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The Colossal Figured Consoles of the Hadrianic Baths at Aphrodisias

aus / from

Istanbuler Mitteilungen, 72 (2022)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34780/wa2r-w842>

Herausgebende Institution / Publisher:
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut

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IMPRESSUM

Istanbuler Mitteilungen

erscheint seit 1933/*published since 1933*

IstMitt 72, 2022 • 282 Seiten/*pages* mit 262 Abbildungen/*illustrations*

Herausgeber/*Editors*

Prof. Dr. Felix Pirson • Dr.-Ing. Moritz Kinzel
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut
Abteilung Istanbul
İnönü Caddesi 10
34437 Gümüşsuyu – Istanbul
Türkei
www.dainst.org

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Indices

Istanbuler Mitteilungen sind indiziert im/*Istanbuler Mitteilungen are indexed in the* European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences ERIHPLUS und in der/*and in the* Expertly Curated Abstract and Citation Database Scopus.

Redaktion und Layout/*Editing and Typesetting*

Gesamtverantwortliche Redaktion/*Publishing editor:*

Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Redaktion der Abteilung Istanbul, İnönü Caddesi 10, 34437 Gümüşsuyu-Istanbul, Türkei
Kontakt für Manuskripteinreichung/*Contact for article submissions:* redaktion.istanbul@dainst.de
Redaktion/*Editing:* Martina Koch, Ulrich Mania
Satz/*Typesetting:* le-tex publishing services GmbH, Leipzig
Corporate Design, Layoutgestaltung/*Layout design:* LMK Büro für Kommunikationsdesign, Berlin

Umschlagfoto/*Cover illustration:* Archivfoto der Hadriansthermen in Aphrodisias (1961). Im Vordergrund: Konsole Typ B mit Minotaurus-Protome (Kat. 42 im Artikel von J. J. Thomas) (Foto: New York Excavations at Aphrodisias, Projektarchiv).

Druckausgabe/*Printed edition*

© 2023 Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin

Druck und Vertrieb/*Printing and Distribution:* Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden (www.reichert-verlag.de)

P-ISSN: 0341-9142 – ISBN: 978-3-7520-0718-3

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Druck und Bindung in Deutschland/*Printed and Bound in Germany*

Digitale Ausgabe/*Digital edition*

© 2023 Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin

Webdesign/*Webdesign:* LMK Büro für Kommunikationsdesign, Berlin

XML-Export, Konvertierung/*XML-Export, Conversion:* digital publishing competence, München

Programmierung Viewer-Ausgabe/*Programming Viewer:* LEAN BAKERY, München

E-ISSN: 2940-8202 – DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34780/ja6c-6e13>

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ABSTRACT

The Colossal Figured Consoles of the Hadrianic Baths at Aphrodisias

Joshua J. Thomas

This paper examines a remarkable series of console blocks from Aphrodisias in Caria, all decorated with colossal protomes depicting animals and well-known figures from the mythological tradition. More than thirty consoles survive, many of them entirely unpublished. These pieces originally decorated the Palaestra Court of the Hadrianic Baths: a large forecourt providing access to the bathing facilities of the complex. Here the full corpus of surviving consoles and fragments is presented for the first time, arranged according to their different functional categories. There follow discussions of how the blocks were displayed, and their striking iconographic choices.

KEYWORDS

Aphrodisias, Hadrianic Baths, Architectural Sculpture, Consoles, Protomes

The Colossal Figured Consoles of the Hadrianic Baths at Aphrodisias

Introduction

¹ More than thirty consoles from Aphrodisias in Caria carry colossal protomes depicting some of the best-known figures of Greek mythology¹. These remarkable blocks stand out for their enormous size, arresting iconography, and powerful visual impact. Among the surviving pieces we encounter Herakles as brawny athlete, Perseus as charismatic young hero, Medusa as apotropaic heroine, and the Minotaur in all his half-bovine glory. Other pieces depict ferocious lions, sturdy bulls, and a pair of sensuous female goddesses or personifications.

² The consoles originally decorated the Hadrianic Baths, a monumental bathing complex located in the heart of Aphrodisias. Most were discovered in and around the Baths' Palaestra Court: a large gymnasium-like courtyard framed by stoas on all four sides. This court was first excavated in 1904–1905 by P. Gaudin, a railway engineer and amateur archaeologist, with the results published in reports by M. Collignon and G. Mendel². At least ten well-preserved consoles were removed from Aphrodisias shortly after. Seven were taken to the Istanbul Archaeological Museum in 1906, where they remain today. A further three travelled to Izmir, where they entered the collection of the Izmir Archaeological Museum in 1926³. These three pieces were returned to Aphrodisias in 2010⁴.

Title Page: Cat. 42, Type C console
with Minotaur, front view

¹ I would like to thank the Aphrodisias Project director R. R. R. Smith for his permission to study the consoles, and for helpful suggestions for the article's improvement. Special thanks are due also to A. L. Amiri for his wonderful photography. Several colleagues provided invaluable assistance at various stages, including I. Jacobs, J. Lenaghan, H. Mark, U. Outschar, U. Quatember, B. Russell, S. Sommersan, P. T. Stinson, A. T. Tek, O. Yildirim, K. Welch and A. I. Wilson. Much difficult on-site work was completed with the help and expertise of T. Kaefer and G. Paul. I am also grateful to U. Mania, M. Koch and two anonymous readers for their stimulating comments. Any remaining errors are my own.

² Collignon 1904; Collignon 1906; Mendel 1906.

³ Their whereabouts during the intervening two decades have been discussed: see Erım 1967.

⁴ Return from Izmir: Smith 2012, 46; Smith 2016, 33.

3 The seven consoles in Istanbul were published expertly by Mendel in his seminal *Catalogue des sculptures grecques, romaines et byzantines*⁵. While scattered photographs of several other pieces have appeared in the years since, the majority of consoles remain entirely unpublished. For this reason, major new research on the pieces still at Aphrodisias was undertaken between 2018 and 2021⁶. This project involved locating, cleaning, documenting and photographing the surviving pieces; identifying joins; and re-evaluating the role of the consoles within the decorative ensemble of the Palaestra Court. This article presents the results of this research, and constitutes the first comprehensive treatment of these exceptional architectural blocks. After a brief account of the Hadrianic Baths, the full corpus of surviving consoles and fragments will be presented, arranged by their functional categories. There follow discussions of how the blocks were displayed, and their striking iconographic choices. As we shall see, the consoles testify to the astonishing skill and inventiveness of Aphrodisian sculptors and architects during the High Imperial Period.

The Hadrianic Baths: Design, Chronology, Excavation

Location, Design, Chronology

4 The Hadrianic Baths were located in the centre of Aphrodisias, immediately to the west of the large urban park known in antiquity as the Place of Palms⁷. The modern name of the Baths stems from a series of dedicatory inscriptions for Hadrian carved on the architecture of the complex, one of which names the emperor together with his imperial epithets Olympios and Panhellenios⁸. Since the first of these titles was bestowed in A.D. 128/129, this date supplies a terminus post quem for the dedication of the bath building⁹. A sixth-century inscription honouring a benefactor named Rhodopaïos reveals that the complex was then known as 'the Summer Olympian Baths'¹⁰.

5 Recent research has helped clarify the original design of the Baths (fig. 1)¹¹. The functional bathing facilities were located at the western side of the complex, consisting of a series of parallel barrel-vaulted chambers arranged around a grand central caldarium (no. 4 in fig. 1). Immediately to the east of these functional rooms was the Palaestra Court (no. 15 in fig. 1), a large rectangular courtyard framed by Corinthian stoas on all four sides. This courtyard functioned both as an exercise space and as a forecourt for accessing the bathing facilities proper. The court's east stoa shared a back wall with the west stoa of the Place of Palms, indicating that the two were constructed together as a »split-level double-faced stoa«¹²: split-level because the ground level in the Place of Palms is ca. 1.20 m lower than in the Palaestra Court of the Baths¹³. Three entranceways punctuated the shared wall between the two stoas: a central tetrastyle propylon (W: 9.5 m), perhaps crowned by a pediment; and

5 Mendel 1914, 176–179. 189–195 nos. 496–502. The entries of Mendel's *Catalogue* can now be consulted online, at <<http://nouveau-mendel.huma-num.fr/>> (23.05.2022).

6 Mentioned in the 2018 season report: Smith 2020, 57.

7 The Place of Palms was recently the subject of a large-scale excavation and research project, generously sponsored by Mica and Ahmet Ertegun. For preliminary findings, see Wilson 2016b; Wilson et al. 2016.

8 IApH 2007, 5.5; Wilson 2016a, 185 no. 7.

9 Boulanger 1914, 49 n. 2; McDavid 2016, 210 n. 6.

10 ALA 2004, 87; IApH 2007, 11.515. Recently on Rhodopaïos: Lenaghan 2018; Wilson 2019, 209–211.

11 Wilson 2016a; Öztürk 2016. For earlier accounts, see Yegül 1992, 273–278; Barresi 2003, 344–348.

12 For this designation, see Smith 2007, 208.

13 Öztürk 2016, 202.

two smaller doorways at the northern and southern extremities¹⁴. All three were equipped with staircases to offset the difference in ground level.

6 Of the monumental buildings constructed in Aphrodisias, the Hadrianic Baths enjoyed perhaps the longest lifespan, since the complex continued to be maintained, repaired and renovated throughout Late Antiquity¹⁵. Important new evidence concerning these late antique renovations was recovered in 2016, when a bronze coin of the emperor Phocas (A.D. 602–610) was found embedded in the mortar layer immediately beneath some loose marble paving in the north-western part of the caldarium¹⁶. This coin indicates that parts of the Baths continued to be repaired in the early seventh century.

Palaestra Court Consoles: Excavation and Study History

7 As we have noted, the Palaestra Court was first excavated by P. Gaudin in 1904–1905. Around ten consoles can be traced in the reports and photographs documenting this excavation, but it is likely that the total number uncovered was significantly higher¹⁷. Following a campaign led by the epigrapher A. Boulanger in 1913 that apparently produced no further console finds¹⁸, excavations in the Baths ceased until 1937, when the complex was again investigated by an Italian team led by G. Jacopi. This campaign led to the discovery of two new consoles, both pictured and described in the publication that followed¹⁹. Less than a decade later, M. Squarciapino discussed the pieces excavated by Gaudin in her monograph on *La scuola di Afrodizia*²⁰.

8 Excavations at Aphrodisias resumed in 1961, this time co-ordinated by a team from New York University led by Prof. K. Erim. Much of the monumental city centre was exposed over the following three decades, including previously unexcavated parts of the Baths (1960s) and the Place of Palms (1970s–1990). These excavations uncovered im-

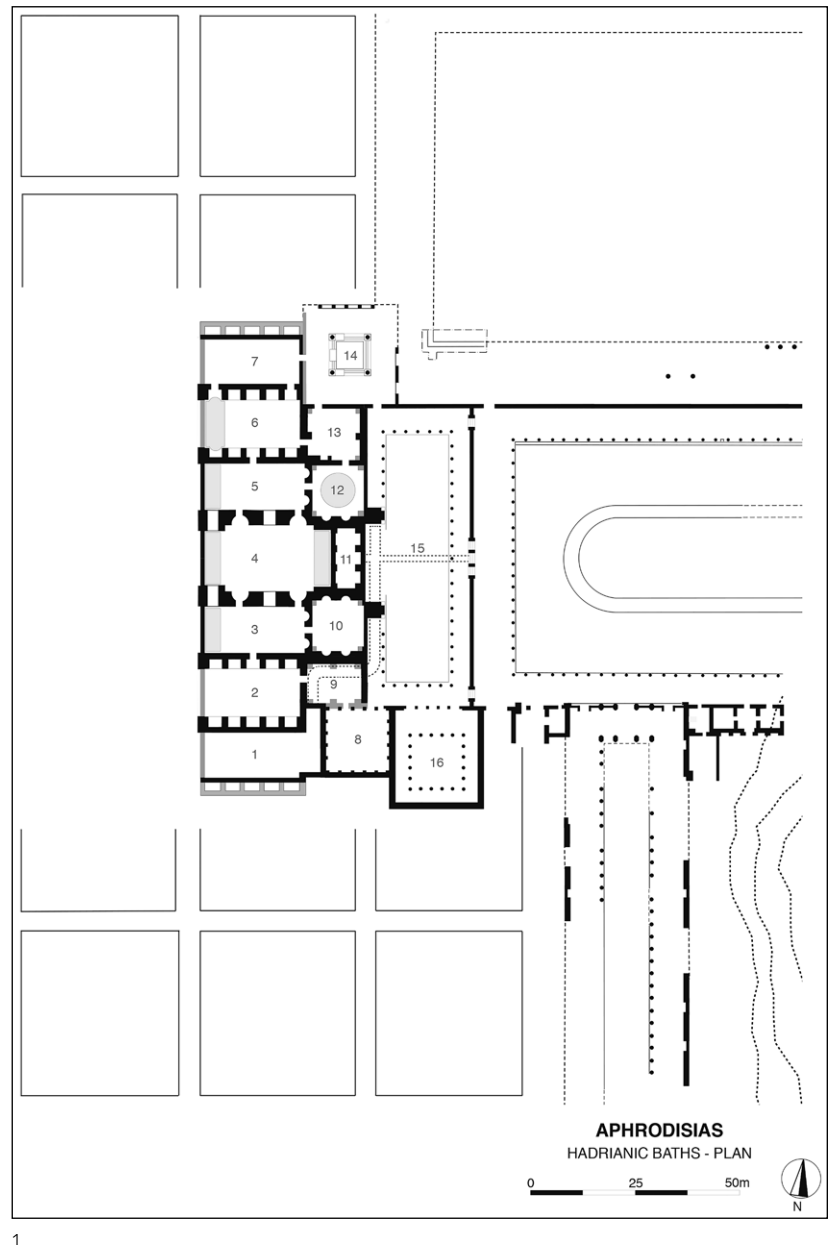


Fig. 1: Schematic plan of the Hadrianic Baths and the surrounding areas. The Palaestra Court (no. 15) served as a forecourt to the functional bathing facilities, including the large central caldarium (no. 4)

14 Entranceways: Öztürk 2016, 202–204.

15 Late antique interventions: McDavid 2016; Wilson 2016a, 192 f.; Wilson 2019, 209–212.

16 On this discovery, see Smith 2018, 270; Wilson 2019, 212.

17 See, notably, Mendel 1914, 178: »Pour les consoles, il faut, aux exemplaires réunis ici, ajouter: plusieurs consoles à la tête Méduse, une console à tête de lion, deux consoles à tête de taureau ... une grande »Flore« ... un Minotaure ... tous laissés à Ghére [= Geyre = Aphrodisias] avec d'autres fragments.«

18 For this campaign, see Boulanger 1914.

19 Crema 1939, 268. 275–278 figs. 45. 46; Jacopi 1939, 158 f. nos. 162. 163; 194.

20 Squarciapino 1943, 66–69.

portant new console finds, while photographs from the early- to mid-1960s document the positions of pieces in the Palaestra Court that had been excavated and left behind by Gaudin²¹.

9 Three site catalogues composed in the 1990s began the important work of documenting and describing the surviving consoles²². More recently, between 2009 and 2016, the Hadrianic Baths were the subject of a major programme of conservation, designed »to arrest the decay of the sensitive archaeology of this grand and sophisticated bathing complex and to maintain the remains in a sustainable condition«²³. As part of this conservation programme, the console pieces remaining in the Palaestra Court were moved to a block field near the Civil Basilica. At the same time, the architecture of the Palaestra Court was studied by the late Prof. A. Öztürk, who published her important preliminary findings in *Aphrodisias Papers* 5²⁴. The same volume also contains chapters by A. Wilson, on the layout and financing of the Baths, and by A. McDavid, on the renovation of the complex during Late Antiquity²⁵.

Typology and Catalogue

10 About sixty console pieces were located and studied during the current research project²⁶. Since some pieces join and others are small fragments, the original number of consoles was certainly lower. The securest metric for estimating the total number of consoles is supplied by the number of surviving protome heads, which stands at somewhere between thirty-three and thirty-five. It is striking that this figure corresponds roughly with the number of Palaestra Court columns that originally had continuous sections of stoa wall behind (about thirty-two). In other words, the number of surviving consoles is about the same as the number we would expect to have been set up in the Palaestra Court. This implies a high survival rate, which could be explained both by the long lifespan of the Hadrianic Baths and by the difficulty involved in moving and re-using such massive architectural pieces.

11 The surviving blocks can be divided into four functional categories, here designated Types A to D. The majority of pieces belong to Types A and B consoles: only two Type C and two Type D examples survive. Here it will be helpful to define the key characteristics of each category before presenting the surviving examples of each in turn. The examples are arranged according to their protome iconography in the following order: Herakles, Perseus, Medusa, lion, bull, Minotaur. This is the sequence followed in the more detailed discussion of the consoles' iconography later on in this article. The running numbers of the pieces in the catalogue [1–45] are referred to throughout, enclosed in square brackets and underlined.

21 As well as the photographs taken by the New York team, several photographs taken by A. Güler in 1961 show consoles in the Palaestra Court.

22 These excellent catalogues were compiled by A. Tolga Tek, J. Chi and L. Klar Philips. They are mentioned in the following season reports: Smith 1995, 356; Smith 1996, 53–55; Smith 1998b, 304; Smith – Ratté 2001, 426; Ratté – Smith 2004, 171.

23 On this conservation programme, see Smith 2016, 25 f.

24 Öztürk 2016.

25 McDavid 2016; Wilson 2016a.

26 Regrettably, two fragments recorded in the 1993 site catalogue have not been located. Already in 1999, both were recorded as »Consoles noted on 1993 and 1996 lists, not presently visible«. They are described as follows: (1) »Console head fragment. Broken on all sides, encrusted with lichen. Surface weathered and worn. Preserved is only part of head with ear and hair of left side. Identification impossible. H: 59, W: 43, D: 48«; (2) »Console fragment with snake hair. Surface burned. Lichen growing on surface. Fragment from a Medusa head? Only R top corner preserved: bit of hair and snake's body. H: 37, W: 7.5, D: 20«.

