
COLONNADED GALLERIES OF THE ROMAN THEATER AT NICAEEA

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To the Architectural Team Members of the Iznik (Nicaea) Roman Theatre Excavation

ABSTRACT

Iznik, with its ancient name Nicaea, contributed to all civilizations that developed around it during and after antiquity, and became the social, political and economic center of the periods it witnessed. One of the buildings is the Roman Theater, which maintained its feature of being an attraction point during the Roman period. The first information about the construction phase of the theater, which was raised on a flat area of vaulted galleries, is taken from the letters written by Pliny the Younger, who was appointed as the governor of Bithynia, to Emperor Trajan in 111 AD. In the letters, it is mentioned that porticos were built with the donations of private individuals. The remains of porticos/colonnaded galleries located to the east and west of the scaenae were unearthed during the recent excavations. The galleries date to the 2nd century AD and are identified as having two floors in Corinthian style. The first floor has been erected by postaments, conglomerate fluted smooth columns, Corinthian capitals, architraves made of gray local marble, conglomerate frieze, denticulae, cornice, geison and sima. However, Attic-Ionic bases, columns made of white marble, Corinthian capitals, Hermae, parapets, architraves made of white/yellow marble, cantilever frieze, cornice, geison, sima and pediments made of gray local marble are used on the second floor. The aim of this study is to analyze in detail the columned galleries, a similar example of which is not found in contemporary theaters.

REZUMAT: GALERIA CU COLONADE A TEATRULUI ROMAN DIN NICEEA

Iznik, cunoscută în antichitate sub numele de Nicaea, a contribuit semnificativ la dezvoltarea civilizațiilor care au prosperat în jurul său, atât în perioada antică, cât și în cele ulterioare, devenind astfel un centru social, politic și economic al epocilor pe care le-a traversat. Unul dintre edificiile semnificative este Teatrul Roman, care a păstrat caracteristica de a fi un punct de atracție în perioada romană. Primele informații despre faza de construcție a teatrului, ridicat pe o platformă plană, susținută de galerii boltite, provin din scrisorile adresate împăratului Traian în anul 111 d.Hr. de către Pliniu cel Tânăr, care fusese numit guvernator al Bithiniei. În aceste scrisori, se menționează că porticurile au fost construite cu ajutorul donațiilor unor persoane private. Ruinele porticurilor/galeriilor cu coloane care se află la est și la vest de *scaenae* au fost descoperite în urma săpăturilor recente. Galerile, datând din secolul II d.Hr., sunt identificate ca având două etaje în stil corintic. Parterul este susținut de postamente, coloane netede și striate din conglomerat, capitale corintice, arhitrave din marmură locală gri, frize din conglomerat, denticulae, cornise, geison și sima. Etajul superior utilizează baze atice-ionice, coloane din marmură albă, capitale corintice, herme, parapete, arhitrave din marmură albă/galbenă, frize cu console, cornise, geison, sima și frontoane din marmură locală gri. Scopul acestui studiu este de a analiza în detaliu galeriile coloanelor, un exemplu similar care nu se regăsește în teatrele contemporane.

KEY WORDS: Roman, Architecture, Iznik, Nicaea, Theater, Colonnaded Gallery.

CUVINTE CHEIE: Roman, arhitectură, Iznik, Nicaea, teatru, colonadă.

Introduction

The ancient city of Nicaea is located in the Iznik District of Bursa Province and was founded on the shore of the Iznik Lake, known as 'Askania Limne'¹. In the city of Nicaea, which has suffered great damage in the historical

¹ Şahin 2003, 3; Strab. geog. XII.4.7.

process and most of the ruins are under modern settlement, one of the rare structures that witnessed the Roman period and survived is the theater². Since 1980, the theater has been excavated periodically and the ima cavea and its trapezoidal vaults, the media cavea and its barrel vaults, the scaenae, the pillars (ambulacrum level) supporting the portico surrounding the cavea, and the east and west colonnaded galleries located on the side wings of the scaenae have all been uncovered.

The theater was built with opus caementicium masonry technique using rubble stone and mortar³ and it is thought that its height was approximately 24 m and its capacity was ap. 10.000 spectators⁴. Built on a flat area of 102,32 x 79,04 m, the theater has a rare vaulted substructure. It differs from the similar examples in Anatolia because it was completely raised with arch and vault technique on a flat area (Fig. 1, 2, 3). Wars fought due to the city's attraction



Fig. 1 Aerial view of the Nicaea Theater (photo by D. Bayrak 2024)

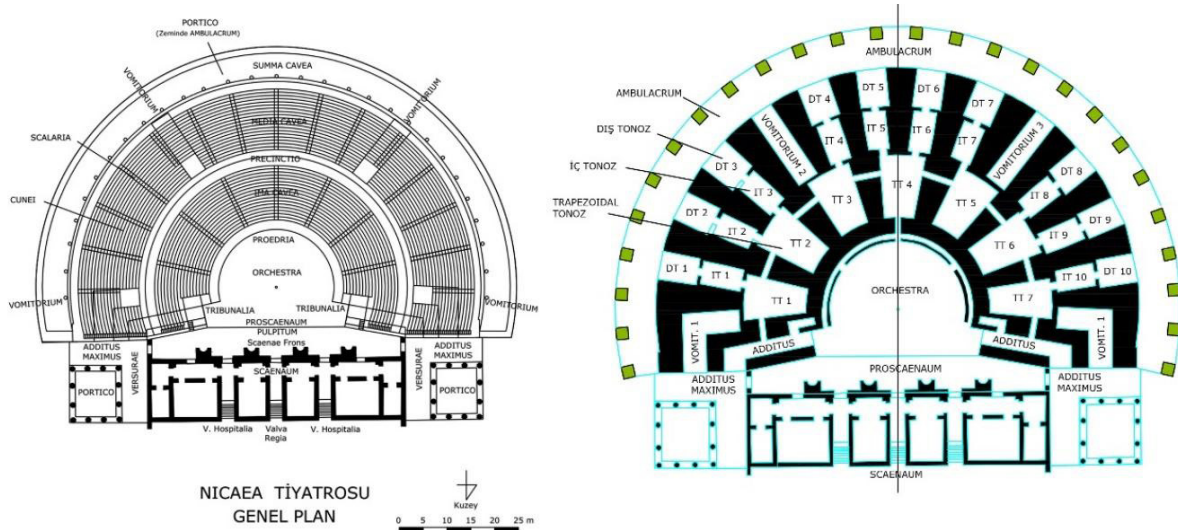


Fig.2 The plans of the Nicaea Theater (draw by A. K. Öz 2020)

² For more information see. Özügül 2017, 317-332; Ekin-Meriç et al. 2018, 285-300; Ekin-Meriç et al. 2019, 293- 310; Ekin-Meriç et al. 2020, 265-284.

³ Ekin-Meriç 2019, 342; Öz 2019, 3; Öz and Ekin-Meriç 2021, 50.

⁴ Öz 2019, 8.



Fig. 3 3D visual of the Nicaea Theater (draw by A. K. Öz 2021)

as a center of attraction, natural disasters and second use of blocks as a source of raw material for urgent defense needs caused serious damage to the theater. The barrel vaults that raised the media cavea, the summa cavea or the gallery with columns and the piers carrying this gallery, and the scaenae were irreparably damaged. In spite of the great damage, the well-preserved building unit in the theater is the colonnaded galleries located to the east and west of the scaenae.

The most comprehensive information about the theater is taken from the letters written to the emperor by Pliny the Younger, a historian and political leader appointed by the Roman Emperor Trajan (98-117 AD) as the governor of Bithynia. In his *Epistulae* (Letters) consisting of ten books⁵. The letters mention that a theater was built in the city of Nicaea, that a lot of money was spent and that this money did not serve a purpose, that unstable fragmented stones were used in its construction and that cracks were formed⁶. Concrete evidence of structural problems in the theater has been uncovered in recent excavations.

What should be emphasized in the letters that are directly related to the colonnaded galleries? In these lines, it is emphasized that the porticoes and the galleries surrounding the pit were built and their costs were undertaken by private individuals, but since the main structure to carry these sections was not completed, the additional building units would not be built. Trajan advised Pliny that the secondary sections to be added to the theater should be completed⁷. During the excavations carried out in the theater between 2018 and 2020 years, the remains of the summa cavea/ maenianum summum in ligneis, referred to by Pliny as ‘galleries surrounding the pit’, and the colonnaded galleries on both sides of the scaenae, referred to as ‘porticos’, were found⁸. Although it is stated in these correspondences in 111 AD that the galleries were under construction and that additional building units could not be built, it is understood that the construction was completed after the letters and that the construction was built with the help of private financiers.

The galleries located on the two side wings of the scaenae were located in the area where the entrances and exits to the back rooms of the scaenae, pulpitum, additus maximus, tribunalia, versurae, parascaenae and vomitorium were located and used as a welcoming space.

⁵ Schneider 1973, 8.

⁶ Plin. epist. X.39, 40.

⁷ Plin. epist. X.40.

