

New archaeological data from Claudiopolis in the light of stadion excavations¹

Davut Yiğitpaşa² 

² Ondokuz Mayıs University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Archaeology, Samsun, Türkiye.

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the excavation results of the stadium, which was discovered during the construction works in Bolu center in 2008 and restarted in 2022. This study, it was tried to date the stadium and evaluate the excavation findings. In the 2022 excavation, it was determined that the northeastern end of the Claudiopolis stadium extended under the apartment building and the southwestern end curved towards İzzet Baysal Street, the stadium was sphendone and 94.50 m long, the rows of seats were divided into 16 keiles, and the remains of the Ottoman Period building, the function of which could not be determined, were the Last Ottoman Period mansion (pavilion) bath. In the bottom sounding we opened considering that the ground of the stadium was deeper, it was understood that the height of the front blocking stones of the guard wall, as well as the small creek stone under the blockage, black slate air, and other materials, the compressed structure was strengthened. The festivals celebrated for Antinoos and Hadrianus, who made the city of Claudiopolis famous in their entire kingdom, including music, gladiator shows, wild animal struggles, and sports competitions. Unfortunately, we cannot say exactly in which year the stadium was built, since the fragment with the Emperor's Reign Period was not found in the excavations among the plates bearing the building inscription. However, it is understood that it was financed by Domitius Ponticus Iulianus and his family and was dedicated to Emperor Hadrian.

KEYWORDS

Bolu, stadion, Claudiopolis, Hadrianus, mansion (pavilion) bath.

Stadion kazıları ışığında Claudiopolis'ten yeni arkeolojik veriler

ÖZET

Bu makale, 2008 yılında Bolu merkezde inşaat çalışmaları sırasında tespit edilen ve 2022 yılında yeniden başlanan stadionun kazı sonuçlarını konu alır. Bu çalışma ile stadionun tarihlendirilmesine ve kazı bulgularının değerlendirilmesine çalışılmıştır. 2022 yılı kazısında; Claudiopolis stadionunun kuzeydoğu ucu apartman altına, güneybatı ucu ise İzzet Baysal Caddesi'ne doğru kavisli bir şekilde uzandığı, stadionun sphendoneli ve 94,50 m uzunluğunda olduğu, oturma sıralarının 16 keileye ayrıldığı ve fonksiyonu tespit edilemeyen Osmanlı Dönemi yapı kalıntısının da Son Osmanlı Dönemi Köşk (Konak) hamamı olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Yeni olarak stadionun zemininin daha derinde olduğu düşünülerek açtığımız sondajda balustrat duvarının önünde blokaj taşları bulunmuş, ayrıca blokajın altına küçük dere taşları, siyah kayrak toprağı ve diğer malzemeler ile sıkıştırılmış taban yapılarak sağlamlaştırıldığı anlaşılmıştır. Claudiopolis kentini tüm imparatorlukta ünlü yapan Antinoos ve Hadrianus için kutlanan bayramlardı. Yapı yazıtını taşıyan levhalar arasında İmparatorun hükümdarlık yılının yazılı olduğu parçanın kazıda bulunamamış olması sebebiyle stadionun tam olarak hangi yılda inşa edildiği konusunda bilgi sahibi değiliz. Ancak yapının Domitius Ponticus Iulianus ve ailesi tarafından finanse edildiği ve dönemin iktidarı olan İmparator Hadrianus'a adandığı anlaşılmaktadır.

ANAHTAR KELİMELER

¹ Herkese açık verilere erişildiğinden dolayı etik kurul kararı veya onayı alınmamıştır.

Bolu, stadyum, Claudiopolis, Hadrianus, köşk (konak) hamamı.

Introduction

As for the city, the following were found during 1978 Bolu/Hisartepi excavations: The Hadrian Temple (Yalman, 1981, p. 435 etc.), the stadion, a mosaic Flat, monumental structure, and Roman road remains on the southern slopes of Hisartepi, a theater in the south of Firkatepesi; and the agora and statues (Özgan, 1997, p. 155 etc.) on Kargatepesi. The architectural remains revealed that the settlement area of the city of Claudiopolis was located on these three hills. Columns, architraves, and frieze fragments belonging to the Temple of Hadrian and fragments of the epitaph frieze belonging to the stadion are exhibited in the Bolu Museum (Figure 1) (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 66) (Figures 3, 7-8).

The lack of archaeological excavations in Bolu also prevents the available information from defining the culture and establishing relationships. With the relative scarcity of excavations and research in the region, chronological problems, cultural relations, protection, and effective promotion of the Cultural Heritage, it is possible to contribute to cultural memory by arranging the Hisartepi Acropolis and Stadium as an "Archeopark". Bolu will gain the identity of being an important tourist city in archaeological and cultural terms and the tourism potential of the region will increase rapidly.

The aims and objectives of the excavations are to accelerate the archeology of Bolu, to reconsider chronological problems and cultural relations in this context, to reveal the relationship of Claudiopolis with other cities and the values it keeps through scientific excavations, to protect the cultural heritage and to promote it effectively and to bring it into the region's tourism.

Bolu/Claudiopolis Stadion Excavation (2022)

The stadion in Bolu Province, Central District, Akpınar Neighborhood sits on a total of eight plots numbered 15, 16, 17, 18, 42, 43, 61, 64 at layout no 9, block no 248. Bolu/Claudiopolis Stadion Excavations started on July 21, 2022, under the direction of the Bolu Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism and Museum Directorate with the permission of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums. It started on 21.07.2022 with the participation of Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs University, Archeology Department Assoc. Dr. Davut YİĞİTPAŞA and Ondokuz Mayıs University undergraduate and graduate level 6 students and 6 workers, and the first stage was completed on 07.09.2022 and the student group in the excavation team left the excavation. In the following period, excavations continued with the expert staff and workers of the Museum directorate and the work was completed as of 20.11.2022. Total 150 days (Figures 5-9).²

The rescue excavations conducted by the Bolu Archaeological Museum in 2008 (Güneş, 2010, pp. 159-173; 2011, pp. 294-308) unearthed the remains of a stadion, apparently built during the reign of Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD), on the southern slope of Hisartepi, the Acropolis of Claudiopolis. Excavations resumed in 2022 after a long break (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, pp. 64-85; Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, pp. 9-24) (Figures 3, 7-8).