Type A: Double-sided Consoles

12 At least fifteen double-sided consoles survive, together with numerous fragments. These pieces can be described as double-sided because decorative elements project from both ends of each block. Fully preserved, each console measures 65–73 cm in height, 76–86 cm in width, and up to 226 cm in length/depth.

13 On the front face of each block is a colossal figural protome. In some cases the protome head accounts for all of the available surface area, while in others it projects from a flat background surface. Among the surviving protomes, two or three depict Perseus [2. 3. 4], three depict Medusa [5. 6. 7], two depict the Minotaur [11. 12], two depict bulls [8. 9], one depicts a lion [10], and one depicts Herakles [1]. In other cases the iconography can no longer be determined [e.g. 13. 14. 15].

14 Behind the protome is the remainder of the front projecting portion, decorated with ornamental panels on the lateral sides. These side panels are rectangular and oriented vertically. Each panel consists of the following elements: a flat outer frame; a moulded inner frame with a cyma reversa profile; a background surface enclosed by the inner frame; and two conjoined volutes projecting in relief from this background. The upper volute tends to be larger than the lower, and the two always joined to form an ›S‹ or ›reverse-S‹ shape, recalling the typical form of volute consoles in classical architecture²⁷. Moulded borders running along the edges of the volutes enhance their definition. Two or three tendrils sprout from the base of the lower volute, sometimes accompanied by small leaves. Above each side panel is a richly encrusted egg-and-dart border set beneath a flat, unarticulated band running adjacent to the upper surface of the block.

15 On the underside are two rectangular coffers, positioned in the area directly ›beneath‹ the decorative side panels (see e.g. fig. 26). Each coffer has a central rosette framed by an egg-and-dart border. Mendel observed that several consoles taken to Istanbul had mortise-and-tenon fittings on the underside – some with iron tenons still preserved – for the attachment of metal ornament²⁸. Since the consoles on-site at Aphrodisias are mostly stored ›the right way up‹, it has not been possible to assess how many were equipped with such fittings.

16 Behind the side panels is the embedded portion, originally inserted into the rear stoa wall. This portion is quadrangular in section, and is the widest part of the console.

17 At the rear of each block is a projecting bracket with a standard curved design²⁹. This bracket has an upper moulded profile consisting of a cyma recta, a narrow fillet, a quarter-round ovolo and a tall band, from bottom to top. On the bracket's underside is a decorative fillet of the kind commonly used for the adornment of architrave soffits (see e.g. fig. 26. 27. 28).

27 Volute consoles in antiquity: von Hesberg 1980, 205–217.

28 Mendel 1914, 191–193 cats. 497–499. 194 cat. 501.

29 For a useful discussion of consoles and modillions with this curved design (›geschweifte Konsolen‹), see von Hesberg 1980, 151–161.

Cat. 1

Double-sided console with Herakles (fig. 2)

Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2276. H: 80.5, W (at bottom): 75, Protome D: ca. 37 cm.

Find context: Found 1905 »dans la moitié sud de la galerie de l'est« (Mendel 1914, 192); i.e. in south wing of west stoa of Place of Palms. For technical information concerning this and the other pieces now in Istanbul, refer to the detailed descriptions in Mendel's *Catalogue*.

Literature: Mendel 1906, 176 fig. 5. 178; Mendel 1914, 192 no. 498; Squarciapino 1943, 67; LIMC IV (1988) 741 no. 166 s. v. Herakles (O. Palagia); Barresi 2003, pl. 50, 3
Description: This Herakles protome was taken to Istanbul in 1906. The hero is characterised by his compact facial features, muscular brow, thick beard, and swollen, boxer-like ears. He wears a wreath made up of large five-lobed leaves – possibly vine leaves – with fillets »hanging« in relief to either side. Mendel states that the protome comes from a double-sided console.



2

Cat. 2

Double-sided console with Perseus (fig. 3)

Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2274. H: 66, W (at bottom): 69.5, Protome D: ca. 49 cm.

Find context: Found 1905 in Palaestra Court, »devant le portique est, non loin de l'angle nord-est« (Mendel 1914, 192).

Literature: Mendel 1906, 177 fig. 6. 178; Mendel 1914, 192 f. no. 499; Squarciapino 1943, 68; LIMC VII (1994) 334 no. 25 s. v. Perseus (L. Jones Roccas)

Description: This Perseus protome was taken to Istanbul in 1906. The hero is depicted with a fleshy round face, pouty lips, a broad nose, and a muscular brow. His hair is parted off-centre into long waves, covering the upper ears on both sides. Below Perseus' chin, the *harpē* is depicted in relief. Mendel states that the piece comes from a double-sided console.



3

Cat. 3

Double-sided console with Perseus (fig. 4. 5)

H: 74, W: 73.5, D: 183.5. Protome D: 31. Embedded portion D: 85. Rear bracket D: 35.5 cm.

Find context: Found 1937 »nell'angolo di NE del peristilio« (Jacopi 1939, 158); i.e. close to north-east corner of Palaestra Court. Photographed here in 1965 (MedForm1965-13-10).

Condition: In current state, block has barrel-shaped profile. Broken or missing: right side of protome head; outer half of right coffer; right side panel; front edges and volutes of left side panel; left egg-and-dart; much of embedded portion surface on right side; tip of rear bracket. Surviving surfaces weathered and abraded, with marble disintegrating in places. Large crack running through protome's right cheek. Best-preserved patches of protome face suggest tooth chisel finish. Inner canthi of eyes incised. Upper surface above embedded portion slightly recessed with careful point chisel work.

Literature: Crema 1939, 277 f. fig. 46; Jacopi 1939, 158 f. no. 163. pl. XL

Description: The severely-weathered protome decorating this console was misidentified as a female figure when excavated in 1937. That the protome represents Perseus is suggested by several iconographic features shared with other Perseus protomes in our series: the muscular brow, the long curls of hair covering the upper ears, and the *harpē* beneath the chin.

Fig. 2: Cat. 1, Herakles protome from double-sided console, right three-quarter view from below

Fig. 3: Cat. 2, Perseus protome from double-sided console, front view from below



4



6



5



7

Cat. 4

Double-sided console with Perseus (fig. 6, 7)

Block no.: HB-0915 (= Hadrianic Baths 0915). H: 67.5, W: 81.5, D: 222. Protome D: 33. Embedded portion D: 82.5. Rear bracket D: 73.5 cm. Unpublished. Find context: First documented in west stoa of Place of Palms in 1990s, west of second column (counting from south).

Condition: Broken or missing: upper part of protome; most of right side panel; front corners of left side panel; left egg-and-dart; lower edges of embedded portion on both sides. Remaining parts of protome badly weathered and abraded, making finish difficult to assess. Upper surface of entire block flattened with careful point chisel work, with finer tooth chisel work visible along lateral edges.

Description: The protome decorating this console originally depicted a full-faced, beardless figure. Two considerations suggest that Perseus was probably represented. Firstly, drill channels at either side of the face probably delineate tragi, indicating that the lower ears were exposed. Secondly, traces remain of the *harpē* blade below the figure's chin.

Fig. 4: [Cat. 3](#), double-sided console with Perseus, front view

Fig. 5: [Cat. 3](#), double-sided console with Perseus, left view

Cat. 5

Double-sided console with Medusa (fig. 8)

Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2279. H: 65.5, W (at bottom): 70, Protome D: ca. 39 cm.

Find context: Found 1904 in Palaestra Court, »près du dernier piédestal (à l'est) du portique nord« (Mendel 1914, 191).

Literature: Collignon 1904, 707; Collignon 1906, 42 f. pl. XIX; Mendel 1906, 178; Mendel 1914, 191 no. 497; Squarciapino 1943, 66 f.; Barattolo 1982, 148; Erism 1986, 43 fig.; LIMC IV (1988) 350 no. 51 s. v. Gorgones Romanae (O. Paoletti)

Description: This protome was taken to Istanbul in 1906. It follows the standard Medusa scheme, with fleshy face, furrowed brow, and a facial expression characterised by heavy pathos. The serpents are unusually well preserved, with their tails knotted under the chin. Mendel suggested that the piece comes from a Type A console, on account of its sophisticated tooth-chisel finish.

Fig. 6: [Cat. 4](#), double-sided console with Perseus, front view

Fig. 7: [Cat. 4](#), double-sided console with Perseus, left view

Cat. 6**Double-sided console with Medusa** (fig. 9, 10)

Recomposed of two pieces, fitting break-to-break.

(1) Main body of block, HB-0834. H: 69, W: 76, D: 210. Protome D: 27. Embedded portion D: 77.5. Rear bracket D: 64 cm. (2) Medusa protome fragment, inv. 75-277. H: 55, W: 36, D: 97 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: (1) First documented in west stoa of Place of Palms in 1990s, west of fourth column (counting from north). (2) Found 1975, »Clearing NW portion of Portico of Tiberius«: i.e. in north wing of west stoa of Place of Palms (site inventory card).

Condition: Broken or missing: large »slice« from protome, accounting for loss of right eye, nose, and much of left cheek; top front corner of right side panel; right egg-and-dart; lower edges of both side panels; shallow »slice« from bottom front corner of embedded portion on right side; tip of rear bracket. Separate protome fragment indicates face worked to rasp finish. Light tooth chisel work visible only on patches sheltered by hair curls. Inner canthus incised but iris and pupil unmarked. Upper surface above embedded portion slightly recessed with tooth chisel work. Two marble flaws running depth-ways visible on block's upper surface, one resulting in crack. Tooth-chiselled anasthrosis bands along edges of embedded portion on both sides. On right side, rough vertical channel cut into rear of side panel.

Description: The Medusa protome decorating this console follows the usual design. Here the gorgon has a rounded face with heavy cheeks and a strong chin. The pair of serpents meet in a half-knot below her chin.

Cat. 7**Double-sided console with Medusa** (fig. 11, 12)

Recomposed of two pieces still joined at time of excavation: (1) Main body of block. H: 71.5, W: 80, D: 196. Front projecting portion D: 46. Embedded portion D: 88. Rear bracket D: 62 cm. (2) Medusa protome. H: 67, W: 78, D: 53. Protome D: 35 cm.

Find context: Found 1937 »lungo il lato occidentale del portico, poco più ad est della linea del colonnato« (Jacopi 1939, 159): i.e. just east of west stoa of Place of Palms. Photographed in 1965, just north of central doorway leading into Palaestra Court (MedForm1965-13-05, MedForm1965-13-08).

Condition: Broken or missing: chin, lips, nose, right wing and serpent heads of protome; lower front corner of right side panel; most of left side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; lower edges of embedded portion; underside and edges of rear bracket; shallow »slice« from upper surface above rear bracket. Best-preserved patches suggest protome face worked to rasp finish. No eye markings. Upper surface of embedded portion slightly recessed with careful point chisel work. Central lewis hole, but with remains of second transverse lewis cutting – never used – behind.

Literature: Crema 1939, 275 f. fig. 45; Jacopi 1939, 158 f. no. 162. pl. XL; Squarciapino 1943, 67; Squarciapino 1974, pl. XLI, 1; Barattolo 1982, 148. pl. 76, 2

Description: Medusa here has a long face with fleshy cheeks, which is inclined slightly to the proper left. Despite its poor state of preservation, enough survives to indicate that this was originally a high-quality piece. It is notable that the right upper eyelid is partially obscured by a drooping »hood« of skin, whereas the left upper eyelid is fully visible.

Cat. 8**Double-sided console with bull** (fig. 13, 14)

H: 68, W: 78.5, D: 210. Protome D: 30. Embedded portion D: 84. Rear bracket D: 58 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: Found 1971 during cleaning »in the section of the Portico of Tiberius (sc. Place of Palms) just east of the northern edge of the Baths« (Notebook 102, p. 178): i.e. in north wing of west stoa of Place of Palms³⁰.

Condition: Broken or missing: outer right ear, horns, and part of right nostril of protome; tips of acanthus leaves; shallow »slice« from upper surface above protome head; lower edges of both side panels; upper front corner of right side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; lower part of embedded portion on left side; shallow »slices« of embedded portion on right side; part of rear bracket's upper surface. Protome badly weathered, with marble surface crumbling away in places. This makes protome finish difficult to assess: best-preserved patches suggest rasp finish. Upper surface above embedded portion recessed with fine point chisel work. On right side, rough vertical channel cut through rear side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart. On left side, rough cutting in corresponding position at rear of egg-and-dart.

Description: While the bull protome is relatively poorly preserved, it clearly follows the usual iconographic scheme. The sophisticated treatment of the side panels suggests that the console was originally finished to a high level of specification.

Cat. 9**Double-sided console with bull** (fig. 15, 16)

Recomposed of two pieces: (1) Main body of block, HB-0868. H: 70, W: 79.5, D: 220. Protome D: 31. Embedded portion D: 85. Rear bracket D: 55 cm. (2) Protome snout, find no: Por.Tib.W 1989 F2. H: 28, W: 24, D: 16.5 cm.

Find context: (1) Photographed in west stoa of Place of Palms in 1965, next to central stairway leading into Palaestra Court of Baths (MedForm1965-15-03, MedForm1965-15-09). (2) Found 1989 in rubble fill at west end of Place of Palms pool (Notebook 304, p. 1 F2).

Condition: Broken or missing: »slice« from left brow and horns of protome; lower edges of both side panels; upper corners of rear bracket; shallow »slice« from upper surface at point of transition between embedded portion and rear bracket. Cracks in upper surface

30 »Notebook« = site excavation notebook kept in the Aphrodisias archive. The notebooks are numbered consecutively in chronological order.



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Fig. 8: Cat. 5, Medusa protome from double-sided console, front view

Fig. 9: Cat. 6, double-sided console with Medusa, front view (photo montage)

Fig. 10: Cat. 6, double-sided console with Medusa, left view (photo montage)

Fig. 11: Cat. 7, double-sided console with Medusa, front view

Fig. 12: Cat. 7, double-sided console with Medusa, right view (photo montage)



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Fig. 13: Cat. 8, double-sided console with bull, front view

Fig. 14: Cat. 8, double-sided console with bull, left view

towards rear of block. Protome weathered and stained, though better-preserved snout fragment suggests relatively smooth finish. Unusual cuttings on lateral sides of embedded portion. On left side, lower part cut back, with punch marks visible in recessed area. On right side, tooth-chiselled contact bands along all four edges, and two shallow rectangular cuttings at rear. Upper surface of embedded portion slightly recessed with tooth chisel work.

Literature: Pülz 1989, pl. 35, 3

Description: The bull protome decorating this console likewise follows the standard design. Unusually, its ears are worked in very low relief against the background surface. The snout fragment was re-attached to the main block soon after being found, with the join pictured in the 1999 site catalogue. At some later stage the snout was taken into a site sculpture depot.

Cat. 10

Double-sided console with lion (fig. 17. 18)

Recomposed of two pieces: (1) Main body of block. H: 68, W: 77, D: 180. Front projecting portion D: 56.5, Embedded portion D: 86.5, Rear bracket D: 39 cm.

(2) Lion protome. H: 56, W: 62.5, D: 60. Protome D: 34 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: (1) First documented in 1990s at west end of Place of Palms, east of sixth column of west stoa (counting from south). (2) First documented in 1990s at west end of Place of Palms, east of ninth column of west stoa (counting from south).

Condition: Broken or missing: upper part of protome; much of protome surface; right egg-and-dart; front and bottom parts of left side panel; front of left egg-and-dart; coffers; upper surface above side panels; lower edges of embedded portion; much of rear bracket. Flaw in marble visible on upper surface. Patches on left side of protome face suggest tooth chisel finish. Inner canthi of eyes indicated with drill-work. Upper surface of embedded portion slightly recessed with fine point chisel work. Deep transverse depression in upper surface of rear bracket.

Description: The find locations and break planes of these two pieces suggest that they belonged to a single console. The lion protome is poorly preserved. Originally its mouth was open and its eyes slightly upturned.

Cat. 11

Double-sided console with Minotaur (fig. 19. 20)

HB-0839. H: 67, W: 82, D: 214. Protome D: 31.5. Embedded portion D: 80. Rear bracket D: 61 cm.

Find context: Found 1975 and »left in situ in the northern end of the west portico (sc. of Place of Palms)« (Notebook 164, p. 43). Documented in 1990s west of fifth column of west stoa of Place of Palms (counting from north).

Condition: Broken or missing: left side of protome, as well as nose and horns; much of underside of front projection; lower front corner, bottom edge and volutes of left side panel; lower rear corner and volutes of right side panel; shallow »slice« at rear of embedded

portion on right side; back edge of rear bracket.

Surface of protome weathered and stained, though patches on proper right side suggest rasp finish. Faint traces of incised iris in right eye. Upper surface of embedded portion recessed with point chisel work. Recessed margin also running around edges of rear bracket upper surface. Also on upper surface: incised line marking »transition point« between protome and side panels; three parallel incised lines at rear left of embedded portion. Differential treatment of lateral sides of embedded portion: on left side, tooth chisel anathyrosis bands along all four edges; on right side, wider contact bands at top and rear. Also on right side: rough vertical channel through rear of side panel and egg-and-dart.

Literature: Erım 1976, 29

Description: The protome follows the standard »young Minotaur« scheme, and was originally well finished. The figure has a human facial structure, fleshy physiognomy, bovine ears, cow-like eyes with massive irises, a furry brow, and long shaggy hair falling to shoulder level.

Cat. 12

Double-sided console with Minotaur (fig. 21. 22)

Recomposed of two pieces, fitting break-to-break.

(1) Main body of block, HB-0876. H: 71, W: 84.5, D: 225. Protome D: 30. Embedded portion D: 85. Rear bracket D: 72 cm. (2) Minotaur protome fragment, Aphrodisias Museum inv. 1187. H: 32.5, W: 18, D: 42 cm.

Find context: (1) First documented in west stoa of Place of Palms in 1990s, just south-east of central entrance-way into Palaestra Court of Baths. (2) No find-spot information.