⁸ Öz and Ekin-Meriç 2021, 57; Kardoruk 2020, 441.

East And West Colonnaded Galleries

The Colonnaded Galleries located on both sides of the scaenae in the theater dating to the 2nd century AD⁹ are the well-preserved units of the building (Fig. 4). In the lower floor of the galleries; architectural elements such as postaments, conglomerate fluted and unfluted columns, Corinthian capitals, architraves made of grey local marble, conglomerate frieze, Cornice/ Geison+Sima/Geison+Sima with Dentil were used. On the second floor has been erected by Attic-Ionic bases, columns made of white marble, Corinthian capitals, Hermae, parapets, architraves made of white/yellow marble, Cornice/ Geison+Sima/ Geison+Sima with Console and pediments made of grey local marble¹⁰ (Fig. 5, 6).

In addition to the profiled and decorated blocks with architectural features, a large number of unprofiled blocks were also found during the excavations. The blocks in this group, which have the largest density in both the east and west galleries, have lost all their architectural details, which have an important effect on determining their purpose, and therefore the function cannot be determined. However, the use of different marbles on both floors clarified which floor of the galleries the blocks belonged to. One of the issues that should be emphasized here is



Fig. 4 East and West Colonnaded Galleries plans (draw by A. K. Öz, N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2020)

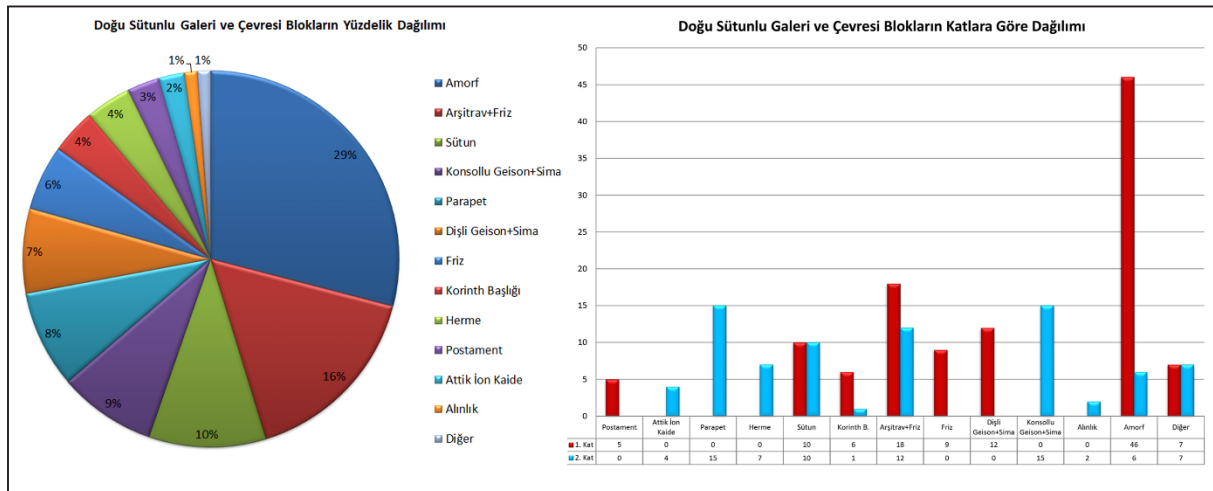


Fig 5 Functions and distribution of the blocks in and around East Gallery (made by N. Kardoruk 2022)

⁹ Yalman 1981, 34; Yalman 1992, 377; Yalman 1996, 345; Ekin-Meriç 2019, 339.

¹⁰ Kardoruk 2022a, 272; Kardoruk 2022b, 36.

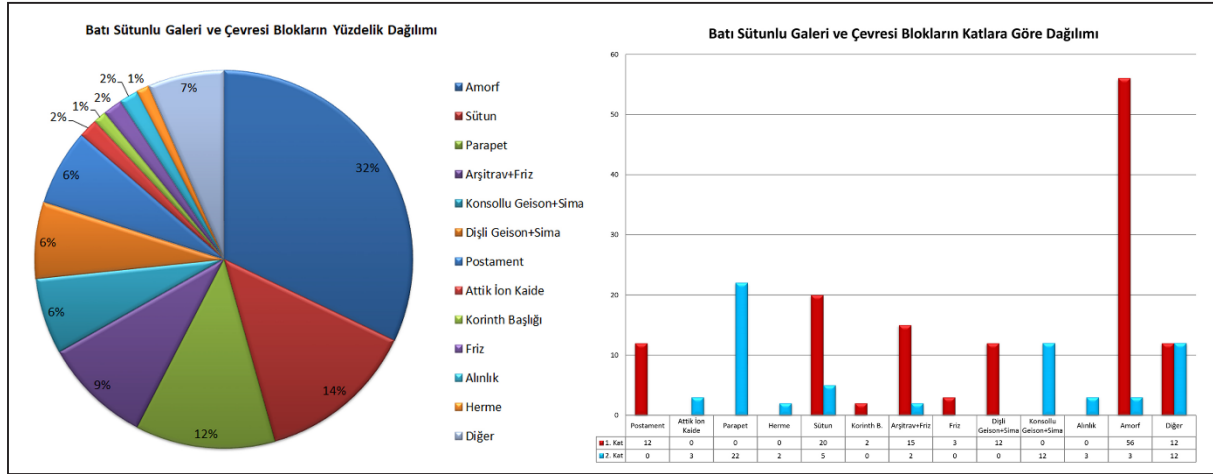


Fig 6 Functions and distribution of the blocks in and around the West Gallery (made by N. Kardoruk 2022)

why the number of unprofiled blocks is higher than the blocks whose function has been determined. The Gothic invasion after the original use, especially earthquakes, Arab raids, Crusades, political developments around the city such as Byzantine, Seljuk, Ottoman and the constant change of function in the use of the theater¹¹ caused serious damage to the building. Although no detailed information can be obtained from the ancient sources about the condition of the theater in relation to these demolitions, the fact that the surrounding buildings were affected by these events and the high number of unprofiled blocks such as small architectural plastic artifacts¹² that were shaved off suggest that it was affected by these events.

Architectural Elements in First Floor

Postaments

Postaments, which were frequently used in the Roman Imperial Period, were made to increase the monumentality of the facade architecture as a column base raising the columns¹³. Postaments, which have an important effect especially on the majestic facade, were used on the first floor of the galleries in the Nicaea Theater (Fig. 7).

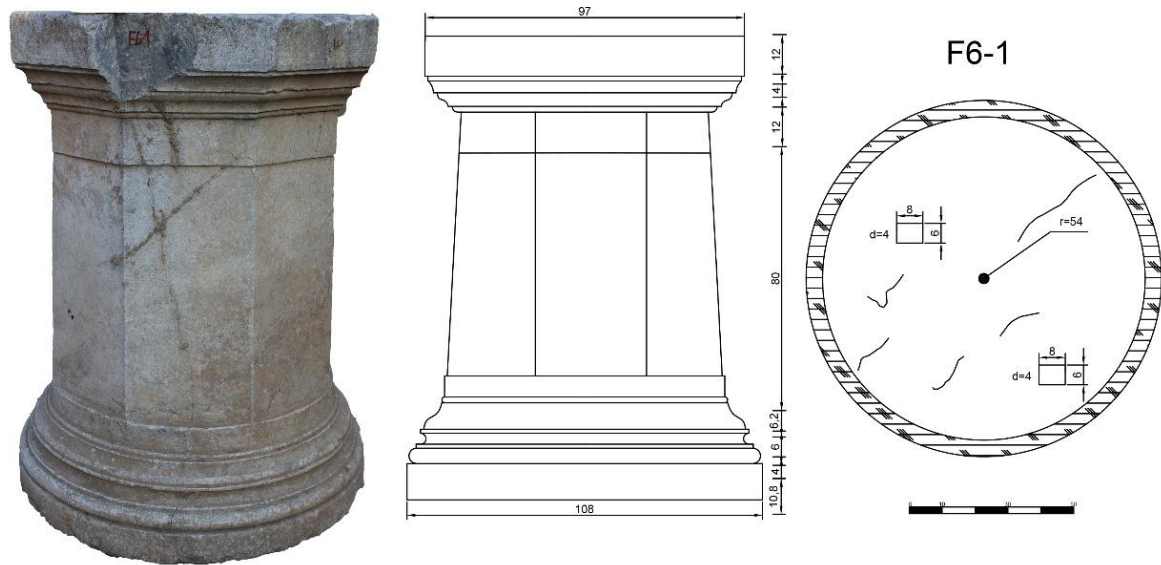


Fig 7 1st Floor Postament (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

¹¹ For more information see. Kardoruk 2022b, 31-62; Ekin-Meriç, 2019, 339-355; Kardoruk 2022a, 90-102.

¹² Kardoruk 2020, 439-441; Kardoruk 2022a, 164-169.

¹³ Alp 2006, 18.