We worked in 23 plan squares measuring 4x4 m in front of the balustrade wall of the stadion, 31.70x0.70 m step-shaped terrace above the seating rows of the stadion, plan squares 24, 25,

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26, 27, 28 measuring 2.50x10 m and plan square 29 measuring 7x7 m (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 9) (Figures 7-12).

Stadion

As mentioned by Strabon (14. 1, 43), the stadion reflects the superior features of Roman Period architecture. The stadion was built on the southern slope of Hisartepesi, leaning on the natural slope, using cut stones, without mortar and with the cladding technique. Since it was constructed in accordance with the topography, it has an impressive infrastructure. The seating benches of the partially preserved structure on the southern slope of Hisartepe and its infrastructure in the northwest corner can be well traced.

Extending in the northeast-southwest direction, the stadion sits on layout no 9, block no 248, plots no 61, 64, 18, 17, 16, 15, 43, and 42, a total of eight plots. It lies parallel to İzzet Baysal Street in the Akpınar neighborhood. The results showed that while 94.50 meters of the structure is standing, about an equal portion was destroyed long ago (Figures 4, 7-8).

The stadion, an architectural masterpiece in terms of typology, construction technique, and functionality, is observed as one-sided on the slope. The scientific study on the stadion in 2022 revealed that the slope on which the rows of seats are based somehow continues. I consider that the stadion was built in the 'U' plan type with a sphendoned (semicircular)³ turning section. However, the publications about the city reported that Claudiapolis had two theaters and a stadion. There are cities in Anatolia, such as Laodikeia and Apameia Kelanai, which house two theaters and a stadion. In a similar situation, it is possible that a massive building with sphendones might not have been needed in Claudiopolis. However, it should not be forgotten that the south spectator tribune of the stadion and a part of the running track were destroyed during the expansion of Gerede Street in 1933/34 and 1972 due to road and building constructions. B. Yalman stated that some seat rows and various architectural pieces were exposed during the street excavation work in 1972, approximately 150 m east of the stadion, and provided photographs and drawings of the ruins (Yalman, 1986, pp. 435-450). Examining the architectural elements of the building after this destruction, N. Fıratlı stated that the diazoma and sitting steps belong to the theater cavea, and the architectural blocks decorated with garlands and the inscribed architrave belonged to the stage building of this theater (Fıratlı, 1979, p. 114). Afterward, F. Becker-Bertau supported N. Fıratlı and defined the building as a theatre (Becker-Bertau, 1986, p. 23). N. Fıratlı and F. Becker-Bertau mistakenly identified the building as a theater and stated that the destroyed remains belonged to a second theater in Claudiopolis. However, an evaluation of the photographs in these publications as a result of our works suggested that the destroyed benches may be the eastern extensions of the stadion unearthed during the salvage excavation (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 67).

In the main axis orientation of the stadiums, it has been determined that the North-South direction is generally the most prolific. There are some exceptions to this orientation due to topographical reasons, such as the stadion of Claudiopolis, oriented in the Northeast-Southwest direction. A total of 5 seating rows were unearthed. The seating rows were divided into 16 keiles (seating sections between the steps), with step sections descending in the north-south direction. The number of steps identified in the widest part of the stadium is 14. Seven steps in the 1st row of stairs at the southwest end, nine steps in the 2nd, 12 steps in the 3rd, 14 steps in the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th, 12 steps in the 8th, six steps in the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th, and five steps in the 15th and last row (northwest tip) have been preserved. Although the first row of seats, 94 cm deep from the balustrade wall, was reported as 77.25 m in the 2008 excavation, it has been determined to be 75.37 m in dimensions and damaged in the last 14

³ The intention behind designing the stadium's narrow sides in a semicircular (crescent moon) shape was to enhance the audience's visual experience. This architectural approach, employed in stadiums like Aphrodisias, Laodikeia, Nikopolis, Nysa, besides Claudiopolis, was referred to as the "stadion amphitheatron" style. Strabon, 14. 1, 43; Yıldırım, 2009, p. 44; The inscription of the Laodikeia Stadion confirms this statement. Şimşek, 2007, pp. 200-204.

years. The 2nd row of seats is 45.85 m, the 3rd is 39.83 m, the 4th is 36.78 m, and the top 5th row is 23.97 m long (Figures 7-8, 11). Like Claudioapolis, Laodikeia is known to have two theaters and a stadium, and Apameia and Kelani are also considered to have two theaters, but this is yet to be confirmed, and inscriptions indicate a double sphendone stadium structure.

On the first seat row;

The dimensions of the steps are as follows: 1st step 72x22x27 cm, 2nd step 72x24x27 cm, 3rd step 72x24x27 cm, 4th step 72x25x26 cm, 5th step 72x26x29 cm, and 6th step 72x29x27 cm. The 1st step is 34 cm higher than the blockage.

The dimensions between the stairs are as follows: 1-2 5.60 m, 2-3 5.70 m, 3-4 5.64 m, 4-5 5.62 m, 5-6 5.63 m, 6-7 5.60 m, 7-8 5.63 m, 8-9 5.65 m, 9-10 5.64 m, 10-11 5.65 m, 11-12 5.97 m, 12-13 5.68 m, 13-14 5.59 m, 14-15 5.62 m, 15-apartment building 2.96 m.

The seating rows of the stadion extending in the northeast-southwest direction are 39-40 cm high and 73-74 cm deep. The length of the section, which separates the spectator section from the running track and has inscription plates on the front side (Balustrade), is 94.50 meters. The northeastern end of the stadium extends under the apartment building, and the southwestern end curves towards İzzet Baysal Street.