Condition: Broken or missing: lower left portion of protome, as well as chin, lower lip, tip of right ear, and »slice« from right temple; much of block's left side, accounting for loss of left coffer, most of left side panel and lower part of embedded portion on this side; upper front corner of right side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; lower edge of embedded portion on right side; corners of rear bracket; part of surface of rear bracket on left side. Protome face covered with tooth-chisel marks, with base of left horn given rasp finish. Outline of iris incised. Differential treatment of protome background on right side: area around right ear fully recessed and worked to smooth finish; area around acanthus scroll not yet cut back. Upper surface squared all over with point, but with more careful work over embedded portion. Two pry holes at »transition points« where embedded portion meets front projection and rear bracket. On block's right side, rough vertical channel through rear side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart. Also on this side, tooth-chisel contact bands along edges of embedded portion. No equivalent anathyrosis bands on left side.

Literature: Öztürk 2016, 200 fig. 12, 10

Description: This block's superb protome follows the more bestial Minotaur scheme, though it lacks the ferocity and intensity of some other examples in the series. Here the wide, snout-like nose is well preserved.



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Fig. 15: Cat. 9, double-sided console with bull, front view (photo montage)

Fig. 16: Cat. 9, double-sided console with bull, right view (without snout fragment)

Fig. 17: Cat. 10, double-sided console with lion, front view

Fig. 18: Cat. 10, double-sided console with lion, right view (photo montage)

Fig. 19: Cat. 11, double-sided console with Minotaur, front view

Fig. 20: Cat. 11, double-sided console with Minotaur, right view

Fig. 21: Cat. 12, double-sided console with Minotaur, front view (photo montage)

Fig. 22: Cat. 12, double-sided console with Minotaur, right view

It is enlivened by bulging crests of muscle along the bridge, and terminates with large flaring nostrils and a fleshy bifid tip. The creature's bulging eyes, meanwhile, are set beneath eyelids with thick edges, lending them a leathery quality. Other bovine features include the tufty hair on the brow, the bony ridges on the forehead, and the bovine right ear with fur growing around its outer edge.

Cat. 13

Double-sided console with missing protome
(fig. 23)

HB-0858. H: 70, W: 77, D: 187. Embedded portion D: 84. Rear bracket D: 65 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in west stoa of Place of Palms in 2010, west of seventh column (counting from north).

Condition: Broken or missing: protome; coffers; left side panel; most of right side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; lower edges of embedded portion on both sides; upper edge of embedded portion on right side; upper edges of rear bracket on both sides. Remaining surface badly weathered. Upper surface of embedded portion recessed with point chisel. Tooth-chiselled anathyrosis bands along lateral edges of this recessed area. Two pry holes in upper surface where embedded portion meets front projection and rear bracket. On block's right side, shallow ›slice‹ cut away at top front corner of embedded portion.

Description: The moulding course at the top of the rear bracket of this console is unusually tall. The bracket therefore has a squat, heavy appearance.

Cat. 14

Double-sided console with missing protome
(fig. 24)

H: 72, W: 73 D: 136. Embedded portion D: 83.5 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in 1990s at west end of Place of Palms, east of seventh column of west stoa (counting from north).

Condition: Broken or missing: protome; most of left side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; front part of coffers; tip of rear bracket, as well as part of bracket's underside. Upper surface of embedded portion slightly recessed with careful tooth chisel work.

Cat. 15

Double-sided console with missing protome
(fig. 25, 26)

H: 68, W: 72, D: 190. Embedded portion D: 85.5. Rear bracket D: 61.5 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: Found 1984 at west end of Place of Palms, east of eighth column of west stoa (counting from north) (Notebook 256, p. 104 f.).

Condition: Large portion of block's right side broken away. Missing on this side: right side panel; much of embedded portion; much of block's upper surface. Also broken or missing: protome; volutes and frames of left side panel; front part of coffers; upper and lower edges of block. Upper surface worked to flat finish all

over using point chisel. Large quadrangular cutting of uncertain function at rear edge of embedded portion on left side.

Description: Standard Type A console. Since it is lying on its side, the block's underside can be examined in detail.

Cat. 16

Rear bracket fragment (fig. 27)

H: 44, W: 80, D: 43 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in 1990s at far south end of Place of Palms west stoa.

Condition: Only ›tip‹ of rear bracket preserved, with vertical break running through upper part of incised fillet on underside. Mouldings at top worked to smooth finish. Main body below finished with tooth chisel.

Cat. 17

Rear bracket fragment (fig. 28)

H: 45, W: 61, D: 46 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in 1990s at west end of Place of Palms, east of ninth column of west stoa (counting from north).

Condition: Only underside of rear bracket and small part of embedded portion preserved. Surface of rear bracket finished with tooth chisel. Surface of embedded portion squared using point.

Type B: Single-ended consoles

18 At least eight consoles belong to a second functional category. These blocks are similar in design to the Type A examples, but with an important difference: they lack the projecting bracket at the rear. Each console therefore consists of the following elements: a colossal protome head, the projecting body with ornamental side panels, and the embedded portion. Fully preserved, the pieces are 65–77 cm tall, 73–84 cm wide, and up to 169 cm deep.

19 Among the surviving protomes, there are two Herakles heads [18, 19], two bulls [22, 23], two Minotaurs [24, 25], one lion [21], and one Medusa [20].

Cat. 18

Single-ended console with Herakles (fig. 29)

Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2278. H: 77, W (at bottom): 77.5, Protome D: ca. 30 cm.

Find context: Found 1904 »au milieu de la cour, à côté de la console à tête de lion (laissée à Ghèrè [= Geyre = Aphrodisias])« (Mendel 1914, 191). Pictured in this location in Gaudin's photo album, with protome facing east.

Condition: Side panels unfinished, with volutes not yet properly worked out, and plain bands in place of usual egg-and-dart designs.



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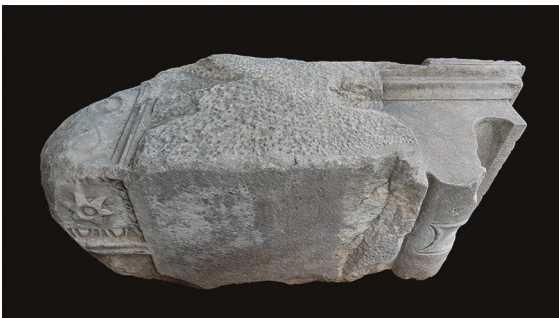
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Fig. 23: [Cat. 13](#), double-sided console, right view

Fig. 24: [Cat. 14](#), double-sided console, left view

Fig. 25: [Cat. 15](#), double-sided console, left view

Fig. 26: [Cat. 15](#), double-sided console, three-quarter view showing underside

Fig. 27: [Cat. 16](#), rear bracket fragment

Fig. 28: [Cat. 17](#), rear bracket fragment

Fig. 29: [Cat. 18](#), Herakles protome from single-ended console, three-quarter view from below

Literature: Mendel 1914, 194 no. 501; LIMC IV (1988) 741 no. 166 s. v. Herakles (O. Palagia); Erim 1989, 50 fig. 67

Description: This Herakles protome was taken to Istanbul in 1906. The hero is characterised by his square face, creased brow, wide eyes, broad bony nose, tall ears, and thick beard. He wears a wreath made from leaves with about ten lobes each – possibly oak leaves. Fillets ›hang‹ in relief to either side. Mendel states that this piece comes from a single-ended console.

Cat. 19

Single-ended console with Herakles (fig. 30. 31)

Recomposed of two pieces. (1) Main body of block preserving only right ear of protome, HB-0538. H: 68, W: 74, D: 99. Front projection D: 52. Embedded portion D: 47 cm. (2) Large Herakles protome fragment, inv. T-0556. H: 49.5, W: 62, D: 28 cm. Unpublished. Find context: (1) First documented in Palaestra Court in 1990s, west of sixth column of east stoa (counting from north). (2) No find-spot information.

Condition: Broken or missing: most of protome surface; lower part of protome; upper front corner of right side panel; front and bottom parts of left side panel; most of left coffer; much of embedded portion at rear. Side panels and right egg-and-dart left unfinished. Parts of right side panel and protome covered with mortar-like substance, with metal nail embedded in egg-and-dart on right side. Surviving patches of protome face finished with light tooth-chisel work, though ears have rasp finish. Upper surface of block squared roughly with point. Lewis hole towards front of embedded portion indicates Type B classification. Description: Herakles is again characterised by his boxer-like ears, tufty hair, thick beard, and wreath with hanging fillets. Three of the wreath's leaves are intact on the proper right side of the large protome fragment. They have a wide profile, long stalks, and about five lobes each. They may be vine leaves, evoking Herakles' Dionysian aspect. Both side panels are unfinished, with volutes roughed out but not yet fully worked.

Cat. 20

Single-ended console with Medusa (fig. 32. 33)

H: 72, W: 79, D: 169. Protome D: 45. Embedded portion D: 80 cm.

Find context: Photographed by DAI in 1909, with chin still preserved but location unclear (D-DAI-IST-Inv.11.944). Photographed in southern part of Palaestra Court in 1965 (MedForm1965-13-05).

Condition: Well-preserved. Missing from protome: nose; point of chin; ›slice‹ above right brow with wing and serpent head. Abrasions on lips, hair and brows. Also broken or missing: bottom edge of right side panel; much of embedded portion at rear. Surface of protome face worked to rasp finish. Eyes un-marked. Upper surface of block squared all over using point chisel, although raised ›ridge‹ separates part above side panels from part above embedded portion. On

right side, rough vertical channel through rear egg-and-dart and fillet above. On left side, rear borders of side panel cut back roughly.

Literature: Squarciapino 1974, pl. XLI, 1; Barattolo 1982, 148. pl. 76, 1; Erim 1986, 20 fig.; Erim 1989, 50 fig. 68; Barresi 2003, pl. 41, 3; Morandini – Mor 2008, 32 fig. 7

Description: This well-preserved protome follows the usual Medusa scheme, with the head tilted slightly to the proper right. The depth of the relief is noteworthy: four rows of hair curls are visible on the lateral sides of the block. The treatment of the hair varies: the strands on the proper right side are separated by deep drill-channels, while drill-work is more sparing on the left, resulting in a flatter effect. Unusually, the pair of serpents seems to emerge from the main body of the block rather than Medusa's hair. Their tails are tied below the chin in a tight, overhand knot.

Cat. 21

Single-ended console with lion (fig. 34. 35)

H: 72, W: 81, D: 95. Protome D: 32.5 cm.

Find context: Found 1904–1905 during Gaudin's campaigns: possibly the lion discovered »au milieu de la cour« (Mendel 1914, 191). Taken to Izmir, but returned to Aphrodisias in 2010. Now displayed in Aphrodisias Museum.

Condition: Traces of modern work to aid transport to Izmir: embedded portion mostly sawn away; back of resulting block hollowed out. Otherwise well preserved. Broken or missing: ›slice‹ on block's right side, accounting for loss of lower edge of embedded portion and bottom rear corner of side panel; lower edge of left side panel. Protome face finished with tooth chisel. Inner and outer canthi of eyes incised; pupils indicated with light indentations. Side panels only partially finished. Upper surface of block flattened using point chisel. Position of lewis hole towards front of embedded portion indicates Type B classification.

Literature: Aziz 1933, 32; Erim 1967, 239 f.; Erim 1986, 43 fig. (with caption mistakenly locating piece in Istanbul); Smith 2016, 33

Description: This well preserved protome was returned from Izmir in 2010. Unlike the other lion protomes in the series, this example has an emphatic downwards tilt, meeting the viewer's gaze more directly. The lion has a triangular face with powerful features: thick knots of skin over the inner corners of the eyes; a broad muscular snout; and an open mouth with individually articulated teeth, including sharp canines at the corners. The sculptural treatment of the creature's mane is flat, with limited drill-work. The ears are also rendered schematically, being barely distinguished from the surrounding hair tufts. The block's right side panel is unfinished. Although the S-shaped volutes are carefully worked, the borders and background have been finished roughly using a wide-headed tooth chisel, and the moulded profile of the inner border has not yet been worked out. The left side panel also bears many tooling traces.



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Fig. 30: Cat. 19, single-ended console with Herakles, front view (photo montage)

Fig. 31: Cat. 19, single-ended console with Herakles, right three-quarter view (photo montage)



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Fig. 32: Cat. 20, single-ended console with Medusa, front view

Fig. 33: Cat. 20, single-ended console with Medusa, left view

Fig. 34: Cat. 21, single-ended console with lion, front view

Fig. 35: Cat. 21, single-ended console with lion, right view

Cat. 22

Single-ended console with bull (fig. 36. 37. 38)

H: 68, W: 84, D: 155. Protome D: 36. Embedded portion D: 79.5 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: Photographed in northern part of Palaestra Court in 1909 (D-DAI-IST-KB 604), and then again in 1965, south of central column of north stoa (MedForm1965-13-10).

Condition: Well-preserved. Missing from protome: ›slice‹ over left eye and brow; horns; left ear; acanthus leaf tips. Also broken or missing: borders of left side panel at front and bottom; most of left egg-and-dart; rear part of right egg-and-dart; shallow ›slice‹ from upper surface above protome on right side; lower rear corner of embedded portion on right side. Protome finished with delicate tooth chisel work. Left side panel not fully finished. Upper surface above embedded portion recessed with point chisel work. Tooth chisel anathyrosis bands running along edges of upper surface and along front edge of embedded portion on right side. Behind lewis hole, two guidelines incised in upper surface perpendicular to lateral edges of block. Description: This is among the finest consoles not taken to Istanbul or Izmir following Gaudin's campaigns. The bull protome follows the usual scheme, but stands out on account of its exceptional plasticity. Much effort was put into rendering the creature's leathery skin-folds and powerful bulges of muscle beneath the skin. The flaring nostrils and slightly open mouth are worked out with careful drill-work. The left side panel has an unfinished appearance: while the volutes are beautifully carved, the surrounding background has not been cut back. This probably resulted from a mistake by the sculptor, who did not cut the boss back sufficiently before carving the volutes. On the right side panel, meanwhile, the lower background has been flattened neatly using a tooth chisel, while the upper background is finished more roughly with the point.

Cat. 23

Single-ended console with bull (fig. 39. 40)

Recomposed of two pieces that probably join. Connection recognised through break planes on right side. (1) Main body of block, HB-0107. H: 70, W: 77, D: 82. Front projection D: 28. Embedded portion D: 54 cm. (2) Bull protome and right side panel. H: 66, W: 72.5, D: 52. Protome D: 32 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: (1) First documented in Palaestra Court in 2010, east of second column of west stoa (counting from south). (2) No find-spot information.

Condition: Relatively well-preserved. Broken or missing: horns and tip of left ear; part of background flanking protome on left side; left side panel; left egg-and-dart; rear part of embedded portion. Some staining on main body of block. Protome finished with tooth chisel, though flat chisel marks visible around mouth. Areas behind horns left roughed out with point. Shallow hole in upper surface above protome head: possibly a pry-hole. Upper surface squared with point. Lewis hole at front of embedded portion indicates Type B classification.

Description: This piece's bull protome is well preserved, and follows the standard design. Whereas the nostrils were worked out with spiral drill channels, the sides of the mouth are articulated only with chisel work. The sides of the face also lack the bulging muscles and skin-creases at the top of the neck that characterise other examples in the series. The protome therefore has most impact when viewed frontally.

Cat. 24

Single-ended console with Minotaur (fig. 41)

Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2275. H: 65, W (at bottom): 77, Protome D: ca. 27 cm.

Find context: Found 1904 in Palaestra Court, »devant le portique nord« (Mendel 1914, 193).

Literature: Mendel 1914, 193 f. no. 500; Squarciapino 1943, 68

Description: This Minotaur protome was taken to Istanbul in 1906. It is the most complete surviving example of the ›young Minotaur‹ scheme. Here the beast has a fleshy face, wide irises, pouty lips, a prominent chin, bovine ears, tufty fur growing on the brow, and long waves of shaggy hair. Mendel states that the protome comes from a single-ended console.

Cat. 25

Single-ended console with Minotaur (fig. 42. 43)

Recomposed of two pieces that probably join. (1) Main body of block, HB-0623. H: 78, W: 76, D: 162. Front projection D: 64.5. Embedded portion D: 98.5 cm.

(2) Long ›slice‹ fragment with upper right corner of Minotaur protome and upper part of right side panel (not pictured). H: 29.5, W: 57, D: 162. Front projection D: 62. Embedded portion D: 100 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: (1) First documented in Palaestra Court in 1990s, west of fifth column of east stoa (counting from north). (2) No find-spot information.

Condition: Main body of block shattered into at least three pieces: (i) protome and left coffer; (ii) right side of block; (iii) left side of block behind left coffer. Several further large cracks in marble. Broken or miss-

Fig. 36: [Cat. 22](#), single-ended console with bull, front view

Fig. 37: [Cat. 22](#), single-ended console with bull, left view

Fig. 38: [Cat. 22](#), single-ended console with bull, right view

Fig. 39: [Cat. 23](#), single-ended console with bull, front view

Fig. 40: [Cat. 23](#), single-ended console with bull, right view (photo montage)

Fig. 41: [Cat. 24](#), Minotaur protome from single-ended console, front view

Fig. 42: [Cat. 25](#), single-ended console with Minotaur, front view. Owing to its fragile condition, this piece was photographed upside-down

Fig. 43: [Cat. 25](#), single-ended console with Minotaur, right view



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ing: front edge of right side panel; lower part of left side panel; outer edges of coffers; surface of embedded portion on right side; lower edge of embedded portion on left side. Block stained and battered, with detail lost from protome, including horns and hair. ›Slice‹ fragment has traces of mortar-like substance on surface, and suggests upper surface above embedded portion recessed with point chisel work. Poor preservation makes protome finish difficult to diagnose. Irises and pupils indicated.

Description: The main body of this console is stored upside-down in the block field near the Civil Basilica. Its fragile condition means it cannot be moved: hence it was photographed and studied upside-down. The protome follows the ›young Minotaur‹ scheme, with long shaggy hair, a furry brow, and a bovine left ear. The separate long ›slice‹ fragment probably once completed the upper right part of the block.

Pieces Belonging to Type A or B Consoles

20 The similarities between the Type A and B consoles mean that it is difficult to classify a piece as one type or the other unless the rear portion of the block survives. The following pieces certainly belonged to Type A or Type B examples, but the precise classification can no longer be determined:

Cat. 26

Console with Herakles (fig. 44)

H: 56, W: 51, D: 67. Protome D: 28 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in 1990s at west end of Place of Palms, east of central part of west stoa.