The octagonal postaments made of local grey marble are better preserved in the west colonnaded gallery. The examples found in the west were generally recovered in-situ position. In the eastern gallery, except for a single example preserved almost complete in-situ, the others were found in fragments. The circular pedestal heights of the postaments with a lower diameter of 1,08 m are approximately 0,32 m, the octagonal body is 0,80 m, and the height of the octagonal upper pedestal adapted to the octagonal body is 0,24 m. The width of the octagonal upper base is about 0,97 m and the total height of the postaments is 1,36 m. When the well-preserved examples are analyzed, architectural details such as plinthus, torus, scotia or trochilus, S moulding (cyma reversa), astragalus, straight band, octagonal body, straight band, astragal, S moulding (cyma reversa), cavetto and straight band can be observed from bottom to top. When the dimensions and architectural details of the east and west galleries are compared, no difference is observed between the two galleries.

Postaments, which were used extensively in public buildings such as theater, nymphaeum, temple, basilica, agora and colonnaded street during the Roman Empire period, vary in square, round or polygonal shapes. The most common form used within this diversity is the square postament. Octagonal or polygonal postaments were frequently used in structures such as theater, temple and nymphaeum¹⁴.

The polygonal examples used in the east and west colonnaded galleries of the Nicaea Theater, which are not widely used, are found in Anatolia on the scaenae frons of the Hierapolis theater¹⁵, the second floor of the Traianus nymphaeum of Ephesus¹⁶, on the southwest corner of the south agora of Aphrodisias¹⁷, on the facade of the N1 temple of Termessos¹⁸. It is also seen on the facade of the temple of Antonius Pius in Kremna¹⁹, on the facade of the Perge nymphaeum²⁰, at the southern entrance of the Miletus stadion²¹, at the east section of the north-south colonnaded street in Perge²², on the facade of the nymphaeum structure in Bostra²³, in the apse of the Leptis Magna Severan Basilica²⁴ and in the Church of St. Philippus in Hierapolis²⁵.

Unlike the Nicaea examples, most of these examples are carved with an Attic-Ionic base, have a flattened and rather low body and this type was frequently used during the Roman Imperial Period²⁶. Among these postaments, which are quite low in height, examples with a height similar to Nicaea are found on the apse of the basilica of Severus in Leptis Magna²⁷, outside Anatolia and on the facade of the nymphaeum in Bostra²⁸.

The biggest difference of the postaments found in the Nicaea Theater from the Anatolian and other examples is that the pedestal section joining with the stylobate is made in a circular shape, not adapting to the octagonal body. With this feature, it differs from all of the mentioned examples. The architectural details on the pedestal are similar to the postaments used on the scaenae frons in Hierapolis Theater²⁹. In both examples, there are many architectural details on the sections. In the other examples, there are no detailed architectural details on the upper and lower pedestals, except for linear details such as straight bands and inclined/ beveled bands. When the architectural details on the profiles of the square postaments, which are known as the common type, are taken into consideration, it is not difficult to mention the existence of a standardized form. However, when octagonal examples are examined, it is seen that this standardization has been departed from and a freer form has been followed.

Attic-Ionic Bases

No bases compatible with the first-floor columns were found during the excavations in and around the galleries or in the theater.

¹⁴ Alp 2006, 19.

¹⁵ Türkmen 2007, Lev. 48.1-2; Sobra 2012, 187, Fig. 5, 9, 10; Scardozzi 2019, Fig.6 L.

¹⁶ Quatember 2011, Taf. 5.2; 67.1; Köster 2004, Taf. 112.1.

¹⁷ Stinson 2007, Pl. 4.12.

¹⁸ Alp 2006, Lev. 93; Erön 2007, 130, Fig. 2.a; Gülbay 2009, Fig. 155; Robertson 1959, 228, Fig. 98.

¹⁹ Aslan 2015, 109, XVI.b; Alp 2006, Lev. 64.

²⁰ Williams 1979, Pl. 7.b.

²¹ Gerkan 1921, Taf. V, VII.

²² Özdibay 2008, Lev. 49. 9-10.

²³ Segal 1981, 115, Fig. 19; Segal 1997, 156, 190.

²⁴ Gros 1980, Pl. XII; Vita 1996, 180, Abb.18.

²⁵ Caggia 2016, Fig.33-34.

²⁶ Alp 2006, 18.

²⁷ Gros 1980, Pl. XII; Vita 1996, 180, Abb.18.

²⁸ Segal 1981, 115, Fig. 19; Segal 1997, 190.

²⁹ Türkmen 2007, Lev. 48.1-2; Sobra 2012, 187, Fig. 5, 9, 10; Masino et al. 2011, 74-81.

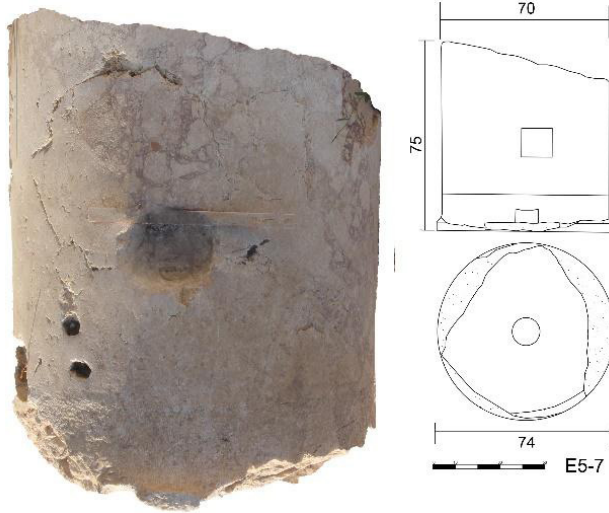


Fig 8 1st Floor conglomerate unfluted column (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

monumental facade architecture. Flat conglomerate columns were used in the scaenae frons of the theater in Merida³⁰, Leptis Magna³¹, Sabratha³², Gerasa³³, Palmyra³⁴, Hierapolis³⁵ as the Nicaea theater.

The fluted columns (Fig. 9) combined with the Corinthian capital were also severely damaged, as were the unfluted conglomerate pieces forming the lower section. Diameter measurements in detailed astragalus sections that are preserved and combined with the Corinthian capital, between 0,65-0,61 m in the upper base. This is important because the diameters of the Corinthian capitals are similar in size, showing that the capital and the column are compatible with each other.

In the Roman Empire period, fluted columns made of conglomerate with full flutes were also frequently used. Examples of fluted conglomerate column bodies with flutes are found in Falerone³⁶, Metellinum³⁷ theaters, in the scaenae frons of Leptis Magna³⁸, Arles³⁹ and Sabratha⁴⁰ theaters.

Conglomerate unfluted columns were frequently used in all ancient cities within the borders of the

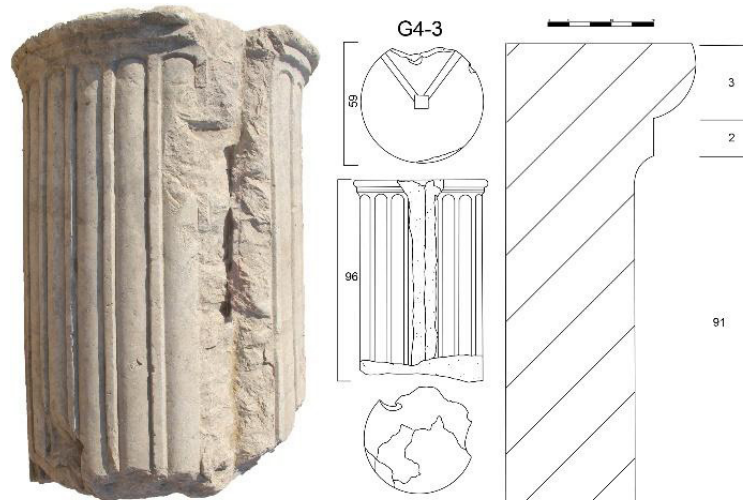


Fig 9 1st Floor conglomerate fluted column (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

Columns

In the galleries, which were found to have two stores, the columns made of conglomerate on the first floor are unfluted on the lower facade where they join with the postament, and fluted on the upper facade where they join with the Corinthian capitals. The measurements of the unfluted columns (Fig. 8) on this level vary between 0,73/4 m in the few examples where the lower column parts joining with the Attic-Ionic base are preserved, and between 0,70-0,68 m in the body fragments. The diameter of the other part of the column, which joins the Corinthian capitals with the fluted columns are not known due to the lack of preserved fragments.

As in the Nicaea Theater, conglomerate unfluted columns were used in many buildings from the theater to the colonnaded street within the Roman Empire. Especially conglomerate used in the construction of columns is frequently seen in

³⁰ Cruz and Gutierrez 2018, 55, Fig.14; Velez 2018, 76, Fig. 1.

³¹ Bejor 1979, 39.2; Vita 1996, 177, Abb.10.

³² Lopez 2017, 20.3; Kandilzaied and Rehan 2019, 23-24, Pl.2, 4-5.

³³ Sear 1993, 697, Fig.12; Segal 1987, 7, Abb. 12-13.

³⁴ Frezouls 1961, Pl. VI.2.