A total of 23 plan squares, each measuring 4x4 meters, were set up in front of the balustrade wall of the stadium by attaching strip bands to iron rods, and work was conducted within these areas. The excavations started from the 1st plan square at the southwest end of the stadion. While the 2008 excavation indicated that the stadion was 93.20 m long, the continuation of the stadion was tracked in the section where the concrete embankment built by the municipality in the southwest corner was located, revealing that the existing stadion was 94.50 m long. The thin vertical stone to the southwest of the 1st staircase measures 24x102 cm and has a clamp slot on it. This vertical stone rested on two stones. The dimensions of this stone on the floor at the bottom of the balustrade under the stairs from the vertical stone are 130 cm in length, 54 cm in depth, and 32 cm in height (thickness) in front and 40 cm towards the back. This stone continues 73 cm southeast from the vertical stone. Thanks to our work in this area, we found out what the balustrade's interior was like. The interior of the balustrade, which is in the shape of a chest except for the part leaning against the hill, was filled with large and small stones, part of the floor was paved with smoothly worked stones, while part was filled with compacted river stone, and the section leaning against the hill was completely filled with compacted river stone. This flat-cut floor stone is 60x51x25 cm in dimensions. Therefore, the discovery of these paving stones revealed that the stadion continued 120 cm from the vertical stone. The next section cannot be traced because it was destroyed during the road construction by the municipality. The municipality built a high concrete set wall to prevent soil from flowing into this section. In the 2008 excavation, the soil after the last step down to the stadion was considered the ground and left like this. However, we opened a borehole, thinking the stadion floor was deeper down. Newly, we found blocking stones in front of the balustrade wall. This blockage extending for 94.50 m was completely exposed (Figures 12-13). The lengths of the blocking stones are 70-176 cm, and the widths vary from 50 cm to 0 cm as they were destroyed by the rows of shops built in the 1970s. In plan square 22, a 75x50 cm borehole was drilled to the south of the blocking stone measuring 74x38x28 cm to determine whether this blockage continues to the south (Figure 15). We observed that the blockage continued in front of the balustrade wall in the northeast-southwest direction in a single row but did not continue toward the south (due to destruction). We also found that the blockage was reinforced by making a compacted base with small river stones, black slate soil, and other materials. How this section continues towards the running track (to the south) is yet to be determined. We observed that 23.45 m after the existing northeast end of the stadion, i.e., 80 cm southwest of the 13th stair row, it continued by descending 13 cm (Figure 13). Therefore, while the distance between the blockage and the 1st step is 23.5-25 cm at the northeast end, it is 32-34 cm high at the southwest end because of

this level difference. The stone between the 1st step and the blockage has a 5-13.5 cm protrusion (Figure 14). Since destroyed by the shops, it is unknown how many cm the protrusion actually is (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 10).

Looking between the 1st-2nd stair row from the front, after the stones of 100x35,5 cm, 135x35,5 cm, 147x35,5 cm, 97x35,5 cm, 151x35,5 cm, 102x35,5 cm on the blockage, after the stones of 100x35,5 cm, 135x35,5 cm, 147x35,5 cm, 97x35,5 cm, 151x35,5 cm, 102x35,5 cm, 5 cm indented inwards, then horizontal and vertical stones, respectively, after the 25x100 cm vertical block, 100x135 cm horizontal block, on top of the blocks of 24x100 cm, 100x156 cm, 24x100 cm, 100x178 cm and 24x100 cm, the horizontal stones from the front to form a chest are 26x70 cm, 26x180 cm, 26x189 cm, 26x117 cm respectively and the upper flat section of these stones (top of the balustrade) measures 94x70 cm, 94x180 cm, 94x189 cm, 94x117 cm. The 1st seating row on the balustrade starts after a depth of 84 cm. The 1st block in the 1st seating row has a side section of 10x9.5 cm, a height of 35.5 cm, and a length of 227 cm. It has a curved section of 30.5 cm and a straight section of 7 cm. Block 2 is 228 cm long. After 74 cm depth from the 1st seating row, the 2nd row starts. The 1st seating row was damaged after the 13th stair row. The 2nd seating row is also the 7th step. The 2nd seating row has a width of 12 cm from the front, a curve of 9 cm, a depth of 34, 169, 163, 153 and a width of 27 cm, a curve of 31 cm and a straight section of 7.5 cm, i.e. a height of 38.5. The 3rd row begins at a depth of 74 cm. The 3rd seating is 11, 194, 189, 170, and 15 cm wide. Seat 4 is 16, 27.5, 112, 130, 234, 234, 40, and 13 cm wide.

The horizontal stones on the balustrade wall facade vary in size between 1-2.66 m, and the vertical stones vary in thickness between 18-42 cm.

Steps 1-5 are made entirely from a single block in the form of a rectangular prism, while step 6 has a protrusion of 13 cm in height after the depth of the step to coincide with the 1st seating row and adjust the step ratio at the top. The first five steps are in regular blocks with average dimensions of 52x26x71 cm. The 6th step is 41x55 cm, and the upper part continues 27 cm flat, 13 cm high, and 28 cm flat. After the 7th step, the blocks themselves were processed into two steps, and there were seating benches on the protruding sections on both sides of these steps. On the right of some of these blocks and on the left of others, the steps were terminated and the seating benches were joined. These carved stairs 7-14 are less meticulous than the block stairs in rows 1-6.

On the 2nd staircase, the 10 cm high section between the 6th and 7th steps is not set on top exactly but protrudes from 4 to 9 cm. On the 3rd staircase, 5 cm was left protruding between steps 6 and 7. Its height is 9 cm. On the 4th staircase, it was left protruding from 6 to 13 cm between the 6th and 7th steps. Its height is 10 cm. On the 5th staircase, there is no protrusion between the 6th and 7th steps, and it is placed exactly on top. The 6th staircase has a 2 to 1 cm protrusion between steps 6 and 7. On the 7th staircase, no protrusion was left between the 6th and 7th steps, and it was placed exactly on top. There is also a 71x15.5x0.4 m frame on the facade of the 7th step. On the 8th staircase, there is a 1 cm protrusion between steps 6 and 7 (Figure 11).

There are three in-situ stones in front of the 1st step on the 7th staircase. The stones measure 39x37x17 cm, 97x62x21 cm, and 50x68x30 cm (Figure 10).

The distance between the 14th and 15th stairs is 5.64 m. After the 15th staircase, there is 2.90 m. The rest of the staircase was destroyed because it continued into the apartment building. The balustrade is missing because the upper stones were destroyed (Figure 18). According to Hisartepesi, there are small clamp slots measuring 2x3 cm with an average depth of 4 cm to fasten the vertical and horizontal stones together, while there are single clamp slots measuring 6x7 cm with an average depth of 5 cm at the end of the vertical stones and horizontal stones in square and rectangular dimensions (Figure 19). Small iron remains were recovered from the clamp slot in the vertical thin stone at the southwest end of the 1st staircase. Furthermore, the

second vertical stone northeast of the 1st staircase is fractured, allowing the iron clamp to be seen (Figure 17).