Condition: Fragment from front left side of console.

Most of protome missing. Preserved are: left ear; left sideburn and adjacent beard curls; fillet hanging from wreath on left side; two small beard curls on right side. Right side panel broken away. Left side panel broken around three sides. Poor preservation makes protome finish difficult to assess. Fillet on left side worked to rasp finish: same perhaps true of protome.

Description: The fragmentary protome figure can be identified as Herakles thanks to his swollen left ear, his beard curls, and the fillet ›hanging‹ in relief beside his head.

Cat. 27

Console with Medusa (fig. 45. 46)

H: 72, W: 83, D: 92. Protome D: 31 cm.

Find context: Found 1904–1905 during Gaudin's campaigns. Taken to Izmir, but returned to Aphrodisias in 2010. Now displayed in Aphrodisias Museum.

Condition: Traces of modern work to aid transport to Izmir: most of embedded portion sawn off; top of block hollowed out; chisel work over break-plane at upper right side of protome. Otherwise well preserved. Broken or missing from protome: nose, lips, chin, wings, serpent heads, as well as ›slice‹ from lower left corner

with serpent coil and hair locks. Smaller abrasions on cheeks, eyes, and brows. Also broken or missing: bottom front corner, lower edge, and volutes of left side panel; lower edge of right side panel. Protome face finished with light tooth chisel work. Inner canthi lightly marked. Block's upper surface squared roughly using point.

Literature: Aziz 1933, 32 no. 68. pl. 9; Squarciapino 1943, 67; Erim 1967, 239 f.; Squarciapino 1974, pl. XLI, 2; Barattolo 1982, 148. pl. 74, 1–75, 3; de Chaisemartin 2007, 204. 205 fig. 2; Smith 2016, 33

Description: This high-quality protome follows the usual Medusa scheme. The head is tilted slightly to the proper left, and is outlined with deep drill channels that increase the depth of the relief. Medusa's forehead is unusually low, accentuating the round shape of her face. She has a powerful facial expression, with parted lips and brow arches sloping at a dramatic angle. Beneath her chin, two serpent tails are tied in a half-knot. The tail to the proper right is enlivened with emphatic roundel work, possibly because a sculptor mistook it for a hair strand.

Cat. 28

Console with Medusa (fig. 47. 48)

Recomposed of two pieces. (1) Main body of block with left side of protome. H: 73, W: 60, D: 88. Protome D: 20 cm. (2) Large protome fragment, inv. 69-219.

H: 58, W: 30, D: 26 cm.

Find context: (1) First documented in south stoa of Place of Palms in 1990s, adjacent to third column (counting from west). (2) Found 1969 in Place of Palms south stoa, in topsoil close to second column (counting from west) (Notebook 76, p. 59 F29).

Condition: Broken or missing: much of protome surface, including hair, wings, serpents, nose, lips and chin; front and bottom parts of right side panel; most of right egg-and-dart; much of right coffer; most of left side panel; rear part of embedded portion; surface of embedded portion on left side. Block now weathered and stained. Separate fragment suggests protome worked to tooth-chisel finish. Upper surface above embedded portion recessed with point chisel work. Finish of right side panel comparatively rough: many flat chisel marks visible.

Literature: Erim 1969, 92

Description: This Medusa protome clearly followed the usual design, though the characteristic wings and serpent coils are no longer preserved.

Cat. 29

Console with bull (fig. 49. 50)

Recomposed of two pieces: (1) Main body of block, HB-0551. H: 68, W: 73, D: 84.5. Front projection D: 66. Embedded portion D: 20 cm. (2) Bull protome fragment, inv. 71-339. H: 31, W: 36, D: 18 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: (1) First documented in 1990s, at north end of central aisle of Civil Basilica. (2) Excavated 1971: »surface find« in Theatre (site inventory card).

Condition: Poorly preserved. Broken or missing: much



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Fig. 44: [Cat. 26](#), console with Herakles, left view

Fig. 45: [Cat. 27](#), console with Medusa, front view

Fig. 46: [Cat. 27](#), console with Medusa, right view

Fig. 47: [Cat. 28](#), console with Medusa, front view (photo montage)

Fig. 48: [Cat. 28](#), console with Medusa, right view (without large protome fragment)



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Fig. 49: [Cat. 29](#), console with bull, front view (photo montage)

Fig. 50: [Cat. 29](#), console with bull, right view (without protome fragment)

Fig. 51: [Cat. 30](#), console with lion, front view

Fig. 52: [Cat. 30](#), console with lion, left view

Fig. 53: [Cat. 31](#), console with Minotaur (Dilettanti Minotaur), front view

Fig. 54: [Cat. 31](#), console with Minotaur (Dilettanti Minotaur), left view

of protome and adjacent background; front and bottom parts of right side panel; bottom edge of left side panel; both egg-and-dart designs; rear part of embedded portion. Surface of main block badly weathered. Separate protome fragment in better condition and suggests rasp finish, with shallow drill-work used for interstices of tufty hair on forehead. Upper surface of block squared roughly with point.

Description: While the bull protome decorating this block followed the standard design, the surviving parts suggest the sculptural execution was flatter and more schematic than other examples in our series. Indeed, the upper eyelid is not crisply delineated, and the tufts of forehead hair seem comparatively lank and lifeless. This console also has distinctive, low-quality side panels, with the volutes set askew at slight diagonals.

Cat. 30

Console with lion (fig. 51. 52)

Inv. 84-123 = HB-0838. H: 70, W: 72, D: 56. Protome D: 24 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: Found 1984 towards north-west corner of Place of Palms (Notebook 256, p. 93).

Condition: Fragment preserving part of front projection. Broken or missing: much of protome surface; most of right side panel; right egg-and-dart; upper surface on right side; lower and rear parts of left side panel; most of left coffer. Small patches of original surface suggest protome worked to rasp finish. Inner canthus of left eye incised. Upper surface squared roughly with point.

Description: This poorly preserved protome once depicted a lion with its mouth wide open and its tongue carefully worked inside. Traces of a fleshy jowl remain at the right side of the mouth. The creature's mane consists of a series of thick, coarse tufts centrally parted above the forehead. Its ears are pinned back, making them hard to distinguish when the block is viewed frontally.



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Cat. 31

Minotaur protome (Dilettanti Minotaur) (fig. 53. 54. 81)

Inv. 62-273. H: 64, W: 60, D: 70 cm.

Find context: First drawn in 1812 during Dilettanti expedition to Aphrodisias. Drawing shows protome lying north-west of Temple of Aphrodite. Re-found 1962: »Stray find, TA [sc. Temple of Aphrodite] along road« (site inventory card).

Condition: Preserved are protome, top front corner of left side panel, and front edge of coffers on underside. Broken or missing: hair at right of head; right side panel; bottom left corner of protome. Surviving surface weathered and abraded, with damage to nose, lips, brows and eyes. Hair locks also worn away. Poor preservation makes protome finish difficult to assess. Pupils originally indicated, probably using drill. Traces of point chisel work on upper surface of block.

Literature: Wilkins et al. 1840, 62. pl. 3

Description: This badly-weathered protome conforms to the usual »young Minotaur« iconography. The figure has a fleshy face, shaggy hair, and traces of incised fur on the brow. Its find location and iconography suggest it should be identified as the protome drawn during the Dilettanti expedition to Aphrodisias in 1812 (discussed further below).

Cat. 32

Fragment (fig. 55)

H: 45, W: 35, D: 62.5 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: No find-spot information.

Condition: Fragment preserving part of right side panel and small portion of protome surface. Broken on all sides, with surviving protome surface badly weathered.

Description: All that remains of this block's protome is a curving strip projecting in relief. It resembles the hanging fillet of a Herakles wreath, but certain identification is no longer possible.



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Fig. 55: Cat. 32, fragment, right three-quarter view

Fig. 56: Cat. 33, left side panel fragment

Cat. 33**Side Panel Fragment** (fig. 56)

H: 40, W: 76, D: 17 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: No find-spot information.

Condition: Fragment preserving top front corner of left side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart.

Cat. 34**Side Panel Fragment** (fig. 57)

H: 42, W: 35.5, D: 73 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in west stoa of Place of Palms in 1990s, at base of central staircase leading into Baths.

Condition: Fragment preserving part of left side panel and adjacent coffer on underside. Evidence for piecing at lower front corner of panel: careful tooth chisel work with small dowel hole at centre.

Cat. 35**Coffers fragment** (fig. 58)

HB-0518. H: 52, W: 56, D: 63. Rosette W: 15, L: 16.5.

Coffer D: 30.5 cm.

Find context: First documented in Palaestra Court in 2010, east of seventh column of east stoa (counting from north).

Condition: Most worked surfaces missing. Only coffers on underside preserved: the central rosettes each have six petals. Drill-work used for interstices of rosettes and egg-and-dart.

21 For some protomes and fragments, nothing survives to indicate console typology. It is however likely that most belonged to Type A and B consoles, since these were clearly the most numerous. The pieces are as follows:

Cat. 36**Herakles protome** (fig. 59, 60)

H: 57, W: 55, D: 60 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: First documented in 1990s: stored behind museum.

Condition: Protome broken at bottom and left sides. Remaining surface damaged in places, with nose, lips, part of right eyelid, most of left eye, and most of lionskin headdress broken away. Large crack also in right cheek. Also missing: coffers; side panels; embedded portion. Surviving patches of face suggest rasp finish. Chiselling visible at hairline above forehead, presumably where mouth of lion-skin hollowed out. Inner canthi and individual teeth articulated with chisel-work.

Description: This protome depicts Herakles, identifiable thanks to his thick beard, curly hair, and heavy right ear. The hero's mouth was open, judging by the upper row of individually articulated teeth. Here he was shown wearing his signature lion-skin headdress. Indeed, the right ear is enclosed by a ›hood‹, and the second row of hair curls has been cut back in the area directly above the forehead, probably during the

hollowing out of the lion's mouth. At the top of the protome, a small patch of the original surface of the headdress is preserved.

Cat. 37**Herakles protome fragment** (fig. 61)

Inv. 76-137. H: 18.5, W: 37, D: 31 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: Found 1976, »Clearing in front of the Baths of Hadrian – NW Portico of Tiberius«: i.e. at north-west corner of Place of Palms (site inventory card).

Condition: Only lower protome preserved, with break running roughly horizontally above mouth. Right side of beard better preserved than left. Some abrasions on surface. Tooth chisel finish. Drill-work used to outline lower lip, and for interstices of beard strands (on front) and central points of beard curls (on underside).

Description: This fragment preserves the lower part of a Herakles protome. The thick waves of the hero's beard are centrally parted below his fleshy lower lip. The upper lip was probably obscured by his moustache. On the underside, the beard is arranged as a series of schematic C-curly, each with a deep drill hole at its centre.

Cat. 38**Perseus protome** (fig. 62, 63)

H: 60, W: 70, D: 91. Protome D: 44 cm.

Find context: Photographed by DAI in 1909, but location unclear (D-DAI-IST-KB 529). Photographed at south end of Palaestra Court in 1965 (MedForm1965-15-02).

Condition: Large protome fragment now displayed in modern cement setting outside museum. Lower portion of protome missing. Lips, nose, most of right wing, ›tip‹ of left wing, right earlobe and adjacent hair also broken away. Crack in left cheek. Also broken or missing: most of left side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; all of right side panel and adjacent egg-and-dart; part of upper surface. Protome surface worked to smooth or rasp finish. Irises incised but pupils unmarked. Upper surface squared roughly with point. Literature: Erim 1986, 39 fig.

Description: Perseus' head is turned emphatically to the proper left. The hero has a round face, with classicising physiognomy and long waves of hair parted off-centre to the right. While the right wing has broken away, the left wing has a dense arrangement of feathers at the top and a row of long feathers tapering towards the bottom.

Fig. 57: [Cat. 34](#), left side panel fragment, three-quarter view from below

Fig. 58: [Cat. 35](#), coffers fragment

Fig. 59: [Cat. 36](#), Herakles protome, front view

Fig. 60: [Cat. 36](#), Herakles protome, right view

Fig. 61: [Cat. 37](#), Herakles protome fragment, front view

Fig. 62: [Cat. 38](#), Perseus protome, front view

Fig. 63: [Cat. 38](#), Perseus protome, left view



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Cat. 39

Minotaur protome (fig. 64)

Inv. 84-079. H: 61, W: 44, D: 38 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: Found 1984: surface find towards north-east part of excavation trench at far west end of Place of Palms (Notebook 257, p. 30).

Condition: Protome broken on all sides, with only face preserved. Missing or broken: horns, ears, nose, lips, chin, right sideburn, hair framing face. Further abrasions on surface. Protome worked to rasp finish. Inner canthi of eyes indicated with shallow drill channels. Irises incised, with traces of shallow drill-hole for right pupil. Individual teeth articulated.

Description: This Minotaur protome follows the more ferocious, monstrous scheme. The creature has wide bulging eyes, a broad snout-like nose, bony ridges on his forehead, tufty hair on his brow, and a long wispy sideburn. An upper row of individually-articulated teeth indicate that his mouth was shown open.

Cat. 40

Hair fragment (fig. 65)

H: 42.5, W: 24.5, D: 46 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: No find-spot information.

Condition: Fragment broken on both sides and at back. Hair stained and weathered.

Description: Fragment with long wavy hair. It may have belonged to a Medusa or ›young Minotaur‹ protome.

Type C: Single-ended Consoles with L-shaped Side Panels

22 Two consoles in the series constitute an independent category, decorated with Minotaur and lion protomes respectively. Like the Type B examples, these pieces consist of three parts: the protome head; the projecting body with side panels; and the embedded portion.

23 Whereas the side panels of the Type B consoles are rectangular and oriented vertically, those of the Type C consoles are L-shaped and oriented horizontally, with larger volutes disposed in sideways S-designs. As a result, the front projections are deeper and the egg-and-dart borders correspondingly wider. This design also necessitated a different arrangement for the coffers, which here decorate the underside of the long branch of the ›L‹, and are therefore set higher (by ca. 19 cm) than the bottom edge of the block. The front face of the short branch of the ›L‹ – adjacent to the coffers – is decorated with a flat panel framed by a simple border.

24 The embedded portion, meanwhile, is comparatively shallow, with a total depth of just 67–70 cm. On the rear side, each console has a wide quadrangular cutting at the bottom of the

embedded portion (H: ca. 40 cm; W: ca. 27 cm), extending deep into the body of the block (see fig. 69). These cuttings should perhaps be identified as settings for wooden beams. The presence of unusual cuttings extends to the upper surface of each block, where a complex series of dowel, clamp and pry cuttings are found in addition to the usual lewis hole. The entire upper surface is carefully finished with neat tooth-chisel work, apart from the part above the protome. This distinguishes these consoles from the Type A and B examples, where the upper surface above the side panels usually has a rough, uneven finish.

Cat. 41

Type C console with lion (fig. 66. 67. 68. 69)

Recomposed of two pieces re-joined during 2019 season. (1) Lion protome with part of front projection. (2) Main body of block. H: 86, W: 74, D: 175. Protome D: 33.5; Front Projection D: 77; Embedded Portion D: 70 cm. Unpublished.

Find context: (1) No find-spot information, but photographed by DAI in 1909 (D-DAI-IST-Inv.11.944). Later taken to Izmir, but returned to Aphrodisias in 2010. (2) First documented in 1990s at east side of Palaestra Court, just west of seventh column of east stoa (counting from north).

Condition: Protome well preserved, but main body of block stained and weathered. Console completely broken on left side, with loss of left side of protome, left side panel, left coffer, surface of embedded portion, and large ›slice‹ of upper surface. Also damaged: left brow, right eye and snout of lion; lower edge of right side panel. Protome face worked to smooth finish, with some rasp work visible on sides of face and inside mouth. Drill-work used for inner corners, inner canthi and upper lids of eyes. Irises rendered with chisel-work. Upper surface above protome finished with point chisel work. Remainder of upper surface flattened carefully with tooth chisel. Complex series of cuttings in upper surface, all on roughly the same axis: central lewis hole; two dowel holes with pour channels either side of central lewis hole; two pry cuttings towards front and rear.

Description: This lion protome is a tour de force of architectural sculpture. The creature has piercing upturned eyes, an intensely furrowed brow, flaring nostrils, fleshy jowls, and an open mouth revealing two sharp rows of teeth and the tongue inside. Sensitive flesh folds enliven the muscular physiognomy, while whiskers are incised emphatically on the snout and chin. The mane is rendered as a series of thick curls with pointed tips, parted centrally above the forehead. Several curls over the brow are worked in the round in a virtuoso manner. The ear emerging from the mane on the right side has been given a furry pinna.



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Fig. 64: [Cat. 39](#), Minotaur protome, front view

Fig. 65: [Cat. 40](#), hair fragment

Fig. 66: [Cat. 41](#), Type C console with lion, front view

Fig. 67: [Cat. 41](#), Type C console with lion, right three-quarter view

Fig. 68: [Cat. 41](#), Type C console with lion, right view

Fig. 69: [Cat. 41](#), Type C console with lion, rear view

Cat. 42

Type C console with Minotaur (fig. 70, 71)

H: 87, W: 78, D: 180. Protome D: 37; Front Projection D: 76; Embedded portion D: 67 cm.

Find context: Found 1904 »entre les portiques nord et ouest« of Palaestra Court (Mendel 1906, 169 n. 1). Photographed here in 1909 (D-DAI-IST-Inv.11.945) and again in 1960s (MedForm1962/64-08-06, MedForm1965-13-10).

Condition: Well preserved. Broken or missing: right side of protome face, as well as horns, nose, lower lip, chin, edges of left ear; »slice« of upper surface above protome; front portion and volutes of right side panel; parts of right egg-and-dart and adjacent upper surface; lower edge of left side panel and adjacent coffer on underside; »slice« of upper surface on left side of embedded portion. Protome face well finished, with few tooling traces remaining. Inner canthi and irises incised; pupils marked with round drill-holes. Upper surface above protome finished roughly with point chisel work. Remainder of upper surface flattened carefully with tooth chisel. Complex series of cuttings in upper surface: central lewis hole; square dowel hole with pour channel in front of lewis hole; rectangular pry hole just right of pour-channel; two incised guidelines perpendicular to lateral edges of block on same axis as rectangular dowel hole. Second square dowel cutting with pour channel towards rear of block; rectangular pry hole right of this pour-channel; rectangular clamp cutting on same axis at right side of block.