³⁵ Mellink 1987, 29, Fig. 36.

³⁶ Montali 2015, Fig.10-11.

³⁷ Mateos-Picado 2011, Taf. 22. a.

³⁸ Bejor 1979, 39.2.

³⁹ Moretti et al. 2010, 143, Fig.6.

⁴⁰ Lopez 2017, 20.3; Kandilzaied and Rehan 2019, 23-24, Pl.2, 4-5.

Roman Empire. It has been emphasized that the columns without fluting, the first example of which is seen in the east stoa of Magnesia agora, are not a common group in Anatolia⁴¹. However, it would not be wrong to say that this type of column, which is formed by combining unfluted and fluted pieces was especially popular in theater structures.

Corinthian Capitals

The majority of the preserved examples were found in and around the eastern colonnaded gallery and the first-floor capitals are generally placed in the 2nd - 3rd century AD (**Fig. 10**). A few of the capitals bear the characteristics of the group featured as simple decoration⁴². The most prominent attributes of the simple decoration capitals are the acanthus leaves, which are quite separate and long. The volutes, positioned under the helix and abacus plate, do not rise from the caulis bowl, but from the second row (*secunda folia*) of acanthus leaves.



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*Fig 10 1st Floor Corinthian column capitals
(photo by N. Kardoruk, F. H. Kaya 2022)*

The other striking feature of these capitals is that the kalathos surface is seen between the acanthus leaves and the tectonic features are emphasized rather than the decorative features⁴³. The most distinctive feature of the period is the processing of acanthus leaves. Details such as the deep processing of the leaf veins, the rounding of the spaces⁴⁴ between the leaf teeth and the protruding rise of the acanthus leaves⁴⁵ forming the second row (*secunda folia*) from the acanthus leaves in the lower row (*ima folia*) are Hadrian period features. These features increase the plastic effect of the cap⁴⁶, strengthen the light and shadow effect.

Capitals that do not belong to the simple decoration group are also evaluated within the 2nd century AD. These capitals are distinguished from the simple decoration examples by the processing of acanthus leaves and the general character of the Corinthian capitals⁴⁷. Apart from the capitals dated to the Hadrian period, a group of capitals is dated to the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries AD. Acanthus leaves are classified as fine-toothed leaves due to the saw-tooth appearance of the leaf tips⁴⁸.

The eagle figure is used on the abacus plate in the only preserved example. The eagle is depicted quite small with its wings open in side profile⁴⁹. Apart from the aforementioned differences, the enlarged acanthus leaves wrapping the surface of the kalathos, the geometric motif between the two neighboring leaves, similar examples⁵⁰ and the general character of the capitals show the characteristics of the Severus period.

⁴¹ Alp 2006, 21.

⁴² For the capitals representing the period, see. Heilmeyer 1970, 101, Lev. 36, 3. 4; 104, Lev. 38. 1; İdil 1984, 31; İdil 1979, 482, Lev. 279. 11, 12; 483, Lev. 280. 13, 14; Vandeput 1997, 89, 94, 208; Pülz 1989, Taf. 44, 1, 3-4.

⁴³ Başaran 1999, 22; Başaran 1997, 6.

⁴⁴ Başaran 1997, 5.

⁴⁵ Fischer 1990, 40.

⁴⁶ İdil 1984, 17; Vandeput 1997, 172.

⁴⁷ For examples of comparisons see. Yener 2014, 132, Fig.4; Rohmann 1998, Taf. 22. 3-4, 5-6, 23-6; Heilmeyer 1970, Taf. 25, 3-4; Taf. 29, 1-2; Fischer 1990, Taf. 8, 40; Taf. 9, 45.

⁴⁸ For the capitals representing the period, see. Türkmen 2007, 114, 141, 145; cat. no. 24, 51, 55; 139-140; cat. no. 49-50; 138, 151; cat. no. 48, 61; Sobra 2012, 193, Fig.13.

⁴⁹ For more information, see. Türkmen 2007, 139, 140; cat. no. 49, 50; Mercklin 1962, 132-134; Abb. 1059 (561), 1066 (564), 1070 (565).

⁵⁰ For more examples, see. Türkmen 2007, 11, 128-129, 134; cat. no. 38-39, 44; 22, 114, 141; Lev. 6.1; cat. no. 24, 51; 127, cat. no. 37; 113, 131, 146; cat. no. 23, 41, 56; 148, cat. no. 58; Yener 2014, 136-137, Fig. 7; Kaya 2016, Fig. 195; Başaran 1999, 36, Fig. 37, 38; Başaran 1997, 39, Fig. 41; Kramer 1994, 45, Taf. 13, 4; 46, Taf. 13, 3.

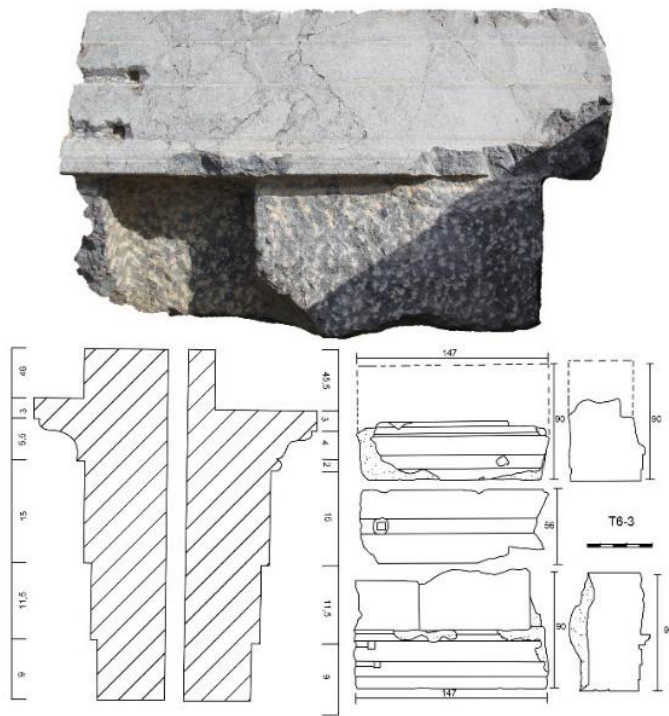


Fig 11 1st Floor Architrave+Frieze (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

Architrave and Frieze

The architraves (**Fig. 11**) used on the first floor, made of grey local marble, are monolithic with the frieze sections not separated. On the back side of the blocks, from bottom to top, the details of fascia, astragal, S moulding (cyma reversa), straight band, frieze (unprocessed); on the front side, 3 fascia, S moulding, straight band, frieze (unprocessed) are observed. The soffit used on the lower facade is left flat as in the architrave in the Hellenistic theater of Ephesus⁵¹.

The well-preserved and well-drawn architrave+frieze blocks measure between 0,88-0,90 m in height, while the frieze heights vary between 0,40-0,45 m. While the width of the lower facade with soffit decoration varies between 0,57-0,60 m, the dimensions of the architrave crown inside the architrave vary between 0,66-0,70 m. The actual length of the architraves, which are usually broken, is 3,25 m in the only preserved example. These architrave + frieze blocks made of grey local marble are considered within the Ionic architrave type and similar examples are found in many buildings. Examples of such

architraves with unprocessed friezes are found on the rear facade of the architrave used in the Palaestra of the Vedius Gymnasium in Ephesus⁵², on the rear face of the friezes used in the propylon and temple in the Asclepion of Pergamum⁵³, and in the Temple of Tyche in Corinth⁵⁴.

In the frieze sections of the first-floor architraves, which were not resurfaced on both facades, conglomerate frieze plates were used on the front facade (**Fig. 12**). The specimens preserved in very few fragments generally belong to the body section of the friezes. The measurements taken from the two frieze fragments that survived intact and from which information about the architectural details was obtained indicate that the height is approximately 0,45 m and the depth varies between 0,13 m on the upper facade where the architectural details are located and between 0,60-0,80 m on the flat body section. The height of the frieze plate is consistent with the height of the architraves on the frieze section of the facade. Similar examples of the use of conglomerate frieze slabs used in the first-floor architraves are seen in the architrave frieze used on the scaenae of the Agrippa Theater in Ostia⁵⁵, in the architrave frieze on

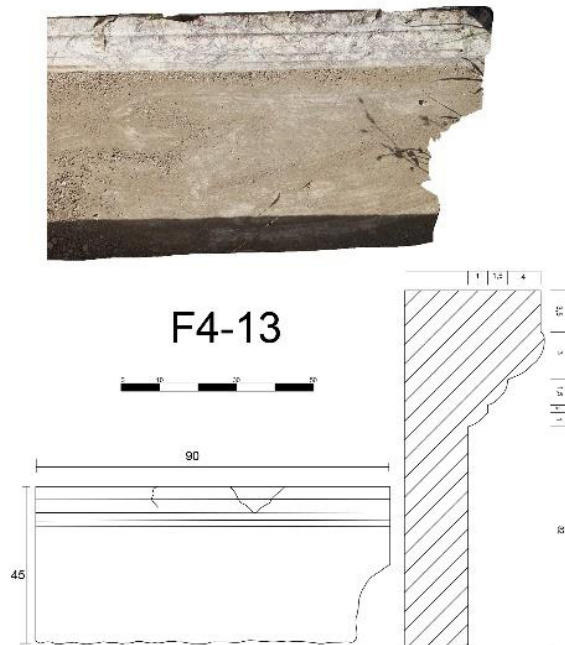


Fig 12. 1st Floor conglomerate frieze (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

⁵¹ Krinzinger and Ruggendorfer 2017, 502, Fig. 20.