A significant part of the area has been opened, but the excavation was redirected to a large soil mass 2-4 m high, 11.30 m wide, and 95 m long on the upper part of the 5th seating row to unearth it. The entire 11,30x95 m area was divided into plan squares, and as it is difficult to evacuate soil, a 31,70x0,70 m step terrace was first constructed at the southern end of this soil mass to prevent the soil from flowing directly to the seating rows. A 3x0.70 m, 65 cm high concrete mass of a modern structure left from the 2008 excavation on the 4th seating row was broken and removed. Maintaining the level of the area, a depth of 60 cm was reached from the starting point, and a depth of 1 m was reached until the end of the 5th step. After this section, a second terrace was constructed as the soil mass was unsuitable for evacuation.

Moreover, considering the heavy snow and rainfall in Bolu province, the soil on the last step of the stadion was removed after constructing a terrace to prevent soil runoff. Starting from the 1st terrace, working in 5 plan squares numbered 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28 measuring 2,50x10 m, the excavation continued for 50 m with a depth of 60 cm and concluded upon reaching the Ottoman baths. The soil recovered from these zones was filled into the spaces next to the wall, and the boring pits opened in 2008. A retaining wall should be built to prevent soil flow from the base of the wall and the upper part of the hill towards the slopes in the future and to ensure the required safety measures. Furthermore, the part of the soil mass above the seating rows facing the stadion was properly removed, and the soil was evacuated.

In order to remove the concrete foundations of the shop built by the municipality, which exhibited an unsightly appearance inside the fence, and the concrete bars spewing out irregularly from these foundations, the foundations were removed with the decision of the Ankara Regional Board for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets dated 09.08.2022 and numbered 3507. In addition, the 30 cm high soil above the blockage up to the fence in front was removed and taken flat at the level of the pedestrian sidewalk at the northeast end. Due to the elevation difference, it was beveled towards the southwest end (Figures 20-21) (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 12).

Some of the foundations of the modern structure made of concrete, brick, and stone masonry above the stadion measuring 11.30x9.00 m, with a 1.90 m high front wall and 4.25 m high back wall, were broken with sledgehammers and removed. The rows of walls in front and west of this structure and the concrete embankment built to prevent landslides will be removed next year.

There is a round hole resembling a clamp hole with a diameter of 3.6 cm and a depth of 6.5 cm between stair rows 4-5. On the balustrade wall, 32 cm southeast of the 3rd stair row, is a hollow circle 10x11 cm in diameter and 6 cm deep. Its function is yet to be determined. A clamp fracture can be seen northeast of the 8th stair row.

In the flat upper part of the balustrade wall between stair rows 10-11, 1.20 m from stair 11, there is a 4x4 cm square and 4 cm deep clamp slot. From here to the south is a shallow recess 7.5 cm long for the clamp to fit into. 14 cm south of the clamp slot is a 3x2 cm cavity measuring 3x2 cm and 1.5 cm deep, and 2.7 cm southwest of it is another 3x2 cm cavity measuring 3x2 cm and 1.5 cm deep. These three grooves must have formed the clamp system. 11.5 cm south of these two grooves is a rectangular depression measuring 19x23 cm and 4 cm deep with rounded corners. Although the function of this section is unclear, it must have been a mechanism pit for something to be placed here. Furthermore, it is unclear whether the curved section 84 cm southwest of this section on the lower facade of the 1st seating row with vertical dimensions of 13x23 cm and a depth of 7-9 cm is related.

Fragments of a terracotta oil lamp, terracotta nozzle, metal fragments, and broken potsherds were recovered. Moreover, an inverted marble column base was found 2.30 m southwest of the southeast corner of the bathhouse (Figure 31). The flat section on which the pedestal sits is

61x35 cm in diameter and 29 cm high, the top of the column is 30 cm in diameter, and there is a round clamp pit measuring 5x5 towards the edge (not in the center). It is considered that it may have been rolled down from the Acropolis of Hisartepe. A spolia marble architectural element measuring 44.5x35x19 cm was found in the remains of the modern building above the stadion (Figure 30), which is also considered to be taken from the Acropolis. It was also understood that a few stadion stones were cut and used in the foundation of this modern building. Metal nails, hooks, ceramic and oil lamp fragments were recovered during the excavation (Figures 32-35, 40) (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 12). In addition, a total of 7 coins were found behind the inscription, 5 with inscriptions and depictions faded due to their condition, and one each belonging to Emperor Septimius Severus (AD 193-217) and Emperor Pautalia Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180). Excavation Inv. No 4 (729) of these, 2.8 cm. diameter bronze coin. Obverse: One countermark. The descriptions are faint. Reverse: One countermark. The descriptions are completely blurry (Figure 41). Excavation Inv. No 9 (734) 2.3 cm. diameter other bronze coin. The front face is completely faded and oxidized. On the reverse side, there are two standing figures in a faded condition (Figure 42).

The roof drainage pipe of the apartment building northeast of the stadion was pouring directly into the stadion. The building manager was requested to transfer the wastewater to another area to prevent damage to the stadion's foundation and stench.

Since the domed entrance first appeared in the 2nd century AD during the reign of Emperor Hadrian, the entrance to the stadion of Claudiopolis must also have been domed. We hope to be able to determine this in the coming years. We also think there must have been under the stadion galleries, rooms where the gladiators entered the stadion like the athletes in today's stadiums, and chambers where they put wild animals.

Georadar scanning is planned to be carried out in this area in 2023 before the excavation. We also hope to find at the entrance of the stadion the statue of Antinoos mentioned by ancient sources.

Stadion Inscription

The stadion's construction inscription was written very regularly on thin plates and placed in four panels on the balustrade separating the running field from the spectator tribune in the middle of the building and thus visually emphasized. Although there are hundreds of construction inscriptions belonging to the Roman Period in Anatolia, the stadion inscription in Bolu is known to be unique in terms of architecture (Güneş, 2010, pp. 159-173; 2011, pp. 294-308). Seven inscriptions were revealed, while four plates could not be found (Figures 22-24). The inscription was engraved on thin marble slabs with very regular letters in two lines.

The fact that these four panels with the inscription were visually brought to the fore gives the impression that this part is the very center of the stadion. Only a small part of the lower edge of plate no. 1, which must have been located at the inscription's beginning, remains to this day. The writing part of plate no. 1 and the plates that should be in 3 separate pieces after plate no. 6 are missing (Güneş, 2010, pp. 159-173; 2011, pp. 294-308). The Turkish translation of the building inscription, of which four plates were not found, reveals that the building was financed by Domitius Ponticus Iulianus and his family and dedicated to Emperor Hadrian, the ruler of the period. The Domitiuses, who undertook all the expenses related to the construction of the stadion, are recognized as one of the city's wealthiest families from other inscriptions found in Bolu. Celebrated for Antinoos and Hadrian, who made the city of Claudiopolis famous throughout the empire, these festivals included music, gladiatorial performances, wild animal fights, and sports competitions. It would not be wrong to think that the stadion financed by Domitius was used for these competitions. Unfortunately, we cannot tell the exact year the stadion was built, as the fragment with the year of the Emperor's reign among the plates bearing the building inscription could not be found during the excavation. We think that by finding these

missing inscriptions with the continuation of the excavations, we will be able to find out the exact year in which the stadion was built.