Literature: Collignon 1904, 708; Collignon 1906, 43 fig. 5; Mendel 1906, 169 n. 1; Squarciapino 1943, 68. pl. N a; Becatti 1958, 111 fig. 161; Morandini – Mor 2008, 32 fig. 6

Description: This high-quality protome is the best preserved example of the »ferocious Minotaur« scheme. The beast's head is inclined slightly to the proper left, and incorporates anatomical elements that work up the theme of his half-bovine parentage. He has wide bulging eyes set beneath leathery lids, creases of loose skin hanging from the brow arches, heavy knots of muscle gathered over the inner corners of the eyes, a broad snout with flaring nostrils, and a bovine left ear with a thick ridge of cartilage in its centre. The exposed upper teeth indicate that the mouth was open. A pyramid of fur grows in the centre of the forehead, flanked by bony ridges beneath the skin to either side. The creature's hair consists of coarse, tufty locks delineated by deep drill channels, with a wavy sideburn extending down the left cheek to jaw level.

Type D: Double-ended Corner Consoles with Female Busts

25 The largest consoles in the series are two pieces excavated at the north-west and north-east corners of the Palaestra Court that constitute an independent functional category. While the protome of the north-west piece was taken to Istanbul in 1906, the block from the north-east corner remains at Aphrodisias.

26 Like the Type A consoles already discussed, the Type D consoles are double-sided, with a front projecting part, an embedded portion, and a rear bracket. There are however striking differences. Most notably, the protomes of the Type D consoles are colossal busts of ideal female figures, recalling in their form – though not their iconography – the well-known Zeus and Apollo busts decorating a corner capital from the *Temple of Apollo at Didyma*³¹. These female busts account for the entire front projection of each console, and so there are no decorative side panels directly behind.

27 The form of the rear projection also differs (see fig. 74). Immediately behind the embedded portion, the lateral sides of the block are decorated with small ornamental panels. The panels are square-shaped, with a flat outer border and a moulded inner border with a cyma reversa profile, but without central volutes. Immediately behind the ornamental panels – and so at the tail end of the block – is a rear bracket. As in the Type A consoles, the bracket has a standard curved design and is crowned by an upper moulded profile.

28 The Type D piece still at Aphrodisias preserves a series of holes and cuttings in its upper surface. Particularly interesting are two incised guidelines in the area directly »above« the rear side panels, which meet in a right angle on the block's central axis. These guidelines, together with the find locations of the blocks, might seem to suggest that the Type D consoles functioned as corner pieces that projected towards the Palaestra Court at a 45-degree angle. The difficulty with this arrangement, however, is that the blocks' large rear brackets would then have extended diagonally into the tetrastyle court at the north side of the complex (no. 14 in fig. 1) and the south stoa of the North Agora in awkward, asymmetrical positions. Given this, their original display configuration remains unknown.

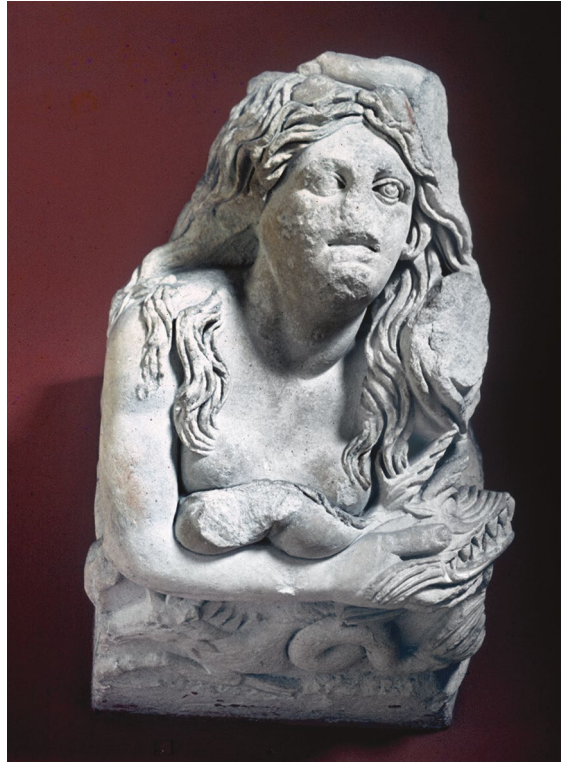
31 Pülz 1989, 136 f. cat. 11.



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Fig. 70: [Cat. 42](#), Type C console with Minotaur, front view

Fig. 71: [Cat. 42](#), Type C console with Minotaur, left view

Fig. 72: [Cat. 43](#), Protome with aquatic goddess from Type D console, front view from below

Cat. 43

Double-sided console with aquatic goddess (fig. 72)
Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2280. H: 88, W (at bottom): 78,
Max. protome D: ca. 105 cm

Find context: Found 1904, »thermes, cour de l'est;
trouvée vers l'angle nord-ouest de la cour« (Mendel
1914, 194).

Literature: Collignon 1904, 707 f. pl. I; Collignon 1906,
42, fig. 4; Mendel 1906, 169 n. 1; Mendel 1914, 194 f.
no. 502; Squarciapino 1943, 68 f.; Picard 1949; Picard
1951; Glueck 1966, 336–338. pl. 1, 1; LIMC VI (1992)
820 no. 486 s. v. Nereides (N. Icard-Gianolio – A.-
V. Szabados); Smith 2001, 210 pl. 93. 211; Barresi 2003,
pl. 50, 4; de Chaisemartin 2007, 204. 206 fig. 3

Description: This piece was taken to Istanbul in 1906.
Its protome depicts the bust of an ideal nude female
figure, turning slightly to the proper left. She has an
accumulation of aquatic attributes: long strands of
water-drenched hair falling onto the shoulders and
exposed breasts; a pair of dolphin-heads in her hair;
and a sea-monster (*ketos*) in her right arm, whose tail
continues on the block's right side. The figure's left arm
was originally outstretched, with the left hand resting

on her head above. A second sea monster is depicted
on the block's left side, while a hippocampus is shown
in relief on the underside.

Cat. 44

Double-sided console with fertility goddess
(fig. 73. 74. 75)

H: 85; W: 84; D: 290. Protome D: 67. Embedded portion
D: 113. Side panel D: 49. Rear bracket D: 67 cm.

Find context: Found 1905, »près de l'angle nord-est« of
Palaestra Court (Mendel 1906, 169 n. 1).

Condition: Broken or missing: much of protome,
including neck, head, hair, upper right arm and
shoulder, left arm and shoulder, object held in right
hand; upper right edge of embedded portion; shallow
»slice« from upper surface at front of embedded
portion; upper edges of rear bracket. Surface stained
and weathered. Protome bust finished with light tooth
chisel work. Differential treatment of lateral sides of
block: right side of embedded portion squared roughly
with point, apart from tooth-chiselled contact band
at rear; left side of embedded portion squared more
carefully, with wide tooth-chiselled contact bands



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Fig. 73: Cat. 44, Type D console with fertility goddess, front view

Fig. 74: Cat. 44, Type D console with fertility goddess, right three-quarter view

Fig. 75: Cat. 44, Type D console with fertility goddess, left three-quarter view of protome

Fig. 76: Cat. 45, keystone (?) with lion, front view from below

Fig. 77: Cat. 45, keystone (?) with lion, left three-quarter view from below

along all four edges. Right side panel fully finished; left side panel finished only at rear, with borders unarticulated at front. Main body of rear bracket finished with tooth chisel, but with flat-chiselled margin at edges. Moulded profile above worked to smooth finish. Treatment of upper surface varied. Squared roughly using point chisel above front projection and rear bracket. Upper surface above embedded portion and side panels worked to flatter finish using finer point and perhaps also tooth chisel. Several cuttings in upper surface: lewis hole in centre; second lewis hole further forward, in area behind protome; two clamp cuttings at far right edge, just in front of each lewis hole. On upper surface above side panels: two incised 'guide-lines', meeting at right angles on block's central axis. Literature: Mendel 1906, 169 n. 1; Mendel 1914, 195; Squarciapino 1943, 69

Description: This large console is decorated with the bust of an ideal female figure turning slightly to the proper left. Despite her poor preservation, several identifying attributes remain. The figure once had long hair falling onto the shoulders and exposed breasts. Her right arm is folded below the breasts, and carries a selection of natural bounty: two wheat-sheaves; a bunch of grapes; an apple; a quince or lemon (?); a pinecone; and two pomegranates. She holds another item in her right hand: possibly a bunch of wheat. Drapery folds behind the shoulder suggest that her body was covered below the breasts.

Keystone (?)

²⁹ A block excavated in the middle of the courtyard differs from the others in our series. It is taller and has a distinctive tapering profile. Its front face is decorated with a protome depicting the entire front part of a lion – including its forearms. There are no decorative panels on the lateral sides of the block. Instead, the embedded portion begins immediately behind the lion.

³⁰ The unique form of this piece suggests that it occupied a special position within the architecture of the Palaestra Court. One possibility, first suggested at the time of excavation, is that it served as the keystone of the monumental archway providing access to the bathing facilities at the centre of the court's west side³². This archway was supported by two colossal piers, each decorated with elaborate marble pilasters enlivened by sumptuous acanthus scroll ornament.

Cat. 45

Keystone (?) with lion protome (fig. 76. 77)

Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 2277. H: 110, W at bottom: 57, W at top: 78 cm.

Find context: Found 1904, »thermes, cour de l'est; trouvée à peu près au milieu de la cour, dans l'axe de l'entrée principale des thermes« (Mendel 1914, 189).

Literature: Collignon 1904, 707; Collignon 1906, 42; Mendel 1914, 189 no. 496

Description: This piece was taken to Istanbul in 1906. Its protome depicts the entire forepart of a lion, shown as though leaping out of the block towards the viewer. The creature turns slightly to the proper left, and has a dynamic, ferocious appearance. Its mouth is open, revealing two rows of teeth inside.

³² Mendel 1914, 189 cat. 496.

Design and Execution

31 Each console is carved from a single block of medium-grained white Aphrodisian marble. In only one case is there evidence of piecing [34], necessitated by a flaw in the block. It should be noted, however, that several other consoles have flaws running through the marble [e.g. 6, 10]. Clearly the architects of the Palaestra Court stoas retained confidence in the structural integrity of these ›flawed‹ blocks, in a way that might seem surprising from a modern architectural standpoint³³.

32 The protomes were carved in high relief on the front face of each block. Here the sculptors made extensive use of the drill, in line with contemporary developments in marble-carving technology³⁴. In the finest examples, drill-work contributes towards a dramatic chiaroscuro effect, being used to articulate important contours and individual locks of hair and fur. Only in a minority of cases were irises and pupils indicated by the sculptors, although they were presumably picked out in paint in the remaining examples. Locks of hair are usually worked with a flat- or round-headed chisel, resulting in a suitably coarse, tufty finish.

33 The treatment of the protome faces varies. Several of the best-preserved faces are covered with tooth chisel masks, and so never received final smoothing. In other cases, the sculptor(s) worked the protome faces to a smoother finish, leaving fewer traces of tooling. We are then presented with the question of how to account for this variety. One possibility is that the different levels of finish can be explained by the involvement of different sculptural workshops, since a large number of sculptors was obviously required for this ambitious project. But it is also possible that this variety was conditioned by the different positions of the pieces within the Palaestra Court. Support for this interpretation is provided by the pair of Type C consoles introduced above [41, 42]. Both protomes were finished to a high level of specification, and the quality of the pieces is underscored by a series of technical flourishes: note, for instance, how many of the individual tufts of the lion's mane are carved fully in the round [41], and how the eyebrow hair of the Minotaur was indicated by delicate chisel-work [42]. This exceptional technical quality, combined with the fact that only two Type C examples survive, suggests that these consoles were displayed in a conspicuous and important setting within the Palaestra Court, to be discussed in more detail below.

34 The quality and finish of the decorative side panels behind the protome also varies from console to console. As a general rule, however, the cyma reversa border and volutes are the most carefully finished parts, while the flat outer border and recessed background surface are finished more roughly, preserving traces of tooth or flat chisel work. Three unfinished examples indicate that there was no standard sequence for carving each panel. In the first, the central volutes are beautifully finished, but the background of the panel has not been cut back [22] (fig. 37). In the second, the background has been cut back, but the volutes have been left in a roughed-out state [19] (fig. 31). In the third, the volutes are mostly finished, but both borders and the recessed background have been finished roughly using the tooth chisel, and the usual cyma reversa profile of the inner border has not yet been worked out [21] (fig. 35).

35 These unfinished side panels open the possibility that some carving was left until the consoles had been lifted into position in the rear stoa walls, even if carving on the ground seems to have been the norm³⁵. Several blocks certainly do bear evidence of last-minute adjustments after they had been set in place. These pieces all have rough

33 Compare the flaws in some marble blocks used to carve Sebasteion reliefs: see Smith 2013, 38.

34 For second-century developments in marble-carving technology, with specific reference to portrait statuary, see Smith 1998a, 61–63; Smith 2006, 32 f.

35 This practice is attested for several Sebasteion reliefs: see Smith 2013, 39 f.

cuttings running vertically through the rear edge of a decorative side panel and/or the adjacent egg-and-dart design, made after these elements had already been finished [e.g. 6. 8. 11. 12. 20]. Incidentally, the egg-and-dart designs also exhibit some variety in terms of the depth of the drill-work, the shape of their darts, and the angle of the moulded profile [compare e.g. 21 (fig. 35) and 38 (fig. 63)].

36 The lateral sides of the embedded portion are always squared roughly using a point chisel, although there are often tooth-chiselled anathyrosis contact bands running along one or more edges, designed to smooth the connection with masonry blocks to either side. The upper surface of the embedded portion tends to be finished more carefully than the upper surface of the projecting part(s) of the console. This was necessary in order for each console to receive architectural members directly on top. Usually the flat upper surface of the embedded portion is interrupted only by a large central lewis hole used for lifting the block into position. Occasionally there are also additional clamp, dowel or pry cuttings.

Find Contexts

37 We have noted already that the Type C Minotaur console [42] was found between the north and west stoas of the Palaestra Court, the Type D consoles [43. 44] were found towards the court's north-east and north-west corners, and the lion keystone [45] was found in the centre of the court. The available find-spot information for the Type A and B consoles is more complex, and requires further consideration.

Palaestra Court

38 Mendel provides individual find-spot information for nine consoles unearthed during the excavations of 1904–1905³⁶. He also records that the Type A consoles were excavated mostly in the vicinity of the east stoa, whereas the Type B consoles were found in front of the north stoa³⁷. In 1913, Boulanger noted the positions of several single-ended pieces not removed from Aphrodisias, three in the north part of the Palaestra Court, and three to the south³⁸. Jacopi then recorded the approximate find-spots of the two consoles excavated during the Italian expedition in 1937 [3. 7]³⁹. From the 1960s, the New York team documented the locations of consoles remaining in the Palaestra Court and its adjoining spaces following the earlier campaigns.

39 All of this find-spot information has now been combined in a single schematic find location diagram, presented here as fig. 78. The consoles marked in red are Type A pieces, while those in black are consoles of other and unknown types. As per Mendel's observations, the Type A pieces are clustered around the east stoa of the Palaestra Court and west stoa of the Place of Palms. We may safely conclude, then, that these consoles were originally built into the shared rear wall connecting these stoas. This position successfully accounts for their double-ended format, since the figural portion of each block would originally have projected into the covered space of the east stoa, while the rear bracket would have projected into the west stoa of Place of Palms.

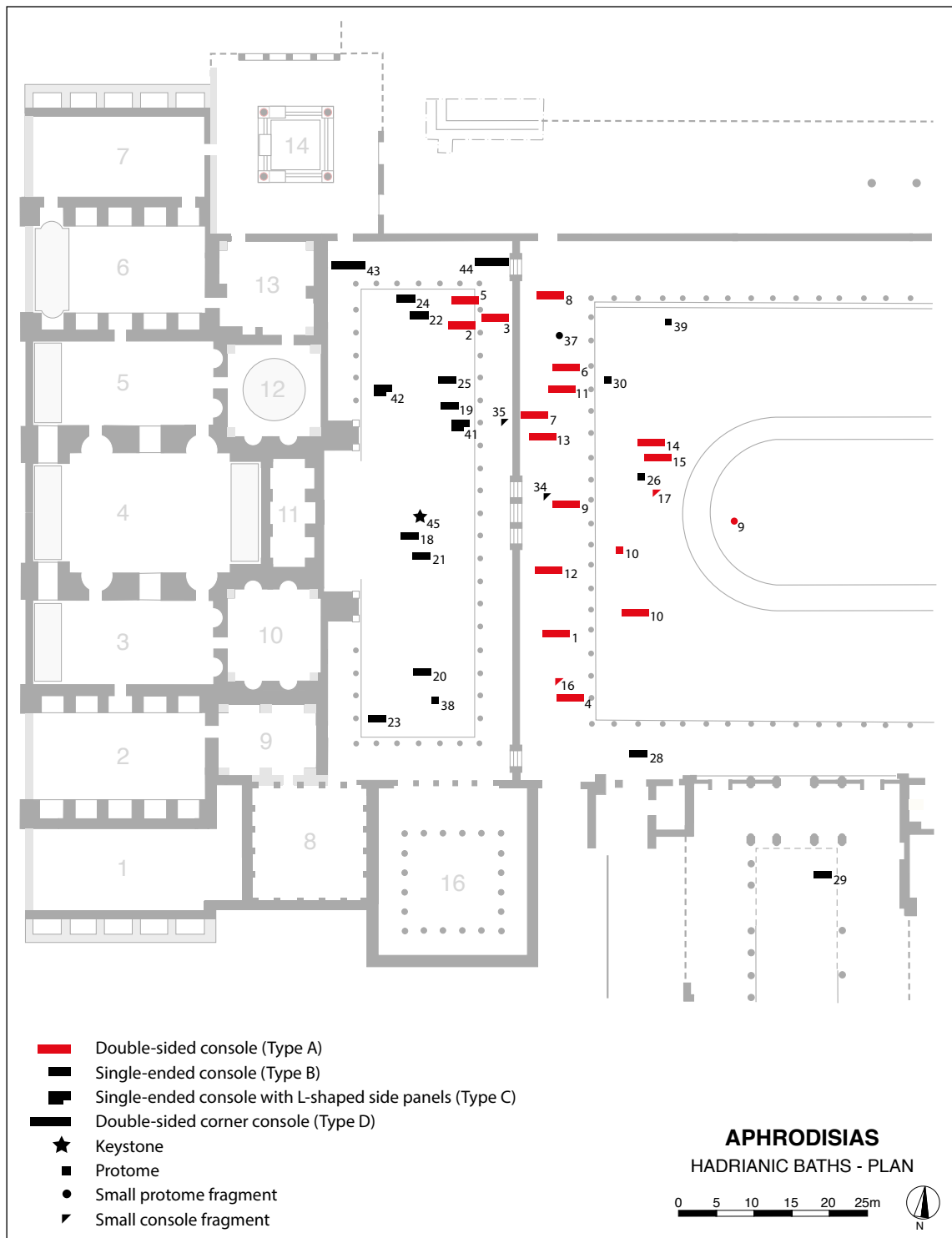
40 The find location diagram also supports Mendel's observation that Type B consoles were set up in the court's north stoa. A key question is then whether or not they were also set up in the south and west stoas. It is true that the plan shows a higher concentration

36 Mendel 1906, 177 with n. 1; Mendel 1914, 189–195 cats. 496–502.

37 Mendel 1906, 168.

38 Boulanger 1914, 50: »à la section Nord appartiennent une tête de Minotaure (trouvée en 1904), une tête de lion et une tête de taureau; à la section Sud, deux têtes ailées (Hypnos?) et une tête de taureau«. While the Minotaur can be identified as [42], there is not enough information to identify the remaining pieces with certainty.