Steskal and Torre 2008, Taf. 52.1

⁵³ Ziegenaus 1981, Taf. 7.b, 51.A1-3.

54 Scranton 1951, Pl. 23.4.

Cooley 1999, 174-175, Fig. 1-2.

the parascenae arch of the Augusta Emerita/Merida Theater⁵⁶ and in the inscribed frieze between the entablature in the Ruscino Forum⁵⁷.

Cornice /Geison + Sima /Geison + Sima with Dentil

The height varies between 0,63-0,68 m in the preserved examples of geison+sima blocks recovered from the east and west galleries (Fig. 13). The longest geison+sima among the group is 2,79 m. On the front facade; from bottom to top; there are architectural details such as tooth row (dentil), S moulding (cyma reversa), straight band, console crown/dropper (corona), S moulding (cyma reversa), straight band, S moulding (cyma recta), straight band. When the dimensions and architectural details of the east and west galleries are compared, no difference is observed between the two galleries.

Similar Ionic cornices or geison+sima blocks are also seen on the scaenae of the Caurion Theater⁵⁸, the Hellenistic Theater of Ephesus⁵⁹, the Corinthian Theater⁶⁰, the Theater of Aphrodisias⁶¹, the first Theater of Miletus⁶², the scaenae of the Pergamon Asclepion Theater⁶³. Ionic cornices were used in many buildings from the Hellenistic period to the Roman Empire period. Although the architectural details used on the facades of the blocks in question have changed during the period, the general type has continued in the same way.

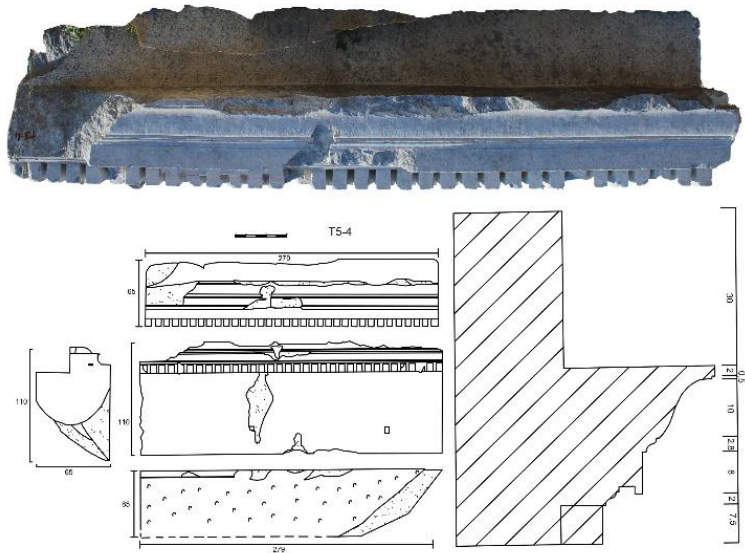


Fig 13 1st Floor Cornice, Geison+Sima, Geison+Sima with dentil (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)



Fig 14 2nd Floor Attic-Ionic bases (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

Architectural Elements in Second Floor

Attic-Ionic Bases

The preserved Attic-Ionic bases (Fig. 14) recovered during the excavations in the eastern colonnaded gallery are the only intact bases from the galleries. The height of the preserved bases varies between 0,26-0,28 m and the diameter between 0,52-0,54 m. The diameter of the base is compatible with the diameter of the lower facade where the second-floor columns rest on the base. When viewed from the side profile, the architectural details of plinthus, torus, straight strip, scotia or trochilus, straight strip, torus can be observed from bottom to top.

Attic-Ionic bases, which have been frequently used in Anatolia since the Hellenistic Period, were used in many buildings.

⁵⁶ Stylow and Villanueva 2018, 164, Fig.20.

⁵⁷ Pensabene et al. 2012, 114, Fig.3-4.

⁵⁸ Stillwell 1961, 70, Fig. 36.1-2, 38.

⁵⁹ Krinzinger and Ruggendorfer 2017, 502, Fig.20.

⁶⁰ Stillwell 1952, 107,113, drawing no.5, 9, 62.

⁶¹ Theodorescu 1996, 130, 132, Fig. 3, 5.a; Chaisemartin and Theodorescu 1991, 64, Fig.15.C; Chaisemartin 1998, Fig. 3.

⁶² Köster 2004, Taf. 28.6; Weber 2004, 112, Abb. 71, Taf. 40.1.

⁶³ Hoffmann 2011, Abb. 156, 171, 236.

Similar examples of the bases are found in the scaenae of the theaters of Regina⁶⁴, Leptis Magna⁶⁵, Taormina⁶⁶, Gerasa⁶⁷, Palmyra⁶⁸, Bostra⁶⁹, Corinth⁷⁰, Parion⁷¹, Nysa⁷², Tlos⁷³, Augusta Emerita/Merida⁷⁴, Diocaesareia⁷⁵, Aizanoi⁷⁶.

Column Body

Among the yellow/white marble column bodies (**Fig. 15**) belonging to the second floor, the preserved columns are few in number, as in the first-floor columns. In the two preserved examples, the diameter of the lower section joining the Attic-Ionic base is 0,50 m, while the diameter of the upper section joining the Corinthian capital diameter is 0,43 m. The diameter of the only preserved Corinthian capital belonging to the second floor and the diameter of a few Attic-Ionic bases are consistent with the columns in question. Apart from a few specimens with preserved upper and lower diameters, the number of body fragments with diameters ranging between 0,48-0,44 m is quite high. Monolithic unfluted column bodies made of yellow/white marble were also used in the scaenae of Nysa⁷⁷, Hierapolis⁷⁸ and Diocaesareia⁷⁹ theaters.

The columns recovered during the excavations generally consist of body fragments. Although the diameters of the upper and lower columns and body are known, no precise information about their heights could be obtained. In this case, according to Vitruvius, the height of a column is 8 times the diameter of the column. Thus, the height of the first-floor columns ($74 \times 8 = 5,92$) should be 5,92 m and the height of the second-floor columns ($50 \times 8 = 4,00$) should be 4,00 m. However, it should be noted that Vitruvian proportions are not used in all buildings and there are exceptional examples.

Corinthian Capitals

On the single capital (**Fig. 16**), which was identified as belonging to the second floor, the leaves tightly surround the kalathos surface and geometric motifs are formed between the two acanthus leaves. On the bell-shaped capital, the caulis are in the form of rings and the general composition shows the characteristics of Severan capitals⁸⁰. The

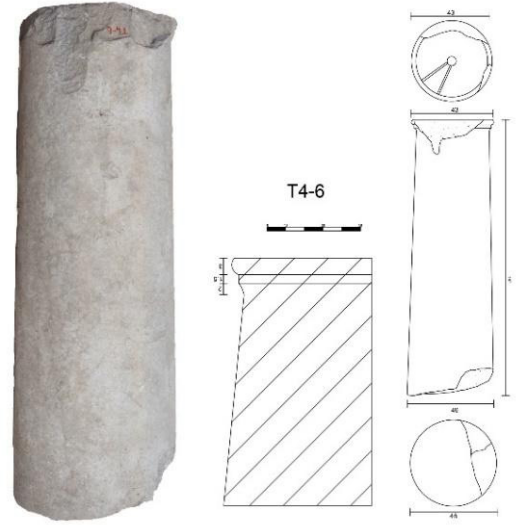


Figure 15 2nd Floor yellow/white marble column (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)



2. KAT

Fig 16. 2nd Floor Corinthian column capital (photo by N. Kardoruk, F. H. Kaya 2022)

⁶⁴ Barrera 2012, 61, Fig.1.

⁶⁵ Bejor 1979, 39.2.

⁶⁶ Gabellone et al. 2019, 2, Fig.1; Sear 1996, 53, Fig.9.

⁶⁷ Sear 1993, 697, Fig. 12; Segal 1987, 7, Abb. 12-13.

⁶⁸ Frezouls 1961, Pl. VI.2.

⁶⁹ Freyberger 1988, Taf. 13.d.

⁷⁰ Stillwell 1952, 123, drawing no. 161.

⁷¹ Ergürer and Özer 2018, 28, Fig. 10, 12.

⁷² Kadioğlu 2002, Abb.45,83, 84, 85; Toma 2018, Fig. 5-6.

⁷³ Akdağ 2014, 66, cat. no.1.

⁷⁴ Cruz and Gutierrez 2018, 48, Fig. 7.