Twenty-three pieces of broken inscription plates were transferred to the museum garden with a report to prevent them from being stolen and destroyed and ensure restoration. After the restoration of the inscription, it is planned to be exhibited in the stadion per the decision of the Ankara Regional Board for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage dated 09.09.2008 and numbered 3507.

These inscription plates were attached to the stadion wall (Balustrade) with iron clamps. Panel 1 is between stairs 9-10, 82x4.96 m in size and 38 cm in height. It is fixed with three iron hooks from the bottom (Figure 25). Panel 2 between stairs 10-11 measures 82x5.30 m and 38 cm high. It is fixed with one iron hook on the left side and four iron hooks below. Panel 3 measures 82x4.95 m and 38 cm high between stairs 11-12. It has one hook slot on the left side and four at the bottom, but no hooks. Panel 4 between stairs 12-13 measures 82x5.13 m and 38 cm high (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 12).

The depth is 11.5 cm. One hook on the left side is broken. There are four hooks at the bottom. There are five hook slots on the bottom and one on the right side, without hooks. Either they were destroyed, or the Roman stonemason failed to place them. The back part where the plates were placed was left unfinished as it was not visible. The remains indicate that the hooks were reinforced by pouring lead (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 13).

Registered as a Grade 1 archaeological site, the stadion is the largest monumental structure that has survived from the ancient city of Claudiopolis. It is also the first stadion to be unearthed in the Bithynia Region. Although hundreds of construction inscriptions from the Roman Period are known in Anatolia, this inscription found in Bolu is architecturally unique.

A retaining wall should be built in order to provide the necessary security measures to prevent soil flow during the stadion excavation. In addition, the inscription plate placed on the four panels in the middle part of the balustrade wall was transferred to the Bolu Museum to prevent theft and destruction of the inscription plates and ensure their restoration (Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 13).⁴

Late Ottoman Bath

During the 2008 excavation, the remains of an architectural structure were found, concluded to belong to an Ottoman Period building from the terracotta nozzle and ceramic sherds recovered, but the function of the building could not be determined (Figure 26) (Güneş, 2010, pp. 159-173; 2011, pp. 294-308). In my article where I re-evaluated the results of the 2008 museum rescue excavation, I stated that it could be a bachelor (Girçık, Çıkçık) bathhouse based on the excavation reports (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 68; Yiğitpaşa, Kaya & Öntaş 2024, p. 13). However, in the 2022 2nd Term excavation carried out under my coordination, it was determined that the building remains were the Mansion (pavilion) bath from the Late Ottoman Period. In many cities in Anatolia, it is a common tradition for the notables of the city to build bathhouses in the gardens or on the premises of their mansions or pavilions. Mansion (pavilion) bath consists of a changing room in the north, a hot room in the southwest of the changing room, a water tank and a stove in the southeast (Figures 27-28).

In order to fully reveal the remains of the building 1.70 m above the 11th stair row of the stadion, which probably corresponds to the 5th seating row, and to learn the function of the building, excavations were carried out on plan square numbered 29, measuring 8x8 m. The remains of the building measures 5.00 m x 3.80 m in its current state. The highest preserved wall of the bath is 1.15 m. A section of the foundation remains is covered with stone; it has a rectangular

⁴ Güneş, 2010, p. 161. After the restoration of the inscription, it is planned to be exhibited in its place in the stadion in accordance with the decision of the Ankara Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Regional Board dated 09.09.2008 and numbered 3507.

plan, extending parallel to the seating rows of the stadion, oriented northeast-southwest, featuring different wall materials, and its base is partially covered with brick blocking. The walls of the building, which is understood to be a bathhouse, are constructed with rough-cut stones, bricks, and plenty of mortar.

While the south wall of the bath is 80 cm thick, the north wall is thinner and 40 cm thick because it was built on a blockage formed by compressing the river stones laid under the seating rows. Although we do not have information about the upper cover of the bath, it was likely covered with characteristic domes and vaults.

Terracotta nozzles belonging to the Late Ottoman Period, metal nails believed to belong to the wooden door, door lock parts, keystone, glass beads, glass bracelet fragments, and many broken glazed and unglazed ceramic sherds were recovered inside the building and in the fill soil (Figures 35-38).

Evaluation and Discussion

The gladiator monument in the Bolu Museum provides information about the types of games played in the city (Figure 39). The eye section of the upper part of the limestone, shield-shaped grave monument is shaped like a perforated gladiator's helmet. Next to the helmet is a scraped dolphin fish. The lower part of the monument continues as a gladiator shield. The inscription is located here with another dolphin fish figure. There are hermes on both sides of the monument (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 70). The inscription on the monument, dating back to the 2nd century AD, reads, "Priest Secundus erected this for gladiators who fought one on one" (French & Üdemiş, 1989, pp. 91, 92, 98). Secundus was likely the financier of the gladiatorial games and erected such a monument to the dead gladiators (Bilir & Tuna, 2022, p. 1232). The second gladiator inscription on display in the museum is the one Anatole commissioned for her husband Philokynegos, which reads, "...Invincible Gladiator, with bronze wreath..." (French & Üdemiş, 1989, pp. 92-93). Gladiatorial games were organized in the stadion of Claudiopolis, as evidenced by the inscriptions commissioned by the priest Secundus and Anatole (Bilir & Tuna, 2022, p. 1232). The fact that the monuments were found in Tepecik District indicates the presence of a possible gladiator cemetery here. Furthermore, athletic competitions were replaced by the more popular gladiatorial games and wild animal shows since the 4th century AD, indicating that the Claudiopolis stadion must have lasted until these dates (Uzunaslın, 1998, p. 28).

