

²⁶ Schröder 1989, 153 no. N12 pl. 17: a table leg from the art market, above the head of Dionysus, on the cornice a bunch of grapes with bird; Schröder 1989, 135 no. E2 pl. 10: terracotta figure from Cilicia, on the right side only a cone-shaped thyrsus is visible. Comparable with the figure E2 is also that of an amphoriskos (138 no. F5 pl. 11).

²⁷ There are also representations of Dionysus in Lykeios-schema without support, especially in relief. Some examples are given in Schröder 1989, nos. A16 (pl. 4); A18 (pl. 18); C4 (pl. 8); F2; F3; F5 (pl. 11).

²⁸ Sodo 1993, 140 no. 5; further examples in: Manfrini-Aragno 1987, 119–126 figs. 232–246.

²⁹ Attis was, so to speak, the product of this Dionysian intervention (Karwiese 1967, 90–95).

³⁰ Rieger 2004, 151–152, no. MMA 24.

³¹ Cf. Vermaseren 1987; the cult of Cybele (with the names Μήτηρ Ὀρεῖα or Μήτηρ Θεῶν) is rarely attested in Lycia, mostly in the mountainous northern regions. Attis, however, is very rare indeed (see Efendioğlu 2008, passim).

³² Bartman 2002, *passim*; Karwiese 1967, 91.

³³ See for an interesting interpretation of sculpture in relation to the different bath spaces Dally 2012, 215–234.

from the left two gods stand: the first one, although capable of flying, is in chains, while the other one is in repose with a hand resting on his head. On the other side a pronounced agile body posture (rotation and dance) connects the two figures. The central aspect of the whole composition is virtually movement, or rather: non-movement vs. movement. With regard to their location, these two obviously antithetical concepts can be reconciled and so underline the same concept, namely a sense of pleasure. This is achieved by expressing exemption from the hardships of everyday life (by doing nothing) and active participation in the pleasures (by dancing), which this space offers.

But there is one more aspect that should not be disregarded, namely, the already mentioned double appearance of each deity in two different forms: once as a young adult and once as a child. This deliberate juxtaposition or confrontation can be interpreted from a religious perspective. As mystery gods Attis and Dionysus share a particular feature: they die and are resurrected³⁴. So the image of the enchained young adult Attis refers to his death (probably by castration). The dancing child Attis, on the other hand, celebrates his resurrection. In the same manner, the child Dionysus symbolizes rebirth, while the resting Dionysus represents a standstill³⁵. In this context, the grapes (if this is what they are) next to the head of the resting Dionysus are very significant, as they ripen even in the fall, that is, just before nature and the god decease. It is evident that one of the central aspects of both cults plays an important role in the present display: the life cycle. Resurrection/ regeneration, furthermore, is also a concept of happiness commensurate with the function of the ancient baths. It is well known that baths were places where one could indulge in pleasure in the broadest sense³⁶. Perhaps the placing of the images here should be understood as intending to praise the qualities of this edifice in particular and of bathing in general: take a bath – and be reborn as the gods were!

What is so attractive about this constellation is not the message alone. Similar contents can be found in many visual programmes or in the individual images of ancient bath buildings³⁷. Of particular interest in the present case are the unusual protagonists in an unusual composition. The Pataran finds should be seen as small-scale testimonies for the richness of the language of visual communication in this Roman >province(.

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³⁴ See Taylor-Perry 2003, passim.

³⁵ This posture (one hand resting on the top of the head) means actually rest and so standstill (see Schröder 1989). But one may ask, whether, in the present setting, it could be possible to interpret this posture as reference to the death of the god.

³⁶ Manderscheid 1981, 31-43.

³⁷ See n. 35.

Vermaseren 1986

Vermaseren 1987

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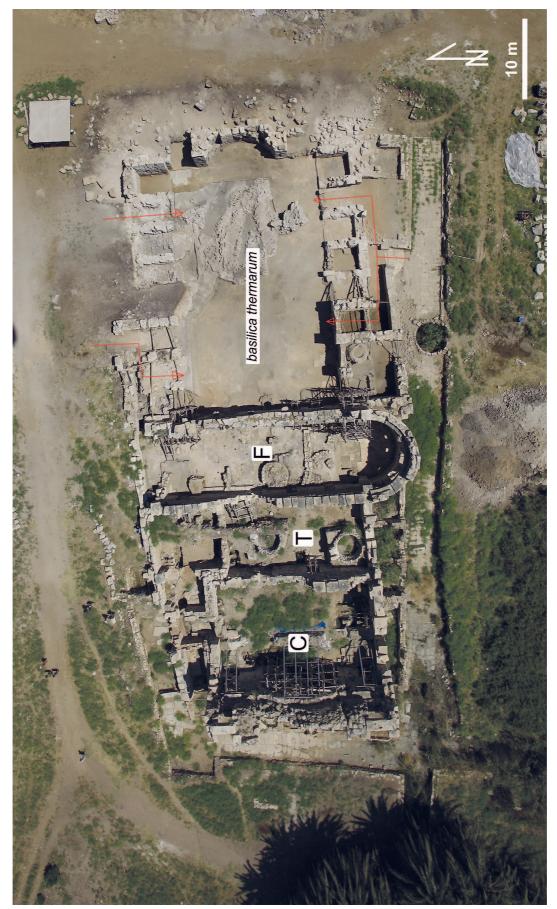
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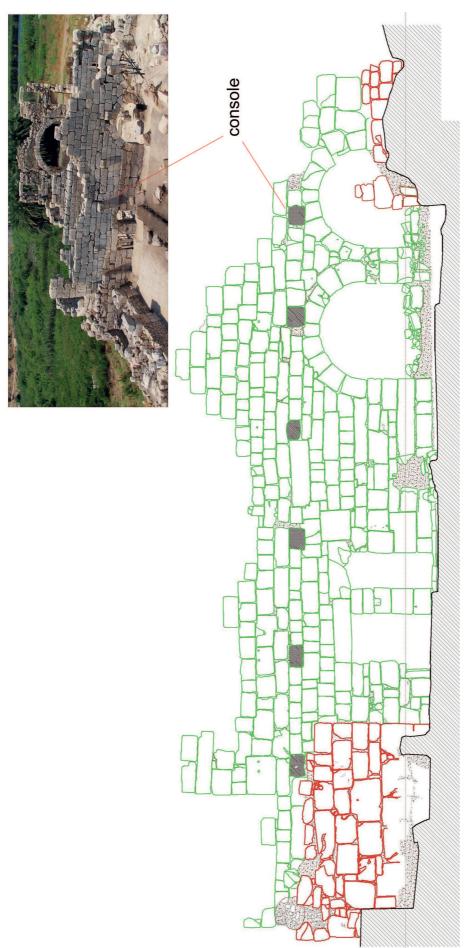


4 P4

3 P3



Patara, Harbour Baths. Aerial view



6 Western wall of basilica thermarum



7 Hand fragment