39 Jacopi 1939, 158 f. nos. 162. 163.



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Fig. 78: Schematic diagram showing the earliest documented locations of console pieces. The find-places of some early finds are based only on descriptions, and some pieces were moved prior to their first documentation. Nonetheless the diagram illustrates the density of console finds in the Palaestra Court and its surrounding areas. All pieces shown in red certainly belong to double-sided consoles (Type A). Those in black belong to other categories, as indicated in the key above

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of consoles to the north and east than to the south and west. But this is partially explained by the architecture of the Baths, since several rooms flanking the Palaestra Court to the south – notably the aleipterion (Room 8) and ›Salle aux Vingt Colonnes‹ (Room 16) – were semi-open spaces accessed through columnar screens rather than closed doorways (fig. 1). As a result, there was less continuous wall into which consoles could have been set. Two further considerations suggest that consoles may have been displayed in the south and/or west stoas. Firstly, it is clear that consoles were indeed discovered at the south of the court: Boulanger locates three pieces in this area, and several important finds were documented here from the 1960s [20. 23. 38]. Secondly, the total number of consoles –

about thirty-three to thirty-five – seems too high for them to have been set up only in the north and east stoas. As a working hypothesis, then, we might imagine that the consoles were displayed on at least three sides of the Palaestra Court. Any consoles displayed on the court's west side would have been embedded in the eastern wall of the bathing block proper.

The ›Dilettanti Minotaur‹

41 One large console piece was excavated some distance from the Palaestra Court. This is the badly-weathered Minotaur protome discovered in 1962 close to the Temple of Aphrodite [31]. The site inventory card lists its find location as »Stray find, TA [sc. Temple of Aphrodite] along road«.

42 The significance of this find-spot increases when we consider an engraving made during an expedition to Aphrodisias sponsored by the Society of Dilettanti in 1812, which was published in the third volume of *Antiquities of Ionia* in 1840 (fig. 79)⁴⁰. It depicts the Temple of Aphrodite viewed from its north-west corner. Clearly visible in the foreground are a colossal sculpted head and an upturned Ionic capital, both lying alongside the road running parallel to the temple's east-west axis. There are strong grounds for supposing that the colossal head should be identified as the Minotaur protome discovered at the temple in 1962. While the face of the head depicted in the drawing seems better preserved than that of the Minotaur protome, perhaps owing to the imagination of the draughtsman, the two pieces are clearly linked by the arrangement of the hair-locks (fig. 80. 81).

43 The ›Dilettanti Minotaur‹ is not the only object from the Hadrianic Baths to have been moved to the Sanctuary of Aphrodite. Indeed, two large circular basins (*labra*) made from blue-grey marble found close to the temple-church are also thought to come from the Baths⁴¹. One is depicted in the same Dilettanti engraving.



79

Fig. 79: Engraving of the Temple of Aphrodite at Aphrodisias, viewed from the north-west corner. First published in 1840, following an expedition sponsored by the Society of Dilettanti in 1812. The ›Dilettanti Minotaur‹ is clearly visible in the foreground, next to an upturned Ionic capital

Fig. 80: The ›Dilettanti Minotaur‹ as depicted in the engraving

Fig. 81: The ›Dilettanti Minotaur‹ [31] in its present state, viewed from the same angle



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81

40 Wilkins et al. 1840, 62. pl. 3.

41 For a discussion of these basins, see Wilson 2016a, 183 no. 2.

Display Setting

⁴⁴ Having discussed the find locations of the different console types, we may consider how they were displayed in the Palaestra Court stoas.

Type A and B Consoles

⁴⁵ We have seen that the Type A consoles were positioned in the shared rear wall linking the east stoa of the Palaestra Court with the west stoa of the Place of Palms, while the Type B consoles were positioned in the remaining stoas. Mendel suggested that both types supported the ceiling beams of the stoas they decorated. According to this reading, the consoles would have been positioned directly behind the stoa columns, and the ceiling beams would have been supported by the colossal protomes on one side and by the entablature above the columns on the other. This reconstruction has often been taken up in other discussions of the Hadrianic Baths⁴².

⁴⁶ A different arrangement was proposed by Öztürk in her preliminary study of the complex's architecture⁴³. She recognised that Mendel's reconstruction fails to account for the difference in ground level between the east stoa of the Palaestra Court and the west stoa of the Place of Palms. This difference is significant, because it rules out the possibility that the Type A double-sided consoles embedded in the shared rear wall could have supported ceiling beams on both sides. Either the blocks could have been positioned at the ceiling level of the east stoa of the Palaestra Court, in which case their rear brackets would have projected well above the ceiling of the west stoa of the Place of Palms, or they could have been positioned at the ceiling level of the west stoa of the Place of Palms, in which case their figural protomes would have projected well below the ceiling of the east stoa of the Palaestra Court. Öztürk argued for the second possibility, restoring the consoles at the ceiling level of the Place of Palms west stoa.

⁴⁷ Öztürk further suggested that the front projecting parts of the consoles might have supported a series of more than twenty inscribed statue bases excavated in the Palaestra Court and its surrounding areas⁴⁴. These bases were mostly dedicated by female benefactors belonging to the city elite⁴⁵, and seem to have supported caryatids⁴⁶. While Öztürk was surely correct to suppose that the caryatids and consoles were displayed together in the stoas of the Palaestra Court, the configuration she proposes is problematic. Indeed, the upper surfaces of the front projecting portions of the consoles bear no traces of being prepared to receive large statue bases directly on top. We would expect anathyrosis contact bands and dowel cuttings had this been the case.

⁴⁸ Even so, the suggestion that the consoles were displayed below ceiling level in the Palaestra Court should be taken seriously. This reconstruction is supported not only by the split-level design of the stoas at the east side of the court, but also by technical evidence furnished by the consoles themselves. Indeed, many blocks are finished with uneven point-chisel work on the upper surface above the front projecting portion, especially in the area over the protome head. This rough finish would not be conducive to ceiling beams resting directly on top, suggesting that the consoles may have been displayed below ceiling level. In the case of the Type A consoles, meanwhile, the upper surfaces of the rear brackets also tend to be finished with rough point chisel work.

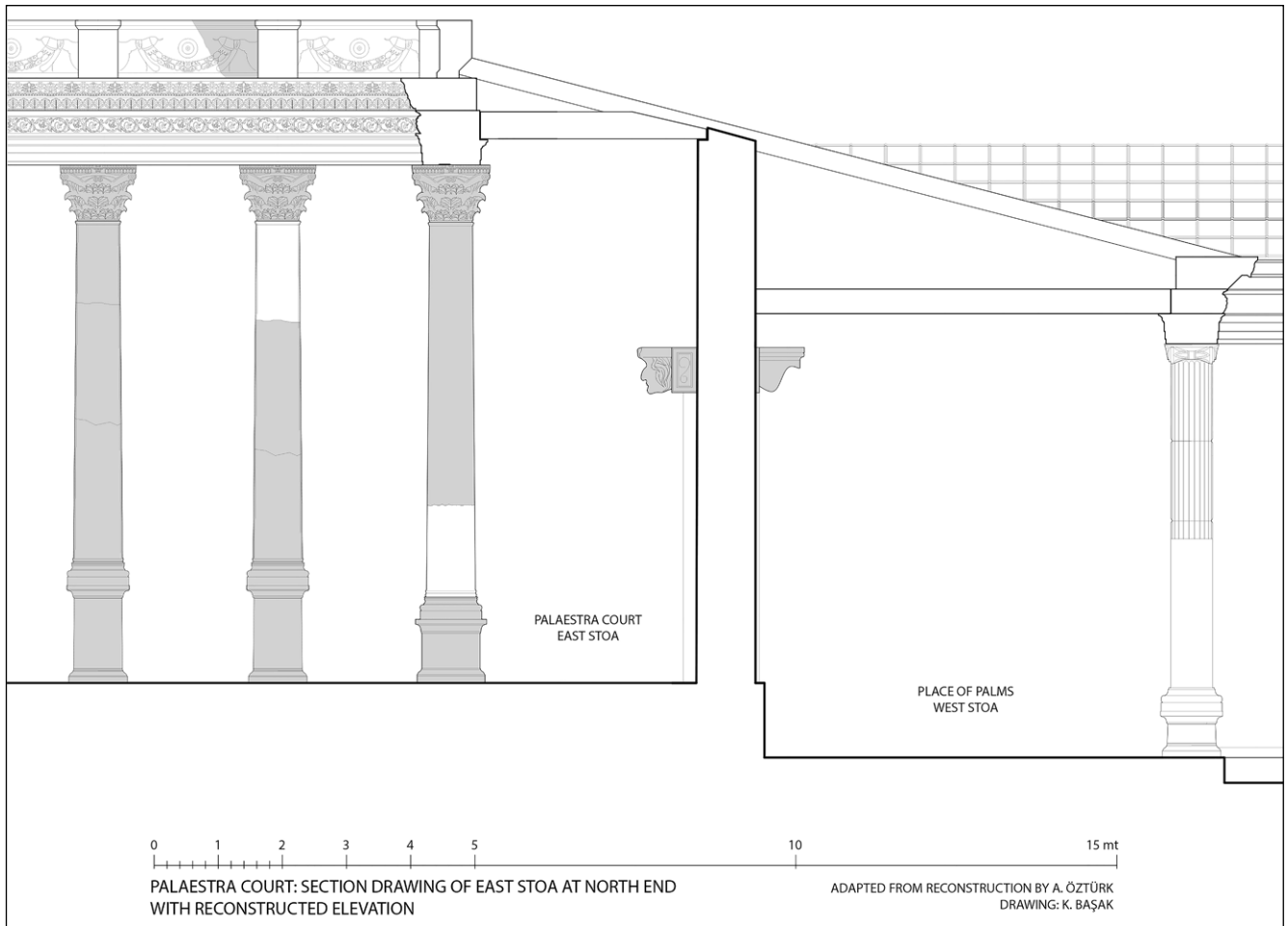
⁴² See e.g. Smith 2007, 213, referring to »colossal protome brackets that supported the ceiling beams of the main order at the back wall«.

⁴³ Öztürk 2016, 197–202.

⁴⁴ Statue bases: Reynolds 2002; Smith 2007, 210–213. 225–227 cats. B11–25; Wilson 2016a, 186 f. 190–192.

⁴⁵ The exception is a base dedicated by one Titus Flavius Athenagoras Agathos on behalf of his wife Flavia Attalis Aeliana: see IAph 2007, 5.212.

⁴⁶ Several ideal female heads found in the vicinity may have belonged to the caryatid series: see Smith 2007, 211–213. 223 f. cats. A16–24; Lenaghan 2021, 227.



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This raises the possibility that the consoles might even have been displayed below the ceiling level of the west stoa of the Place of Palms, in which case their highest possible position would have been approximately halfway up the shared rear wall connecting the two stoas (as in fig. 82). While to modern eyes this arrangement might seem illogical or unattractive, it is difficult to account for the technical execution of the blocks in any other way.

49 This preliminary reconstruction has important implications for our understanding of the function of the Palaestra Court consoles. We are faced with the possibility that the front parts of the blocks played no load-bearing function, projecting into the stoas below the level of the ceiling. The key motivating factor for this arrangement would then have been the collection of colossal figural protomes decorating the consoles. These protomes were perhaps the *raison d'être* of the entire series, designed to enhance the grandeur of the Palaestra Court stoas in a monumental and eye-catching manner. In other words, the consoles may have been conceived primarily as architectural vehicles for their spectacular figural protomes.

50 It remains to consider how the consoles were displayed in the Palaestra Court stoas from a ›horizontal‹ or ›longitudinal‹ point of view. It is of course possible that they were positioned directly behind the stoa columns, as Mendel originally supposed. But other arrangements are possible, especially if the projecting parts of the blocks played no load-bearing function. For example, they could have been set up in intercolumnar positions: that is, embedded in the rear wall at the central points between the columns of the stoa facades, maximising their visibility for viewers in the Palaestra Court. We might compare, in this respect, the porticoes framing the Temple of Mars Ultor in the Fo-

Fig. 82: Section drawing of the east stoa of the Palaestra Court at its northern end, with reconstructed elevation. The consoles are reconstructed below the level of the ceiling beams of both the Palaestra Court east stoa and the Place of Palms west stoa

rum Augustum in Rome, which contained an attic storey with alternating caryatids and shield-portraits (*clipei*) depicting Jupiter-Ammon and other divinities⁴⁷. It is tempting to imagine a comparable arrangement in the Palaestra Court, with caryatids set behind the stoa columns as an engaged attic storey, and huge figural protomes projecting from the walls in between. A taste of this kind of arrangement is supplied by columnar sarcophagi from Aphrodisias, which are decorated on their short ends with protomes framed by columns or caryatid-like female figures to either side⁴⁸.

Type C Consoles

⁵¹ The original display context of the two Type C consoles [41, 42] is even more difficult to assess. The blocks were surely displayed as a pair, and the superb quality of their protomes suggests a conspicuous location. Given that the Minotaur example [42] was excavated »between the west and north stoas«, it is possible that they were connected somehow to the monumental archway that provided access to the bathing facilities proper on the west side of the Palaestra Court⁴⁹. Alternatively, we might imagine that the Type C consoles were displayed in conjunction with the monumental propylon that connected the west stoa of the Place of Palms with the east stoa of the Palaestra Court⁵⁰. A full study of the architecture of the complex may help to resolve these issues⁵¹.

Protome Iconography

⁵² The protomes belonging to the consoles of Types A, B and C depict six figures: Herakles, Perseus, Medusa, lions, bulls and the Minotaur. Here each subject will be examined independently, focussing first on protome iconography and then on the figure's suitability to decorating this monumental bath building. The pair of Type D pieces will then be discussed separately.

Herakles

⁵³ *Protome iconography*: Six Herakles protomes survive. The two best-preserved examples [1, 18] were taken to Istanbul in 1906, while a further four pieces remain on-site [19, 26, 36, 37]. A trial fitting undertaken in 2019 indicated that two pieces still at Aphrodisias [19, 37] might originally have belonged together, but did not demonstrate that they must have done.

⁵⁴ In all cases, Herakles is depicted as a mature, heavy-set figure in the tradition of fourth-century statue compositions such as the *Leaning Herakles* and *Seated Herakles*⁵². He is characterised by his thick beard with curls parted centrally beneath the lower lip, and by his swollen athletic ears. These ears are always framed by tufty sideburns, leading directly into a row of hair-curls framing the forehead. While the protomes all follow this general scheme, the two well-preserved examples in Istanbul demonstrate that they did not closely reproduce a single model. Indeed, we may contrast the fleshier features, rounded eyes, and thick, flowing beard of the Type A example [1] with the more elongated features, downturned eyes and schematic beard design of the Type B example [18]. This scope for variation makes sense from an economic perspective, since

⁴⁷ Zanker 1968, 12–14.

⁴⁸ See e.g. Ögüş 2018, 30 f. cat. 1; 34 f. cat. 19; 77 cat. 211; 78 cat. 213.

⁴⁹ Archway: Öztürk 2016, 204 f.; Lenaghan 2018, 515 f.

⁵⁰ Propylon: Öztürk 2016, 202–204.

⁵¹ At the time of writing, architectural studies at Aphrodisias are focussing on other parts of the site. Even so, the preliminary reconstructions presented here were reached following detailed discussions with senior members of the excavation team.

⁵² Fourth-century Herakles statues: Smith 1991, 64 f.; figs. 71–73.

closely reproducing a single model would have been a more complicated and time-intensive process⁵³.

55 Herakles is usually shown wearing a wreath, with the fillets ›hanging‹ in relief to either side. Three examples are sufficiently well preserved for us to assess the type of wreath⁵⁴. In the Type B Istanbul example [18], the wreath is made up of comparatively narrow leaves, each with around ten or eleven lobes. While the sculptor(s) seem not to have aimed at precise botanical accuracy, these may be oak leaves: a suitable choice for Herakles, given that the oak was sacred to his father Zeus. In the other Istanbul piece [1] and a fragmentary protome still in Aphrodisias [19], meanwhile, the hero wears wreaths with broader leaves, each with about five large lobes. Mendel identified these as plane leaves⁵⁵, but this seems unlikely given the scarcity of evidence for plane-wreaths during antiquity. They may instead be vine leaves, alluding to the Dionysian lifestyle that formed an important facet of Herakles' mythology – an interesting and perhaps unexpected choice in this athletic context.