⁷⁵ Spanu 2012, Fig. 42, Pl. 21.4, 39.5.

⁷⁶ Rohn 2008, Taf.55b.

⁷⁷ Kadioğlu 2002, Abb. 6; Öztaner 2022, Fig.13.

⁷⁸ Mellink 1987, 29, Fig.36.

⁷⁹ Spanu 2012, Fig. 42, Pl. 21.4, 39.5.

⁸⁰ For examples, see. Türkmen 2007, 113, cat. no. 23; Freyberger 1989a, Taf. 11.a; Freyberger 1989b, Taf. 36. a, c; Freyberger 1988, Taf. 10. c, d; Fischer 1990, Taf. 46, 255, Taf. 45, 252.

examples found at Bostra, especially those dated to the late 2nd-early 3rd century AD⁸¹ with Anatolian type⁸² foliage, are very similar in terms of the character of the foliage.

Architrave and Frieze

The state of preservation of the architraves+friezes (**Fig. 17**) of the second floor is quite poor. The preserved examples can be distinguished from the first-floor examples by the fact that the frieze sections were carved on the facade and yellow/white marble was used in their construction. The height of the preserved specimens is approximately 0,64-0,68 m, and the depth of the lower side with soffit decoration, including the architrave crowns, is 0,53 m. The soffit was left plain, that is, undecorated, like the first-floor architraves. On the architrave + frieze blocks, architectural details such as fascia, S moulding (cyma reversa), straight band, frieze (processed), S moulding, straight band were used from top to bottom on the front facade, while architectural details such as fascia, S moulding, straight band, frieze (unprocessed) were used from bottom to top on the back facade.

Similar examples of architrave + frieze blocks used on the second floor are found in many buildings both in and outside the theater. Similar examples of these Ionic architrave+frieze blocks can be seen in the scaenae of the Corinthian Theater⁸³, the late period scaenae frons of the Corinthian Odeon⁸⁴, the Troy C theater⁸⁵, the scaenae frons of the Hellenistic Ephesus Theater⁸⁶, north gallery and theater of the Pergamum Asclepion⁸⁷.

Parapets

The preserved fragments (**Fig. 18**) measure between 0,86-0,88 m in height, 1,25 m in width and 0,24-0,26 m in depth. The architectural details on the facade of the parapet fragments found in the east and west show differences in both galleries. On the facade of the west colonnaded gallery, from bottom to top, the architectural details are straight band, inclined/chamfered band, body (inscribed area), straight band, inclined/chamfered band, cavetto, straight band, and inclined/chamfered band. The parapet fragments recovered from the east colonnaded gallery, from bottom to top, straight band, inclined/chamfered band, body, ovolo, S moulding (cyma reversa), straight band, and inclined/chamfered band. The difference is observed not only in the architectural details but also in the body parts. The fragments recovered from the western colonnaded gallery and its surroundings bear inscriptions, unlike those recovered from the eastern colonnaded gallery.

Among the parapet fragments, only the body and the fragments belonging to the lower parts of the structure were

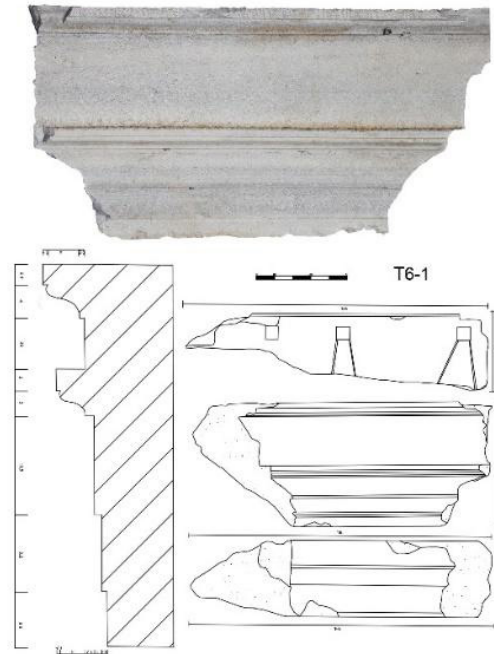


Fig 17 2nd Floor Architrave+Frieze (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

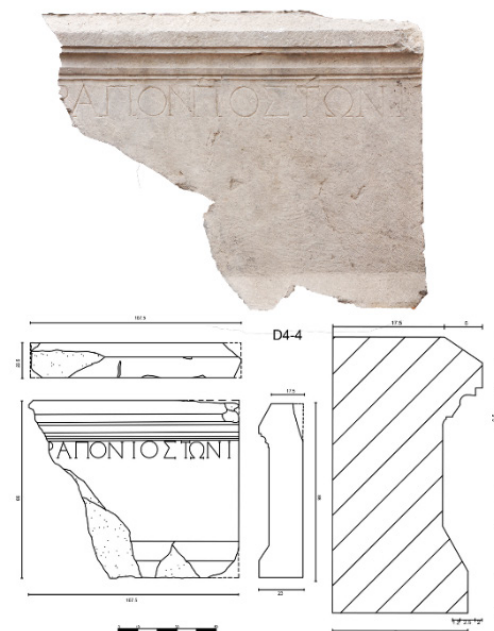


Fig 18 2nd Floor Parapet (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

⁸¹ Freyberger 1988, 19.

⁸² Freyberger 1989b, 100.

⁸³ Stillwell 1952, 115, drawing no. 94.

⁸⁴ Broneer 1932, 88, Fig.63, 64.

⁸⁵ Isler 2017, Taf. 163, 490.

⁸⁶ Krinzinger and Ruggendorfer 2017, 502, Fig. 20.

⁸⁷ Hoffmann 2011, Abb. 18, 20,21, 104, 133,144, Taf. 6.6; 8.1,2, 22.10.

preserved. Since yellow/white marble was used in the construction of the galleries on the second floor, the stone masons marks, and measurements on the preserved fragments are compatible with the preserved fragments, it was determined that these fragments also belong to the parapets. The most important detail on the parapets is the anathyrosis application on the side of the block. The presence of architectural details on some of the nearly complete parapet fragments showing the combination of Hermae with columns and Attic-Ionic bases in some of them clarified the existence of an architectural order with Hermae parapet and column composition on the second floor.

The corner of the inscriptions on the inscribed parapets found in and around the western colonnaded gallery showed that the inscription was placed in a frame on the parapet in two preserved examples. However, the absence of the frame in the other preserved fragments suggests that the two parapets may represent the beginning or the end of the inscription. This confirms the idea that the inscription continued from one column to the other on the second floor and that there was no separate inscription on each parapet.

Hermae

Hermae, which were developed by the Greeks, became a frequently used sculpture type in the Roman world and examples of them are also found in the Nicaea theater⁸⁸ dating to the Roman period (Fig. 19). Male Hermae busts were found in and around the east colonnaded gallery and female Hermae busts were found in and around the west colonnaded gallery. The height of the full body is 0,98 m, the width is 0,35 m, and the depth is 0,30 m in the Hermae, whose body sections are generally preserved. The general height, width and depth of the heads vary between 0,32 m, 0,20 m and 0,25 m, respectively.



Fig 19 2nd Floor Hermae (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

Considering the only fragment preserved with the body in the eastern colonnaded gallery and its surroundings, it is understood that only the fragments recovered as male heads belong to hermae bodies. The preserved nearly complete specimens and the severed heads are stylistically and dimensionally very close to each other. The large number of fragments belonging to the body section also supports this. Among the artefacts, only the female heads found in and around the western colonnaded gallery are of interest, and the presence of female Hermae is known. The excavations did not yield any finds belonging to the Hermae bodies in which the female heads were placed. The fact that the heads in question have the same dimensions as the other Hermae heads and are compatible with the side facades of the parapets indicates that the female heads were also placed on Hermae bodies in this gallery.

The most prominent common feature of the Hermae heads, which are of different genders in both galleries, is the exaggeration of the long flowing locks of hair into large, full and twisted curls⁸⁹. The curls cover the entire head like a snail, and are fluffier and denser on the upper forehead⁹⁰. The eyebrows over the slanted eyes are made in the form of an arc and the hair details are not processed. There is no intensive use of drills in the construction of the statues. These characteristics are seen in the sculpture of the Hadrian period⁹¹. There are many statue heads with the same characteristics in and around the ancient city of Nicaea⁹². In fact, the date of the construction of the galleries mentioned in Pliny letters and the features of the Hermae are compatible with each other in terms of date. Examples of the column-parapet-Hermae-parapet-column combination used on the second floor of the galleries and described as Hermae fencing can be seen in the orchestra of the Perge⁹³ Theater, in the nymphaeum of Severus

⁸⁸ For more information see. Kardoruk and Ekin-Meriç 2024, 283-800.

⁸⁹ Wegner 1956, Taf. 9.d, 12.a; Zanker 1983, Taf. 6.2.

⁹⁰ Wegner 1956, Taf. 24. a, 13. a; Zanker 1983, Taf. 7.1.

⁹¹ Özgan 2013, 134.

⁹² Akın 2019, cat. no.10, 11, 43, 42, 44.