According to the inscription on the structure, the construction was financed by Domitius Ponticus Iulianus and his family and dedicated to Emperor Hadrian, the ruler of the period. The fragment bearing the inscription of the year of the Emperor's reign was not found during the excavation among the plates bearing the building inscription. It is also known that the Domitius family had been present in the region since the Late Republic. Roman public works must have expanded in the city, which gained importance during the Imperial Period. The stadion was used in the agons mentioned above. Although there is no precise information on whether the building was built before Hadrian, the data present indicated that the Domitius family carried out important public works for the city before Emperor Hadrian. Accordingly, it is difficult to say exactly in which year the stadion was built (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 70).

Conclusion

The 2022 excavations yielded important data on the construction date and typology of the structure. The recovered ceramic sherds and coins show that the stadion was used in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD (Figure 40). The latest of the eight bronze coins discovered behind the inscription is dated to the reign of Emperor Septimius Severus (193-217 AD), which gives a precise date for the late use of the stadium. In addition to these archaeological data, Marcus Aereius, T. Aeilius Aurelius Menandros, Aphrodisias Athletes Union, Gnaeus Domitius Panticus

Iulianus, Priest Secundus, Anatole, M. Demetrianos dating back to the 3rd century AD, Marcus Aurelius of Aphrodisias, T. Aelius Aurelius Menandros, Iulianus and his wife. Aleksandra's tomb, dated to the 3rd century AD, provides data regarding the late use of the stadium, as can be understood from the inscriptions (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 70).

In terms of planning, changes were made in Anatolian stadia's sphendone section in the Late Roman Period. A set was drawn in the middle of the race track in the sphendone sections of the Aphrodisias and Perge stadia. Studies reported that this was carried out for gladiator games (Uzunaslın, 2010, p. 20). This may have been done due to the city's decreasing population and welfare level. It is possible to say that these large stadia lost their primary construction function in the late periods (Çoksolmaz, 2022a, p. 24). However, we can state that these applications were not performed in the Claudiopolis stadion.

As mentioned above, the remains of the stadion continue towards Plots 42 and 43 to the east and towards Plots 61 and 64 to the west and southwest of Plots 15-16-17-18. In order to reveal the extensions of the stadion in other plots, it is necessary to continue rescue excavations in layout 9, block 248, plots 42, 43, 61, and 64. Essential works to reveal the stadion in its entirety, which has been partly uncovered, are being carried out today. Therefore, excavation and earthworks started here in 2022. The four plates of the inscription, which could not be found in 2008, and the continuation of the seating rows may be recovered with new excavations. If the top seating row is identified, the audience capacity can also be estimated. Since the present settlement was built on top of the ancient city, no structure has survived standing to this day. Although the building was considered to have a one-sided seating arrangement as far as it is observed on the soil surface today, the studies of 2022 suggested it had sphendones. The partial size of the building is 94.50 m. It can be suggested that the building must have been larger for the agons organized in the city in the Emperor's name. Constructing stadions on the hillside slope is a widely used technique in Anatolia. The one-sided appearance of the Claudiopolis Stadion today is similar to these stadions. However, there is a possibility that the opposite tribüne was on a vault while one side was on a slope. Our recent studies suggest that the stadium had a sphendone. It was stated that it was divided into 15 keiles in the 2008 excavation (Figure 11) (Güneş, 2010, pp. 160-161). The scientific excavations of 2022 evinced that the seat rows descending in the north-south direction into 16 keiles, not 15. We found that the blockage continued in front of the balustrade wall. We also observed that the blockage was reinforced by making a compacted base with small river stones, black slate soil, and other materials (Figures 12-13).

The stadion excavation finds group is diverse. The reports of other stadion excavations in Anatolia do not include detailed analyses, so it isn't easy to make comparisons. The stadion site was actively used in the late periods, as evidenced by the Ottoman-era baths and recovered ceramics and shishah bowls (Yiğitpaşa, 2023, p. 70).

Conflict of Interest Declaration

My article titled "New Archaeological Data from Claudiopolis in the Light of Stadion Excavations" has no financial conflict of interest with any institution, organization, or person.

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Extended Abstract

Claudiopolis kentinin tarihi en erken MÖ 7. yüzyıla kadar gittiği tespit edilmiştir. İmparatorluk Dönemi'nde çok hızlı bir büyüme trendi yakalayan Claudiopolis'in her yanı, kısa sürede pahalı ve muazzam büyüklükteki kamu yapılarıyla

donatılmıştır. Göze çarpan yapılardan en önemlisi stadyumdur. 1978 yılı Bolu/Hisartepe kazısında, Hadrianus Tapınağı, Hisartepe'nin güney yamaçlarında ise stadion, mozaik taban, anıtsal yapı, Roma yolu kalıntısı, Firkatepesi'nin güneyinde tiyatro, Kargatepesi'nde agora ve heykeller tespit edildiği belirtilmiştir. Bolu Arkeoloji Müzesi'nin 2008 yılında stadionda yaptığı kurtarma kazı çalışmalarından sonra 2022 yılında koordinatörlüğünde yeniden başlatılmıştır. Stadionun balustrat duvarının önüne 4x4 m boyutlarında 23 adet plankare, stadionun oturma sıralarının üzerinde 31,70x0,70 m'lik basamak şeklinde teras, 2,50x10 m boyutlarında 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 numaralı plankare ve 7x7 m boyutlarındaki 29 numaralı plankarelerde çalışılmıştır.