56 One exceptional console depicted Herakles wearing his signature lionskin headdress [36]. This is clear from the proper right side of the protome, where the right ear is framed by a ›hood‹, the front edge of which rests on top of the ear, before continuing parallel to the second row of hair curls framing the brow. Crucially, this second row of hair-curls has been cut back above the forehead, demonstrating that Herakles' hairline did not continue here, and suggesting that the broken surface immediately in front of this chisel-work should not be explained with reference to missing hair. It was surely once occupied by the mouth of the lion-skin headdress.

57 *Interpretation:* Alongside Hermes, Herakles was one of two patron deities of the Greek gymnasium. He was suited to this role thanks to his impeccable athletic credentials⁵⁶. Not only did he found the Olympic Games, but he was himself a fearsome competitor. Several ancient authorities report on his victories in wrestling and pankration, as well as his involvement in titanic boxing matches. The boxer-like ears found in many representations of the hero – including the Aphrodisias consoles – refer to this aspect of his mythology.

58 This athletic connection led to statues of Herakles being set up in gymnasia across the Hellenistic world, a tradition that then continued in bath buildings under the Roman Empire⁵⁷. Perhaps the best-known case study is the *Baths of Caracalla* in Rome, where at least three or four statues of the hero were set up, including the famous *Herakles Farnese* now in *Naples*⁵⁸. The tradition also extended to the Hadrianic Baths at Aphrodisias. Indeed, excavations in the tetrastyle court at the north side of the complex (no. 14 in fig. 1) uncovered the upper plinth of a statue base, which was re-used to support the statue of a colossal nude male figure during Late Antiquity⁵⁹. This plinth carries an inscription recording the dedication of a group of ›the Herakles and the Triton and the [lion?]‹ by a benefactor whose name does not survive. While the group's original setting within the Baths is unknown, its aquatic iconography would have been well suited to this watery display context.

59 Clearly the Herakles consoles from the Palaestra Court fit into this longstanding decorative tradition. It has sometimes been suggested that representations of Herakles

53 I am grateful to an anonymous reader for this observation.

54 For a comprehensive study of different wreath types during antiquity, see Bergmann 2010.

55 Mendel 1914, 192 cat. 498.

56 On Herakles' athletic connections, see LIMC IV (1988) 796 f. s. v. Herakles (J. Boardman), with further bibliography.

57 Examples collected by Manderscheid 1981, 70 cats. 16. 17 (Aix-les-Bains). 77 cat. 76 (Ostia). 84 cat. 141 (Argos). 89 cats. 178. 179 (Ephesos). 110 cat. 347 (Thysdrus). 111 cat. 360 (Thuburbo Maius). 115 cat. 407 (Carthage). 121 cat. 465 (Hippo Regius). 123 f. cats. 489–497 (Lambaesis). 128 cats. 530. 531 (Iol-Caeseria).

58 On these Hercules statues, see now Gensheimer 2018, 279–288 cats. 11–14, with further references.

59 On this base, see Smith 2007, 215 f. 225 cat. B10; Wilson 2016a, 188 no. 10.

in bath complexes had a specifically Roman frame of reference, presenting Herakles in his role as »Roman god of state and war«⁶⁰. It seems unlikely, however, that the Palaestra Court consoles were understood in anything other than local terms by those who used the Baths. In this context, Herakles was the patron god of the gymnasium, whose deeds served as archetypal displays of strength and bravery for those training in the complex.

Perseus

⁶⁰ *Protome iconography*: Four Perseus protomes survive. While the best-preserved example was taken to Istanbul in 1906 [2], three further pieces remain in Aphrodisias [3. 4. 38]. Each protome depicts a youthful male figure with a muscular brow and classicising physiognomy. In the best-preserved examples [2. 38], the figure has fleshy cheeks, eyes framed by heavy eyelids set beneath wide brow ridges, and full lips slightly parted. Although the precise configuration varies from protome to protome, the figure has a distinctive hairstyle, with locks parted in an off-centre *anastolē* above the forehead on the proper right side. The locks fall to cover the tops of the ears, leaving only the lobes and tragi exposed. Two wings sprout from the hair above the temples.

⁶¹ According to our usual understanding of Graeco-Roman iconography, male plus wings means either Hermes or Perseus. But the hairstyle of the protomes is wrong for Hermes, who typically wears the close-cropped hair of a gymnasium youth, as on an Aphrodisian frieze sarcophagus of the High Imperial Period⁶¹. Rather, the long hair covering the ears is suitable for a hero, making Perseus the most likely candidate. Compare, for example, a painting of Perseus from Villa San Marco at Stabiae, where the hero wears a free-flowing hairstyle of precisely the same kind⁶².

⁶² Another aspect of the iconography supports the identification as Perseus. On each console, the sculptor(s) rendered a sword hilt with a rounded profile in relief beneath the figure's chin to the left, and the blade of this sword with a flatter profile below the figure's chin to the right. Mendel convincingly identified this as the *harpē*, the sword used by Perseus to decapitate Medusa⁶³. On two consoles [2. 4], traces of the large curved hook emanating from the main blade of the sword are still preserved.

⁶³ *Interpretation*: Representations of Perseus were rare in bath buildings during antiquity. Only one parallel may be cited: a lifesize statue of the hero wearing a chlamys and holding the head of Medusa, found in the area of a domestic bath building near the Laurentine Gate at Ostia⁶⁴.

⁶⁴ Like Herakles, Perseus was a hero with solid athletic credentials. He is said to have competed in a set of funeral games at Larissa (Thessaly), where he accidentally killed his grandfather Akrisios with an exceptionally long discus-throw⁶⁵. It is sometimes held that he also played an important role in initiation rites for boys of gymnasium-age entering manhood, though the evidence for this claim is early and obscure⁶⁶.

⁶⁵ Perseus was better known for tracking down and decapitating the gorgon Medusa before rescuing Andromeda on his journey home. He was kitted out for this expedition by Hermes and Athena, who provided him with the *harpē* for beheading Medusa, a shield for looking at her reflection, a *kisibis* (bag) for concealing her head, winged sandals for moving swiftly, and the cap of Hades for escaping the gorgons' lair.

⁶⁰ Manderscheid 1981, 33 f.

⁶¹ Aphrodisias Sarcophagus S-2: see e.g. Erim 1986, 150 fig.

⁶² Elia 1957, 48 f.

⁶³ Mendel 1906, 177; Mendel 1914, 192 f. cat. 499.

⁶⁴ Ostia Museum, inv. 99. On this statue, see Helbig IV 50 no. 3047 (H. von Steuben); LIMC VII (1994) 336 no. 61 s. v. Perseus (L. Jones Roccas). I omit discussion of the »Perseus Triumphant« statue in Naples (MANN inv. 6408) sometimes said to come from the Baths of Caracalla. This provenance is uncertain, and only the statue's torso is ancient. On this piece, see now Gensheimer 2018, 371–373 cat. 67.

⁶⁵ Perseus' mythology: LIMC VII (1994) 332 f. s. v. Perseus (L. Jones Roccas), with further references.

⁶⁶ Useful summary: Ogden 2008, 65. 159 n. 42.

It is clear that the Palaestra Court consoles alluded to this episode, since the hero was depicted with wings sprouting from his temple – referring to his winged sandals – and the *harpē* beneath his chin. This frame of reference was apposite in this context: Perseus' decapitation of Medusa would have served as an archetypal example of heroic strength for those training in the Baths.

⁶⁶ It should be noted here that Perseus experienced a broader upsurge of popularity in *Asia Minor* during the second and third centuries A.D. This is clear from the numismatic evidence, since many cities across the region began minting coins depicting the hero at this time⁶⁷. We should also mention, in this context, Lucian's *Alexander the False Prophet*, an excoriating biography of Alexander of Abonuteichos, the influential ›interpreter‹ of the prophetic snake-god Glykon⁶⁸. According to Lucian, Alexander claimed to be descended from Perseus on his mother's side, and even equipped himself with an imitation *harpē*⁶⁹. Seen in this context, the Hadrianic Baths consoles constitute an early and unusually monumental instantiation of Perseus' resurgent cultural cachet in Asia Minor during Antonine and Severan times.

Medusa

⁶⁷ *Protome iconography*: Remains of at least six Medusa consoles are preserved. Two were taken from Aphrodisias following Gaudin's excavations [5. 27], while four have remained on-site [6. 7. 20. 28].

⁶⁸ The protomes all follow the same general scheme. Medusa has a wide face bordered by deep drill channels, sometimes with her head tilted slightly to one side. She is depicted with heavy cheeks and a strong, slightly protruding chin. Her mouth is expressive, with fleshy lips parted, usually revealing an upper row of teeth inside [see especially 27]. Her nose above is straight and broad, with deep drill-holes for the nostrils. Her brow, meanwhile, is powerfully furrowed, causing thick bulges of flesh to gather above the inner corners of the eyes. These flesh-bulges frame a flat triangular area of skin in the centre of the forehead, which is further delineated by a pair of deep creases extending from the bridge of the nose to the hairline. The brow arches slope downwards at a dramatic angle, sometimes with fleshy ›hoods‹ hanging over the eyes below. The eyes themselves are small and deep-set, and are usually downturned at the outer corners. Together the furrowed brow, downturned eyes and open mouth lend the protomes a strong accent of pathos.

⁶⁹ Although the precise configuration varies, Medusa's hair is always centrally parted above the forehead and swept back into coarse, ropey locks that frame the face and cover the ears to either side. Two wings sprout from the head just above the temples. Each wing originally supported the head of a serpent whose body emerges either from Medusa's hair [e.g. 27] or from the main body of the block [e.g. 20]. One well-preserved serpent is characterised by its flat cranium, its bulging eye, and the careful roundel work on its body [20]. The bodies of the serpents then re-emerge from the hair at the jawline, framing the lower part of the face before meeting in a central knot immediately beneath the chin. In some cases this is a half-knot [5. 27], in others a tighter, overhand-style knot [6. 20]. The ›loose‹ serpent tails frame the protome along the lower edge.

⁷⁰ While they all follow this design, the protomes exhibit some variety in sculptural treatment. We might contrast, for example, the larger eyes, squarer jawline, taller forehead, and more schematic hair of a Medusa protome belonging to a Type B console [20] with the smaller eyes, rounded jawline, shorter forehead, more expressive mouth

⁶⁷ Examples searchable through the RPC database, at <<https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk>> (23.05.2022). Many of the numbers currently assigned to the relevant coins are listed as ›temporary‹.

⁶⁸ On this text and its historical context, see Jones 1986, 133–148; Thonemann 2021.

⁶⁹ Lucian, Alex. §11.

and more plastically rendered hair of the piece returned from Izmir in 2010 [27]. Different sculptors evidently interpreted the basic scheme in different ways.

⁷¹ *Interpretation:* Medusa protomes were widespread in architectural ornament during the High Imperial Period. Well-known examples from Asia Minor include the frieze blocks from the east side of the Temple of Apollo at Didyma, the frieze of the Trajaneum at Pergamon, and the ›Medusa frieze‹ of Temple N1 at Side⁷⁰. We should also mention here the remarkable set of Medusa protomes associated with the Temple of Venus and Roma in Rome, another building constructed during Hadrianic times⁷¹. The continued appeal of this scheme is demonstrated by the arcaded colonnade framing three sides of the Severan Forum at Lepcis Magna in Tripolitania. Here large *clipei* (medallions) with Medusa protomes decorated the spandrels between the arches of the arcade⁷². These *clipei* are often said to have been inspired directly by the consoles at Aphrodisias⁷³.

⁷² Given these comparanda, it seems likely that Medusa was chosen for the decoration of the Palaestra Court consoles by virtue of her well-established pedigree in monumental architectural sculpture. For some viewers, these blocks may have evoked Medusa's time-honoured role as a protective figure with apotropaic qualities. In this capacity, she could watch over those exercising in the courtyard while enhancing the complex's monumentality and prestige. Other viewers may have drawn a connection with the Perseus consoles in the courtyard, supplementing the narrative thread of the hero's best-known heroic deed. It should be stressed, however, that Medusa's presence in the complex would have been perfectly comprehensive irrespective of this possible narrative link.

Bull

⁷³ *Protome iconography:* While they vary in technical sophistication, the five bull protomes [8. 9. 22. 23. 29] all follow the same general scheme. The bull is depicted with its muzzle lowered, as if charging out of the block towards the viewer. Its face is powerful, with thick knots of muscle bulging beneath the skin. A series of shallow horizontal lines run across the creature's snout, imitating leathery skin-folds. At the base of the snout are flaring nostrils, worked out with spiral drill channels and connected by a thick ridge of muscle. The creature's forehead is covered by a pyramid of tufty hair, arranged around a central cow's lick. Deep drill channels separate the individual hair tufts. Above the temples, two large horns sprout from the head, with a pair of bovine ears projecting outwards just behind. On the sides of the face, the creature's brows are enlivened by further skin folds. The wide eyes below bulge from their sockets, and are set beneath thick, doughy eyelids. The articulation of the mouth varies: in some cases the sculptor(s) used a drill channel [e.g. 22], while in others they preferred chisel work [e.g. 23]. To either side of the head, acanthus scroll ornament is worked in relief against the flat background.

⁷⁴ *Interpretation:* Bull protomes had a long history in monumental architectural sculpture by the time the Hadrianic Baths were constructed⁷⁴. At Aphrodisias, they decorated the consoles that supported the ceiling of the ground floor of the Theatre

⁷⁰ Didyma: Pülz 1989, 57–64. Pergamon: Stiller 1895, 20–25. Side: Mansel 1963, 80 f. On these friezes, see also LIMC IV (1988) 349 nos. 44–46 s. v. Gorgones Romanae (O. Paoletti).

⁷¹ For this parallel, see Barattolo 1982, esp. 148–150, further suggesting that these protomes might have been executed by an Aphrodisian workshop.

⁷² Squarciapino 1974, 65–90; LIMC IV (1988) 356 f. no. 152 s. v. Gorgones Romanae (O. Paoletti).

⁷³ Squarciapino 1974, 82–90. See also now Yegül – Favro 2019, 532: »The Medusa-head medallions . . . were a special decorative touch whose immediate models came from Aphrodisias in southwest Asia Minor«.

⁷⁴ For bull heads in Hellenistic architectural sculpture, see Webb 1996, 29 f.

stage building (later first century B.C.)⁷⁵; a monumental doorway from the Sanctuary of Aphrodite, together with protomes depicting lions pouncing on bulls (first century A.D.?)⁷⁶; and the pier capitals supporting the arcades of the South Hall of the Civic Basilica, together with lion protomes (late first century A.D.)⁷⁷. Other parallels from the East include the bull capitals from the Augustan Basilica at Ephesos⁷⁸, the colossal capitals with bull and sphinx protomes from the Temple of Apollo at Didyma⁷⁹, and the alternating bull and lion protomes of the frieze of the main temple at Baalbek/Heliopolis⁸⁰. Such comparanda suggest that bull protomes were chosen to decorate the Palaestra Court because this sturdy animal had long been used for adorning massive architectural members.

Lion

⁷⁵ *Protome iconography*: Five lion protomes survive [10. 21. 30. 41. 45]. While they all depict male lions with thick manes, they do not follow a standard scheme. The range of possible effects is well illustrated by the pair of examples returned from Izmir in 2010 [21. 41]. The Type C piece [41] is among the most technically accomplished protomes in the series. Here the lion has a ferocious facial expression, with its mouth wide open revealing two rows of sharp teeth, and fleshy jowls drooping to either side. Deep drill-work is used to articulate the mane hair, with some tufts worked fully in the round. By contrast, the Type B lion returned from Izmir [21] has a downwards head-tilt, a less animated facial expression, more schematic mane hair, and a less emphatically open mouth. The overall effect is considerably tamer.

⁷⁶ *Interpretation*: Lion protomes were also widespread in architectural ornament in the Roman East. Two case studies at Aphrodisias have already been mentioned: the pier capitals from the South Hall of the Civic Basilica, and the protomes decorating the monumental doorway from the Sanctuary of Aphrodite. Other parallels include the aforementioned temple frieze at Baalbek/Heliopolis, a pair of lion consoles reused in the North Byzantine Gate at Hierapolis in Phrygia⁸¹, and many cornice blocks with impressive lion-head waterspouts surviving from the Roman East. As one of the strongest and fiercest creatures in the animal kingdom, the lion was well suited to the decoration of such colossal architectural pieces.

⁷⁷ Noting the juxtaposition of Perseus and Medusa consoles in the Palaestra Court, Mendel suggested that the lion and bull consoles also evoked great antagonistic encounters in the mythological tradition. According to this reading, the lion protomes referred to Herakles' defeat of the Nemean lion, while the bull protomes recalled the hero's capture of the Cretan Bull⁸². As we have seen, however, the bull and lion consoles made good sense in their own terms, even without this narrative aspect. Any connection with the labours of Herakles would have been the viewer's own choice.

⁷⁵ de Chaisemartin – Theodorescu 2017, 63. 144 f. 193–196 cats. 1201–1217.

⁷⁶ Unpublished, but referred to e.g. by Rossignani – Sacchi 2011, 244 n. 16; Stinson 2016, 52 with n. 86. The lion-on-bull scheme achieved widespread popularity in Asia Minor in the second century, with examples attested at Hierapolis in Phrygia, Laodikeia, and Sagalassos: see Rossignani – Sacchi 2011, 244, with n. 16 for further references.

⁷⁷ Stinson 2016, 49–52, with pls. 99. 100. 102.

⁷⁸ Scherrer 2000, 79 fig. 2. 80.

⁷⁹ Pülz 1989, 47–52.

⁸⁰ Schulz – Winnefeld 1921, 59 f. pl. 23.

⁸¹ These consoles are discussed in more detail later on in this section.

⁸² Mendel 1914, 191: «le fait qu'on trouve un Persée à côté d'une Méduse (répétée, il est vrai, plusieurs fois), deux têtes d'Héraclès à côté d'une tête de lion et d'une tête de taureau, nous autorise à restituer un Thésée à côté du Minotaure, et à supposer que les sculpteurs s'étaient inspirés des travaux exécutés par les grands héros de la fable».