⁹³ Wrede 1972, 123; Öztürk 1999, Taf. 2; Hanslmayr 2016, 143-145; Ferrero 1990, 161, Fig. 220.

the Great in Leptis Magna⁹⁴, in some of the terrace houses in Ephesus⁹⁵, around the piscina of Welchbiling Villa⁹⁶, in the impluvium of Villa Armira in Bulgaria⁹⁷.

Cornice / Geison + Sima / Geison with Console

The large number of blocks and the wide variety of measurements made it difficult to categorize them (**Fig. 20**). The heights of the fragments recovered from both galleries vary between 0,32, 0,34, 0,36, 0,38 m. Although there are differences in dimensions, the architectural details of cavetto, cassette/console (straight band), S moulding (cyma reversa), straight band, S moulding (cyma recta), and straight band from bottom to top on the facade are similar in all blocks. The cassettes between the brackets are decorated with floral, geometric motifs and mythological characters as filling motifs and with simple plain soffit decoration.

In addition to the blocks grouped according to the measurements taken from the blocks recovered in the east and west and found to have been used on the second floor of the galleries, geison+sima with console blocks outside these measurements were also recovered. The fact that the dimensions of the blocks are different from the other group suggests that these blocks may have been used as sima on the roof of the building. This difference in the dimensions of the geison+sima with console blocks found in and around the eastern colonnaded gallery was not observed in the blocks found in and around the western colonnaded gallery. However, the fact that the dimensions of the blocks thought to have been used on the roof of the east colonnaded gallery and the dimensions of west colonnaded gallery are similar to each other strengthens the idea that these blocks were used on the roof of the west colonnaded gallery. The fact that no specimens with similar dimensions, which we think were used on the second floor, have been found, makes it more plausible to accept this as a difference between the second floor geison+sima with console blocks between the galleries.

The similarities of the geison+sima with console blocks were used in many buildings. In addition to the highly decorated examples, there are also plain examples as in the Nicaea Theater. Some of the spolia blocks found in the scaenae of the Tarraco Theater⁹⁸, the portico of the Corinth Theater⁹⁹, the scaenae frons of the Aphrodisias Theater¹⁰⁰, the scaenae frons of the Ephesus Theater¹⁰¹ show similar characteristics.

Pediments

⁹⁴ Ward-Perkins 1993, 79-86, Pl. 42 a,b., Fig. 45; Wrede 1972, 124.

⁹⁵ Thür and Rathmayr 2014, Taf. 13, 19, 38; Abb.10,44; Krinzing 2010, Taf. 41.A-A14, A-A 15, A-A 11; Taf. 193, B-A 5/8, B-A 19; Ladstätter 2012, Fig. 74, 203; Wrede 1972, 124; Quatember 2011, 127; Hanslmayr 2016, 127, Taf. 56 c; Aurenhammer 2003, 158, Taf. 76, S9A.

⁹⁶ Kahler 2010, 201.

⁹⁷ Wrede 1972, 125; Mladenova 1980, Tav. XLVII.

⁹⁸ Mar et al. 2010, 183, Fig. 10.d.

⁹⁹ Stillwell 1952, 109, drawing no. 53.

¹⁰⁰ Theodorescu 1996, 145-147, Fig. 14-15, 17; Chaisemartin and Theodorescu 1991, 64, fig.15.D, 15.C.

¹⁰¹ Krinzing and Ruggendorfer 2017, Taf. 81, 436-437, Abb. 160, 771-772.

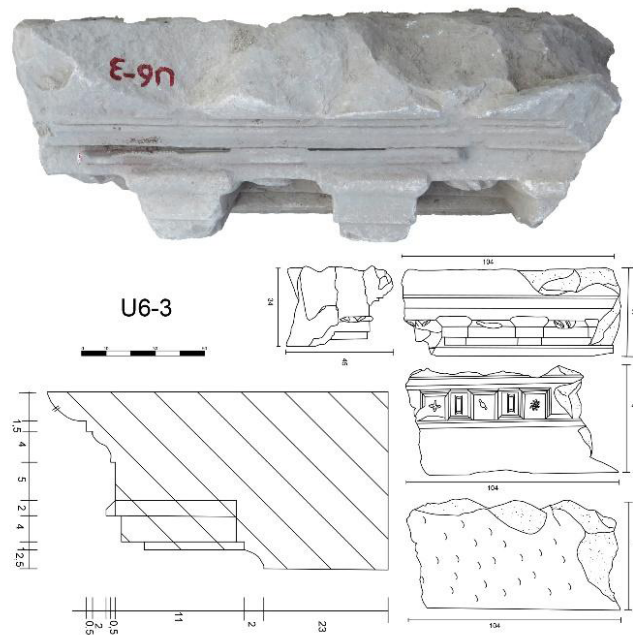


Fig 20 2nd Floor and Roof Floor Cornice, Geison+Sima, Geison+Sima with console (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

The pediments made of grey local marble (**Fig. 21**) have architectural details of straight bands and beveled bands protruding from the upper and lower contours on the facade and do not have any decoration. Apart from the fragmentary examples without flat decoration, a block found in the east colonnaded gallery belongs to the acroter section of the pediment. A similar example of the acroter fragment with half palmette decoration is seen in the Augustus Temple of Pisidia Antiocheia¹⁰². Similar examples, which are quite simple and fragmentary, are seen in almost all building types in Anatolia. Especially tomb structures¹⁰³ and temples¹⁰⁴ are among the most used structures.

Conclusion and Evaluation

Although the east and west colonnaded galleries have the same architectural combination, there are some differences between them. Apart from this, the studies carried out on the blocks within themselves have enabled us to draw different conclusions. Some differences were observed on the two postaments found in the western colonnaded gallery and the conglomerate first floor columns next to this postament. One of the postaments was found on the wall parallel to the west wall of the west colonnaded gallery in the north-south direction. Unlike the galleries, conglomerate was used in the construction of this postament. This situation shows that the postament belongs to the surrounding architectural pattern, not to the western colonnaded gallery. In the other postament found in-situ in the northwest corner of the gallery, unlike all other postaments used in and around the gallery, it was observed that the surface smoothing process was not finalized and it was left as it was after being smoothed with a fine muddler. Immediately next to the postament, in the northwest section, the rear facade of the conglomerate columns, which were probably demolished over this postament, was left flat in order to lean against something. The fact that the rear facades of the columns belonging to the galleries in the northwest corner where the postament is located were left flat and the final correction of the postament was not carried out suggests that a different architectural application was preferred in this area. It is possible that this carelessly constructed section was left in an unseen part of the building or that it is connected with the remains of the wall to the west.

The period differences between the Corinthian capitals are important in terms of the dates of construction and repair works. While the capitals dated to the Hadrian period give the date of construction as stated in Pliny letters; the capitals dated to the beginning of the Severan period suggest the earthquake in 180 AD and the repair activities afterwards. It is also known that scaenae structures were renovated in many theaters in Anatolia, especially during the Severan period. The gallery and the surrounding structures of the Nicaea Theater must also have been repaired and renovated during this period.

The conglomerate friezes used on the first-floor architraves in both galleries differ in terms of the presence of inscriptions in addition to the architectural details on the architrave crown. However, the small amount of material recovered during the studies does not sufficiently help to support this assertion. The only inscribed example recovered from the east colonnaded gallery suggests that there was an inscription on the conglomerate architrave friezes in this gallery. No inscription was found on the more numerous friezes in the west gallery.

Another difference among the blocks with inscriptions is observed on the parapets. While there is an inscription on the parapets, which were found in large numbers in both galleries, in the western colonnaded gallery, it was left plain in the eastern colonnaded gallery. In the east colonnaded gallery, the inscription was used on the first-floor conglomerate architrave friezes, while in the west colonnaded gallery it was used on the parapets. As in the friezes, the architectural details on the upper part of the parapets and the body sections differ from each other in the east and west galleries.

Some differences were also observed in the geison+sima with dentil blocks. Unlike the examples ending with a sima with S moulding, the upper facade of the geison+sima with dentil blocks used in the galleries shows a wide flat architectural detail about 0,30 m high and about 0,30 m behind the S moulding. This detail suggests

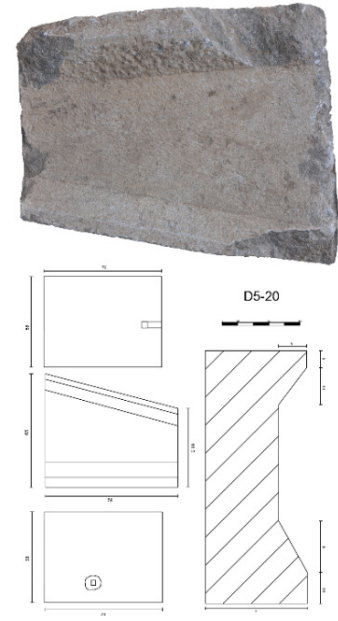


Fig 21 Pediment (photo and draw by N. Kardoruk, S. Yalova, D. Bayrak, B. Doğru 2022)

¹⁰² Alp 2006, Lev. 3.c; Özarslan 2012, 195, cat. no. ATA4.