Stadion; Hisartepesinin güney yamacına, doğal eğim kullanılmak suretiyle yaslanarak kesme taşlardan, harç kullanılmadan ve giydirme tekniğiyle inşa edilmiştir. Topografyaya uygun olarak inşa edilmiş olması nedeniyle, etkileyici bir alt yapıya sahiptir. Hisartepe'nin güney yamacındaki kısmen korunmuş yapının, kuzeybatı köşesindeki oturma sıraları ve altyapısı iyi bir şekilde izlenebilmektedir. Kuzeydoğu-güneybatı doğrultusunda uzanan stadion 9 pafta, 248 ada, 61, 64, 18, 17, 16, 15, 43 ve 42 olmak üzere toplam 8 parsel üzerine oturmaktadır. Tipolojisi, yapım tekniği ve fonksiyonelliği açısından tam bir mimarlık şaheseri olan stadion yamaç eğiminde tek taraflı bir halde görülmektedir. Stadion üzerinde 2022 yılında yapılan bilimsel çalışmada, oturma sıralarının dayandığı yamaç eğiminin bir şekilde devam ettiği tespit edilmiştir. Stadionun, sphendoneli (yarım daire biçimli) dönüş bölümüne sahip 'U' plan tipinde inşa edilmiş olduğu tarafımca değerlendirilmektedir. B. Yalman, stadionun yaklaşık olarak 150 m doğusunda 1972 yılında yapılan cadde açma çalışmalarında bazı oturma sıraları ve çeşitli mimari parçaların açığa çıkmış olduğu belirtilmekte ve kalıntılara ilişkin fotoğraflara ve çizimlere yer vermektedir. Bu tahribat sonrasında yapıya ait mimari öğeleri inceleyen N. Fıratlı, diazoma ve oturma basamaklarının tiyatro caveasına ait olduğunu ve çelenklerle süslü mimari bloklar ile yazıtlı arşitravin da bu tiyatronun sahne binasına ait olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Daha sonra F. Becker-Bertau'da N. Fıratlı'yı destekleyerek yapıyı tiyatro olarak adlandırmıştır. N. Fıratlı ve F. Becker-Bertau yapıyı yanlışlıkla bir tiyatro ile özdeşleştirmiş ve tahrip edilen kalıntıların Claudiopolis'teki ikinci bir tiyatroya ait olduğunu belirtmiştir. Ancak çalışmalarımız sonucu bu yayınlarda yer alan fotoğraflar incelendiğinde tahrip edilen oturma sıralarının kurtarma kazısında açığa çıkarılan stadionun doğu uzantıları olabileceği değerlendirilmektedir. Kuzeydoğu-güneybatı doğrultusunda uzanan stadionda toplam 5 adet oturma sırası açığa çıkarılmıştır. Oturma sıraları kuzey-güney doğrultusunda inen basamak bölümleri ile 16 keileye (basamaklar arası oturma bölümü) ayrılmaktadır. Stadionun en geniş bölümünde tespit edilen basamak sayısı 14 adettir. Stadionun kuzeydoğu-güneybatı doğrultusunda uzanan oturma sıraları 39-40 cm. yüksekliğinde, 73-74 cm derinliğindedir. Seyirci bölümü ile koşu pisti bölümünü ayıran ve ön yüzünde kitabe levhalarının yer aldığı bölümün (Balustrat) uzunluğu ise 94,50 m'dir. Stadionun kuzeydoğu ucu apartman altına, güneybatı ucu ise İzzet Baysal Caddesi'ne doğru kavisli bir şekilde uzanmaktadır.

Çitin içinde bulunan çirkin bir görüntü sergileyen belediye tarafından yapılan dükkan beton temelleri ve bu temellerden dışarı düzensiz bir şekilde fıskıran beton demirlerinin kaldırılması için Ankara Kültür ve Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma Bölge Kurulu'nun 09.08.2022 tarih ve 3507 sayılı karar alınarak temeller kaldırılmıştır. Ayrıca blokajın üzerinde bulunan öndeki çitlere kadar devam eden 30 cm yüksekliğindeki toprak kaldırılırken kuzeydoğu uca kaya kaldırımı seviyesinde düz bir şekilde alınırken kot farkından dolayı güneybatı uca doğru şevli bir şekilde alınarak düzenlenmiştir. Stadionun üstündeki 11,30x9,00 m ölçülerinde, ön duvarı 1,90 m, arka duvarı 4,25 m yüksekliğindeki beton, tuğla, yonu taşından yapılan modern yapı kalıntısı kaldırılmıştır. Pişmiş toprak kandil parçası, pişmiş toprak lüle, metal parçaları, metal çiviler, kancalar, sütun kaidesi, devşirme mimari eleman, kandil ve çanak çömlek parçaları ele geçirilmiştir.

2008 yılındaki kazıda Stadionun 11. merdiven sırasının 1,70 m üstünde muhtemelen 5. oturma sırasına denk gelen yerdeki yapı kalıntısında ele geçirilen pişmiş toprak lüle ve seramik parçalarından Osmanlı Dönemi'ne ait olduğu sonucuna varılmış ancak yapının fonksiyonu konusunda bir tespitle bulunulmamıştır. Yapı, mevcut haliyle 5.00 m x 3.80 m. ölçülerinde olup korunmuş en yüksek duvarı 1,15 m'dir. Kazı sonrası planına göre söz konusu yapının kuzeydeki soyunmalık, soyunmalığın güneybatısındaki sıcaklık ve güneydoğusundaki su deposu ile ocak bölümlerinden oluşan Köşk (Konak) Hamamı olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Claudiopolis kentini tüm imparatorluk sınırlarında ünlü yapan Antinoos ve Hadrianus için kutlanan agonlarda atlı yarışlar, müzik yarışmaları, koşu, uzun atlama, cirit-disk atma, güreş, boks, beşli yarış ve pankration güreşi gibi kategorilerden oluşan atletik yarışmalar ile gladyatör ve vahşi hayvan dövüşleri düzenlenmiştir.