Minotaur

78 *Protome iconography:* Some seven Minotaur protomes survive. One was taken to Istanbul [24], while six remain in Aphrodisias. The protomes can be divided into two categories: four depict a younger, softer Minotaur [11. 24. 25. 31], while three depict a more savage, monstrous-looking version of the beast [12. 39. 42]. In both cases, we detect the remarkable imagination of Aphrodisian sculptors tasked with capturing the half-human, half-bovine parentage of the Minotaur within the limited parameters of the protome format.

79 Both the ›Dilettanti Minotaur‹ [31] and the piece in Istanbul [24] encompass the younger, softer scheme. Here the Minotaur is depicted with a pudgy face framed by long, unkempt curls of hair falling to shoulder level. The hair is centrally parted above the forehead, and totally covers the area usually reserved for human ears. Instead two bull's ears sprout from the hair above the temples. These ears can be depicted in relief against the flat background surface [e.g. 24], or shown emerging directly from the thick mass of curls [e.g. 11]. In both cases, small horns sprout from the head immediately in front of the ears. The creature's bovine aspect is underscored by its brow, where a patch of fur is rendered with delicate chisel work. Judging by the example in Istanbul [24], the furry brow was combined with a series of soft, youthful facial features, including a fleshy nose and a pouty mouth with drooping upper lip.

80 The three remaining protomes depict the Minotaur in a different manner, working up its beastly aspect. Here the creature's nose is broad and bull-like, with huge flaring nostrils and a fleshy bifid tip [see especially 12]. Immediately above the nose, two knots of flesh droop over the inner corners of the eyes. The eyes themselves are wide and intense, bulging from their sockets. They are set beneath thick upper eyelids, which overlap the lower lids at the outer corners. The forehead above is tall and broad, defined on either side by a series of bony ridges beneath the surface of the skin. A pyramid of fur grows on the forehead, arranged around a central cow's lick. The head hair above is arranged in a series of tousled tufts, separated by deep drill channels. Two horns sprout from the hair above the temples. On either side of the face, two long wispy sideburns extend from the hairline down to jaw level. Behind the sideburns are the bovine ears, positioned in the space usually reserved for their human counterparts. The ears have incised hair running around their outer edges, and thick ridges of cartilage in the centre [see especially the right ear of 12]. The creature's mouth, meanwhile, is parted to reveal an upper row of teeth inside. In two cases [39. 42] the teeth are individually articulated, enhancing the ferocity of the creature's expression.

81 *Interpretation:* Representations of the Minotaur were rare in bath buildings during antiquity. Only one parallel is attested, from a bathhouse at *Apameia* (Syria) constructed by L. Iulius Agrippa in A.D. 116/117. Here an inscription records the presence of a bronze group depicting Theseus and the Minotaur⁸³. At Aphrodisias, by contrast, there is nothing to suggest that Theseus was represented in the Hadrianic Baths.

82 While on one level the Minotaur was »a peculiarly unfortunate creature combining the weakness of a man with the limited intelligence and inarticulateness of a bull«⁸⁴, we may doubt whether these negative qualities were supposed to be read into the Palaestra Court consoles. Rather, the creature was surely represented on account of its extraordinary size, strength and power – properties that made it well suited to the decoration of colossal architectural pieces. It is also likely that the protomes played an apotropaic role, protecting the Hadrianic Baths with a ferocity befitting their importance to the polis. This function is suggested above all by two further sets of Minotaur protomes surviving from antiquity, both from the Roman province of *Dalmatia*. The

83 Apameia bath inscriptions: Manderscheid 1981, 100 cat. 264; Balty 1988, 91 f.

84 LIMC VI (1992) 581 s. v. Minotauros (S. Woodford).

first is a protome depicting the Minotaur that once decorated the monumental archway of the Trajanic city gate at *Asseria*, surely as an apotropaic emblem⁸⁵. The second is a pair of Minotaur consoles adorning the north gate (›Porta Aurea‹) of Diocletian's palace at *Spalato*, which functioned both as column-supports and as guardians of the principal entranceway to this heavily fortified imperial complex⁸⁶. Other Minotaur protomes surviving from antiquity – including two colossal pieces from *Brixia* (modern Brescia)⁸⁷ – may have been displayed in comparable contexts.

A Decorative Programme?

⁸³ According to the interpretation outlined here, the figural consoles of the Palaestra Court carried a range of associations for ancient viewers. These blocks depicted the patron god of the Greek gymnasium (Herakles), another much-loved hero (Perseus), a time-honoured apotropaic figure (Medusa), a hybrid creature noted for its strength and ferocity (Minotaur), and a series of figures with a long pedigree in monumental architectural sculpture (bull, lion, Medusa). Given this, it would probably be wrong to suppose that there was a single overarching programme connecting all the consoles of the Palaestra Court⁸⁸. Rather, the designer(s) chose a series of figures that were recognisable in the limited iconographic scope of the protome format, and well suited to the decoration of a monumental bath building.

⁸⁴ Even so, it seems likely that some ancient viewers would have reflected on the connections between the represented figures. While there was presumably no pre-defined set of associations that viewers were supposed to identify, possible registers of reception may have included the following:

1. Comparing the heroic deeds of Herakles with those of Perseus – and perhaps also those of Theseus, whose presence might have been implied by the Minotaur consoles.
2. Comparing the Herakles consoles with the statue group depicting Herakles and Triton that stood in the same complex.
3. Evaluating Perseus' relationship with his divine patron Hermes, who supplied him with winged sandals for his expedition to the gorgon's lair. Alongside Herakles, Hermes was a patron divinity of the Greek gymnasium.
4. Connecting the Herakles and lion consoles with the Nemean lion episode, as Mendel suggested.
5. Connecting the Herakles and bull consoles with the Cretan bull episode, as Mendel suggested. The Minotaur consoles might even have led some viewers to consider Theseus' defeat of the Marathonian bull in this context.

⁸⁵ It is not difficult to imagine how these colossal architectural blocks sparked conversation among the inhabitants of Aphrodisias as they met in the Baths. In this sense they appealed to the traditional role of gymnasia and bath buildings as institutions that catered for intellectual as well as athletic excellence. A similar reading has

⁸⁵ Liebl – Wilberg 1908, 40.

⁸⁶ These protomes have recently been identified as Dionysian figures (McNally 1996, 42) or as Acheloos (Verzár-Bass 2004, 217–225; Verzár-Bass 2009), but their iconography suits the Minotaur better. The apotropaic function of the blocks was recognised already by Niemann 1910, 23.

⁸⁷ For the Brescia Minotaurs, see Morandini – Mor 2008, where the protomes are (mis)identified as Pan and a Faun.

⁸⁸ It remains for future studies to investigate possible connections with the remaining architectural sculpture of the Palaestra Court, with the freestanding statuary displayed in the Baths, and with the sculptural decoration of the Place of Palms west stoa. Particularly deserving of further investigation are the elaborate acanthus-scroll pilasters that decorated the colossal piers supporting the monumental archway that provided access to the complex's functional bathing facilities. These pilasters were crowned by figured Corinthian capitals, which were themselves bordered by frieze panels depicting reclining divinities. On these elements, see Mendel 1914, 179–188 nos. 493–495; Squarciapino 1943, 60–66; Brody 2007, 91; Lenaghan 2018, 515 f.

sometimes been suggested for the masks of the mask-and-garland frieze that decorated the stoas enclosing the Place of Palms⁸⁹, though this remains controversial⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ The impact of these blocks on contemporary viewers is further suggested by a set of five colossal consoles surviving from Hierapolis in Phrygia – three with Medusa protomes and two with lion protomes. One Medusa example was found among the remains of the Stoa-Basilica bordering the town's North Agora, suggesting that the entire series might originally have been set up in this context⁹¹. The remaining four blocks were reused in the North Byzantine Gate, constructed around the beginning of the fifth century A.D. as part of a new defensive circuit⁹². Here they may have functioned as apotropaic emblems, or may simply have been intended to give a prestigious classical-looking appearance to this new functional structure. It is notable that all five consoles have conjoined S-shaped volutes on their lateral sides, recalling the side panels of the pieces from the Hadrianic Baths. This design feature, together with the geographical proximity of the two cities, suggests that the blocks may have been inspired by their counterparts from Aphrodisias.

Type D Consoles

⁸⁷ It remains to assess the iconography of the Type D consoles from the north-east and north-west corners of the Palaestra Court. The north-west figure [43] has an accumulation of aquatic attributes, including long strands of water-drenched hair falling on her shoulders and breasts, a pair of dolphins in her hair, and a sea-monster (*ketos*) in her right arm. She has sometimes been identified as a Nereid, or as the Syrian mother-goddess Atargatis⁹³, but her iconography is not correct for either. A stronger candidate is Tethys, the sea-dwelling wife of the Titan Okeanos. She is frequently depicted in Roman mosaics with long hair falling freely, a *ketos* in close proximity, and aquatic elements – usually fishy wings – in her hair⁹⁴. As a water goddess, Tethys would have been perfectly suited to the decoration of a bath complex.

⁸⁸ The north-east figure [44], by contrast, is characterised by the selection of fruit that she holds in her right arm. The excavators identified her as Flora⁹⁵, but such an overtly Roman identity would be surprising in this Greek civic context. A different reading is suggested by a relief from the Sebasteion South Building, depicting Roma and Gē⁹⁶. Here Gē is shown reclining, leaning against a pile of fruit at the panel's right side. She has long hair falling directly onto her shoulders, and is nude down to the waist, with a himation draped around her back and lower body. In her hands she carries a fruit-filled cornucopia, with a child climbing up its shaft. There are obvious points of contact with the Palaestra Court protome: the exposed upper body, the long hair falling directly onto the shoulders, and the abundance of fruit. It is therefore possible that the protome depicts Gē. This identification has the benefit of connecting the two Type D examples, since Gē was the mother of Tethys and Okeanos.

⁸⁹ See especially de Chaisemartin 1987; de Chaisemartin 1990; de Chaisemartin – Lemaire 1996, 161–164, interpreting the masks as Hellenistic royal portraits and versions of famous Classical and Hellenistic statues, and arguing that they were well suited to an educational context.

⁹⁰ Compare Ratté 2002, 16, interpreting the masks instead as a »generic selection of facial types (with a predilection for the kinds of Hellenistic Dionysiac and genre types much favoured by Hellenistic sculptors) without any specific functional significance.«

⁹¹ Rossignani – Sacchi 2007, 377 with n. 38; Rossignani – Sacchi 2011, 242.

⁹² North Byzantine Gate: Arthur 2006, 129–131.

⁹³ »Nereid«: e.g. Mendel 1914, 194 f. no. 502; Smith 2001, 211. »Atargatis«: e.g. Picard 1949; Picard 1951.

⁹⁴ LIMC VIII (1997) 1193–1195 s. v. Tethys I (M.-O. Jentel), suggesting also that comparable female figures with crab pincers rather than wings in their hair should be identified as Thalassa.

⁹⁵ »Flora«: Mendel 1914, 195; Squarciapino 1943, 68.

⁹⁶ Sebasteion Roma and Gē relief: LIMC IV (1988) 174 no. 33 s. v. Ge (M. B. Moore); Smith 2013, 139 f. cat. C7.

89 Irrespective of their specific identities, the two Type D busts clearly depicted ideal figures associated with land and sea. This combination was well established in ancient visual culture, with a particularly well-known case study supplied by the Tellus relief of the *Ara Pacis*⁹⁷. A parallel at Aphrodisias is supplied by a spectacular relief from the Sebasteion South Building, which depicts Claudius in heroic nude costume flanked by earth and water personifications, characterising him as ruler of land and sea⁹⁸. We may doubt, however, whether the pair of Type D busts from the Hadrianic Baths were designed to refer to imperial authority in this manner. Rather, they surely evoked the fortune and prosperity of Aphrodisias at the time the complex was first constructed.

Conclusions

90 Bathing complexes were focal points for the dedication of mythological statuary during antiquity, and the Hadrianic Baths at Aphrodisias were no exception. Indeed, statues depicting »the Herakles and the Triton and the [ion?],« the Horae (Seasons), Achilles and Penthesilea, and Ajax and Achilles (Pasquino Group) can be associated with the complex⁹⁹, some probably displayed in Imperial times, others repurposed during Late Antiquity. At one level, the consoles from the Palaestra Court can be understood in this context, since their figural protomes resonated with the widespread taste for mythological subjects in monumental bath buildings. It should be emphasised, however, that the decision to depict these figures as colossal protomes was a radical innovation, with no known parallels in other bath buildings under the Roman Empire. We sense here Aphrodisian sculptors and architects taking an established decorative concept and developing it in a characteristically ambitious way. The mythological figures were inserted into the physical infrastructure of the Palaestra Court, enhancing its grandeur for those who visited the complex.

91 As we have seen, we do not need to reconstruct an overarching decorative programme in order to make sense of the consoles' iconography. Rather, the blocks depicted a selection of mythological figures and other creatures that were well suited to the decoration of a monumental bathing complex and/or to the adornment of such colossal architectural pieces. As a result, it was left to individual viewers to draw narrative or thematic links between the represented figures¹⁰⁰. While some connections were perhaps more obvious than others, the range of possibilities was relatively open-ended thanks to the inherent flexibility of Greek myth. It remains for future studies to investigate whether this kind of viewing practice can be reconstructed for sculptural displays in other bath buildings across the Roman Empire. Here we may conclude that the consoles from the Hadrianic Baths deserve to occupy an important place in discussions of monumental architectural sculpture in Roman Asia Minor.

97 *Ara Pacis* Tellus relief: La Rocca 1983, 43–48; LIMC VII (1994) 885 no. 70 s. v. Tellus (E. Ghisellini).

98 Sebasteion Claudius relief: Smith 2013, 171–173 cat. C29.

99 Herakles group: see n. 57, above. Horae: Wilson 2016a, 188 f. no. 11. Achilles and Penthesilea: LIMC VII (1994) 303 nos. 59–61 s. v. Penthesilea (E. Berger); Gensheimer – Welch 2013. Pasquino: LIMC VIII (1997) 838 no. 32 s. v. Menelaos (L. Kahil); Smith 2007, 216–218, 223 cat. A14. Two further statue bases from the Palaestra Court record the dedication of statues by Fl. Zenon in the fourth century, and may be connected to the redisplay of mythological groups: Smith 2007, 214 f. 227 cats. B26. B27.

100 We might compare, in this respect, the mythological statues set up by Klaudios Peisōn in the South Baths at Perge: see Wood 2017, esp. 451–458.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die kolossalen Figurenkonsolen der Hadriansthermen in Aphrodisias

Joshua J. Thomas

In diesem Beitrag wird eine bemerkenswerte Serie von Konsolenblöcken aus Aphrodisias in Karien untersucht, die alle mit kolossalen Protomen verziert sind, auf denen Tiere und bekannte Figuren aus der mythologischen Tradition dargestellt sind. Es sind mehr als dreißig Konsolen erhalten, von denen viele völlig unpubliziert sind. Diese Stücke schmückten ursprünglich den Palaestra-Hof der Hadriansthermen, einen großen Vorplatz, der den Zugang zu den Badeanlagen des Komplexes ermöglichte. Hier wird zum ersten Mal der gesamte Korpus der erhaltenen Konsolen und Fragmente vorgestellt, geordnet nach ihren verschiedenen Funktionskategorien. Im Anschluss daran werden die Art und Weise, wie die Blöcke aufgestellt wurden, und ihre auffällige ikonografische Gestaltung erläutert.

SCHLAGWÖRTER

Aphrodisias, Hadriansthermen, Bauplastik, Konsolen, Protome

ÖZET

Aphrodisias Hadrian Hamamı'nın Devasa Boyuttaki Figürlü Konsolları

Joshua J. Thomas

Bu makale Karia'da, Aphrodisias'taki bir grup dikkate değer konsol blokları ele almaktadır. Konsollar, hayvan ve bilinen mitolojik figürlerin betimlendiği devasa protomlarla süslenmiştir. Korunagelmiş konsolların sayısı 30'dan fazladır ve bunların çoğu yayımlanmamıştır. Hadrian Hamamı'ndaki bu konsollar, yapı kompleksinin hamam bölümüne ulaşan ön alanını, palaestra avlusunu süslemekteydi. Mevcut tüm konsollarla fragmanların – çeşitli işlevlerine göre sınıflandırılmış – bir korpusu ilk defa bu çalışmada tanıtılmaktadır. İncelemenin sonunda ise blokların yerleştirilişi yanı sıra ikonografik düzeni de aydınlatılacaktır.

ANAHTAR SÖZCÜKLER

Aphrodisias, Hadrian Hamamları, mimari heykeltıraşı, konsollar, protom

SOURCE OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Title Page: New York Excavations at Aphrodisias
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Fig. 79: after Wilkins et al. 1840, pl. 3

Fig. 80: after Wilkins et al. 1840, pl. 3

Fig. 81: New York Excavations at Aphrodisias
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Fig. 82: New York Excavations at Aphrodisias
(Arzu Öztürk and Kivanç Başak, modified by
Joshua J. Thomas)

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METADATA

Titel/*Title*: Die kolossalen Figurenkonsolen der
Hadriansthermen in Aphrodisias/*The Colossal
Figured Consoles of the Hadrianic Baths at
Aphrodisias*
Band/*Issue*: IstMitt 72, 2022
Bitte zitieren Sie diesen Beitrag folgenderweise/
Please cite the article as follows: J. J. Thomas, The
Colossal Figured Consoles of the Hadrianic Baths
at Aphrodisias, IstMitt 72, 2022, § 1–91, <https://doi.org/10.34780/wa2r-w842>
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reserved*.
Online veröffentlicht am/*Online published on*:
15.05.2023
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34780/wa2r-w842>
Schlagwörter/*Keywords*: Aphrodisias,
Hadriansthermen, Bauplastik, Konsolen,
Protome/*Aphrodisias, Hadrianic Baths,
Architectural Sculpture, Consoles, Protomes*
Bibliographischer Datensatz/*Bibliographic
reference*: [https://zenon.dainst.org/
Record/003032220](https://zenon.dainst.org/Record/003032220)