¹⁰³ Gülşen 2010, cat. no. 85-86, Lev. 53.a, Lev. 54.b, Lev. 55.c; Kaplan 2013, Lev. 48.a, Lev. 51, Lev. 29 a,b, Lev. 5.a.

¹⁰⁴ Akkurnaz 2007, Lev. 7.E, Lev. 10.C, 11.A, Lev. 38. A; Erön 2007, Lev. 12-b; Ceylan 2013, 134, Fig. 30; Aslan 2015, 112, Lev. XIX. B.

two possible possibilities. The first one is that the remains of the buildings around the galleries are related to the galleries. In the theater, remains of a wall extending in east-west direction in the east colonnaded gallery in the north and a wall extending in north-south direction in the west colonnaded gallery in the west were found. The postaments and square feet on the walls are located on the same axis with the gallery postaments. This suggests that the walls and galleries were connected to each other with the help of arches. This detail on the connection blocks provides enough space for the placement of arch pads. As a matter of fact, many arch blocks were also recovered during the excavations. The other possibility is that this architectural detail on the upper facade of the geison+sima with dentil blocks was built to support the floor of the second floor.

The most important feature of the second floor is the architectural design consisting of parapets and Hermæ between the columns. Compared to other architectural elements, the details of the anathyrosis application made to connect the parapets, which are more in number compared to the other architectural elements, with the columns and Hermæ can be clearly observed. This arrangement became clearer with the blocks found in and around the eastern colonnaded gallery. Although no body belonging to the Hermæ was found in the west colonnaded gallery, the presence of the same anathyrosis application on the parapets found in the west gallery is important in terms of showing that the same design was also used in this gallery. Another difference in the Hermæ dated to the Hadrian period is that the male heads were found in and around the east colonnaded gallery, while the female heads were found in and around the west colonnaded gallery. Although the finds are limited, they show that only male (masculine) statues were found in the east colonnaded gallery and only female (feminine) statues were found in the west colonnaded gallery.

When the two galleries are evaluated as a whole, although they are identical in terms of architectural layout, they differ from each other at some points and complement each other in different aspects. It is observed that the architectural elements or stone artefacts of the second floor were made with better quality marble and more elaborate workmanship. In the east colonnaded gallery, inscriptions are used on the conglomerate frieze plates of the architraves on the first floor, while in the west colonnaded gallery the inscription is seen on the parapets. In the east colonnaded gallery, a masculine structure was planned by using male statues, while in the west colonnaded gallery, a feminine image was given by using women.

Postaments, conglomerate fluted and unfluted columns, Corinthian capitals, architraves made of grey local marble, conglomerate frieze, Cornice/ Geison+Sima/ Geison+Sima with dentil, first floor; Attic-Ionic bases, columns made of white marble, Corinthian capitals, Hermæ, parapets, architraves made of white/yellow marble, Cornice/ Geison+Sima/ Geison+Sima with console and pediments were used on the second floor. There are no complete preserved examples among the column fragments recovered. Therefore, it is not clear how high the building was. However, Vitruvius mentions that the diameter of the lower base of the columns is eight times. According to the calculation made by taking the architectural finds into consideration, it is thought that the second floor with a height of 5,96 m was carried on the lower floor with a height of approximately 9,65 m (Fig. 22, 23). However, it should not be forgotten that not all the buildings constructed during the Roman period were built according to the proportions given by Vitruvius. Considering the measurements of the pediments and the cement on it, it can be assumed that the building with a roof height of 1,5 m reached a height of approximately 17 m.

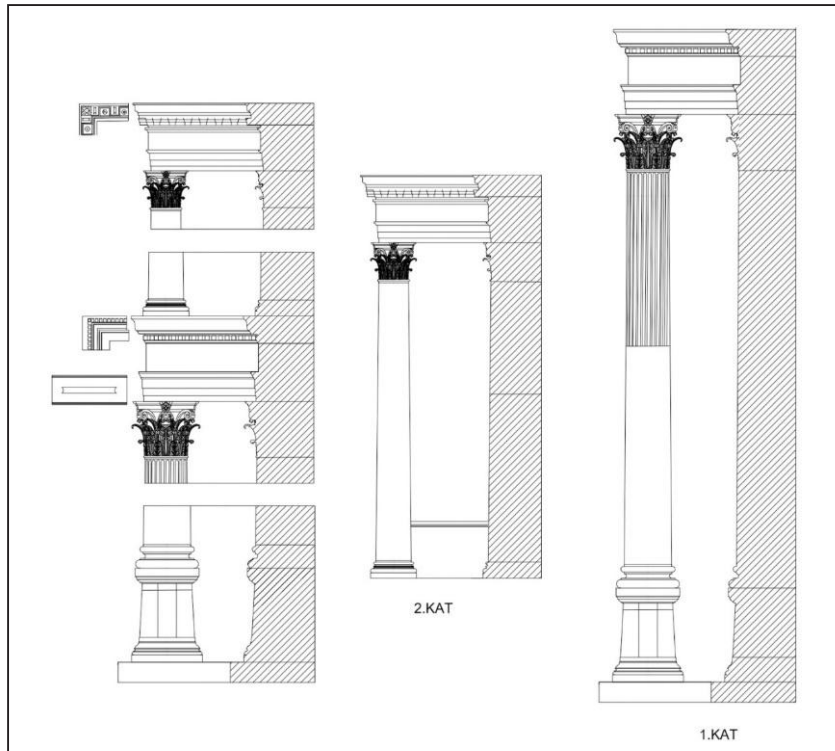
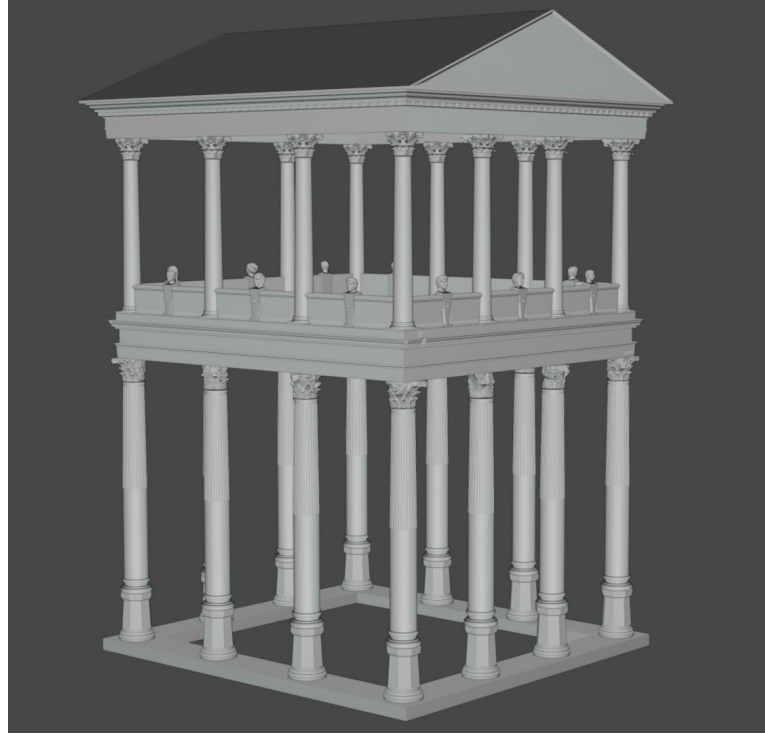


Fig 22 Colonnaded Galleries 1st and 2nd Floor Drawings (draw by D. Bayrak 2021)

Similar examples of the use of these galleries, which complete the theater on both sides of the scaenae, are not found in any contemporary theater. This shows that the theater constitutes a unique example among all other theaters with Roman character. During the excavations carried out in and around the colonnaded galleries of the Nicaea Theater, the presence of some walls at the level of the stylobate surrounding the galleries was found. Thus, the galleries do not appear to be a building unit on their own, but a structure connected to the surrounding walls. When the theaters built during the Roman Imperial Period and bearing the Roman character are analyzed, it is seen that these wall remains are the original architectural remains of the Roman theaters. The wall of the entrance hall, which is called “Basilica”. Most of the aforementioned features are also seen in basilicas, which have become an architectural tradition in Roman theaters. Structures whose function did not change much, the arched entrances on both sides of the scaenae function as a monumental entrance hall, welcoming the protocol with corridors separated by columns. The basilicas, which are accepted as an extension of the stage in Roman theaters, were built within the borders of Greece and Anatolia due to the lack of sufficient space. examples are almost non-existent. Therefore, the evaluation of the galleries in the theater of Nicaea as Basilica at the same time can be considered an important discovery in terms of the architectural history of Anatolia.



*Fig 23 Possible 3D visual of the East Colonnaded Gallery
(draw by A. K. Öz, N. Kardoruk, D. Bayrak, O. Kayabey, A. N. Sarıtekin,
D. Ülgü, B. Erengül 2023)*

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