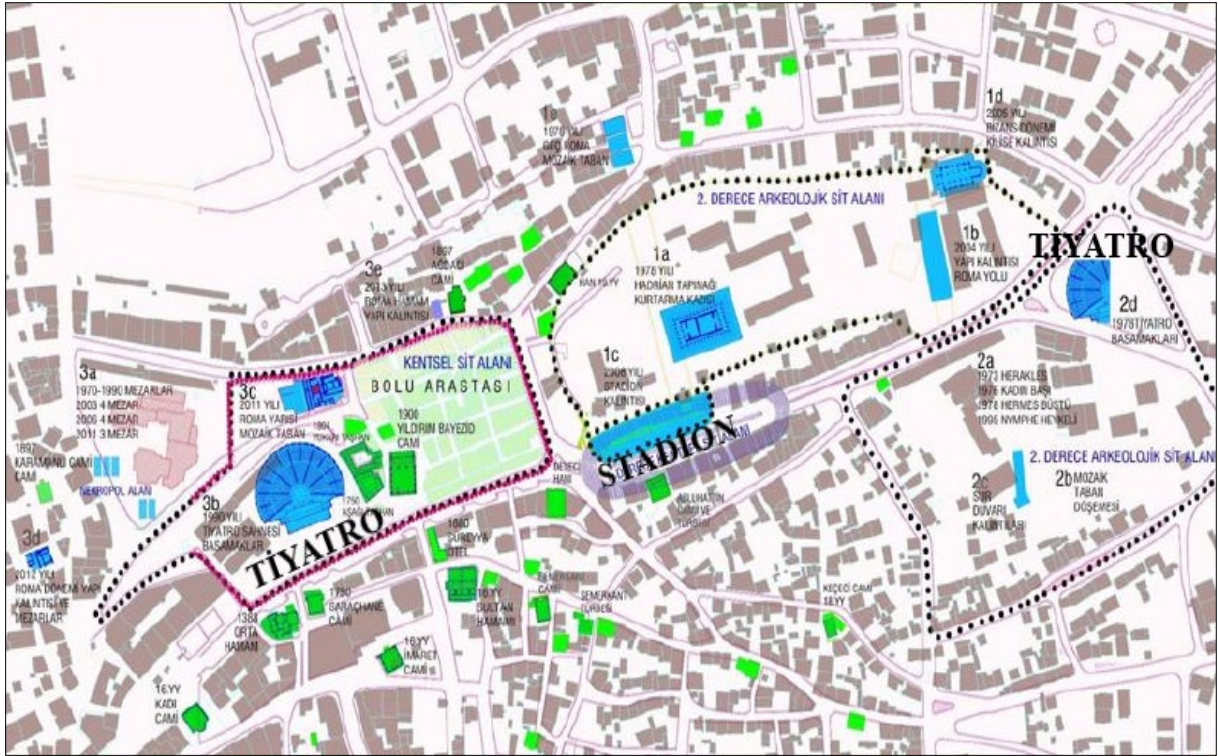


Figure 1 Claudopolis city plan (Karagülle, 2015, no. 401, Fig. 3).



Figure 2 Claudopolis Acropolis and Stadium

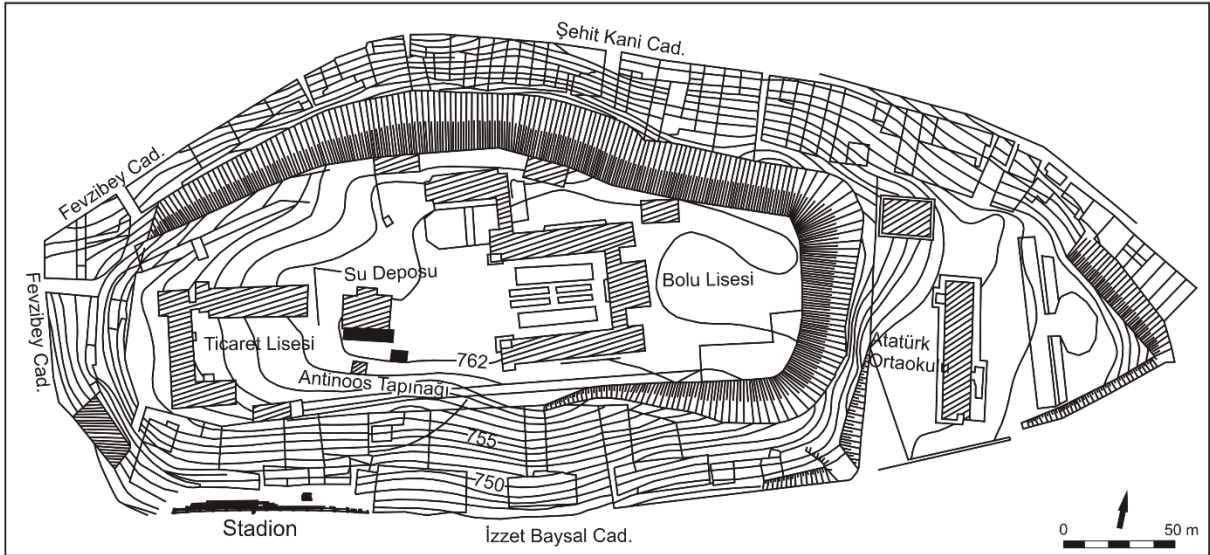


Figure 3 Claudapolis Stadion Topographic Drawing

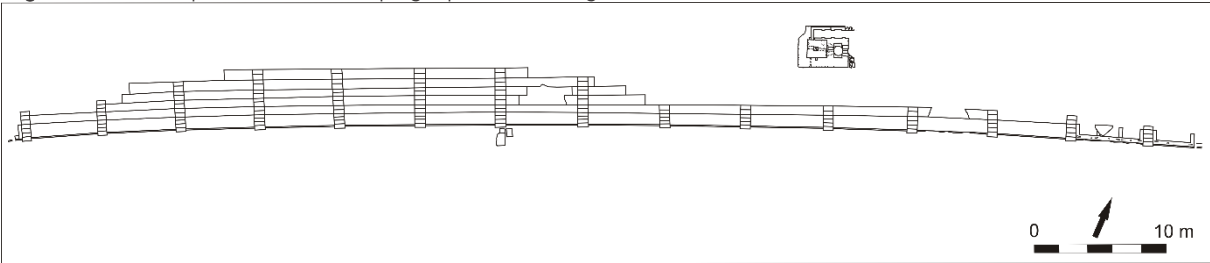


Figure 4 Claudapolis Stadion plan



Figure 5 View before excavation

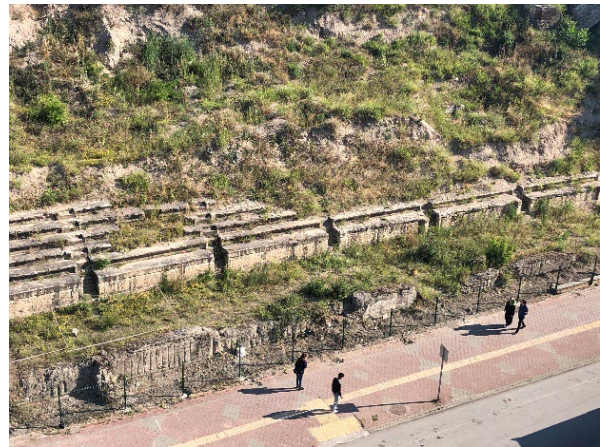


Figure 6 View before excavation



Figure 7 Work on the trenches in front of the Stadium



Figure 8 Work on the trenches in front of the Stadium



Figure 9 Work on the trenches in front of the Stadium



Figure 10 In-situ stones in front of the steps



Figure 11 Seating rows and keiles



Figure 12 Blockage in front of the stadium



Figure 13 Blockage in front of the stadium



Figure 14 Blockage in front of the stadium



Figure 15 Blockage in front of the stadium



Figure 16 Blockage filler behind balustrade



Figure 17 Iron clamp in balustrade



Figure 18 Internal view of the balustrade



Figure 19 Clamp slots in balustrade



Figure 20 Ruins of modern shops

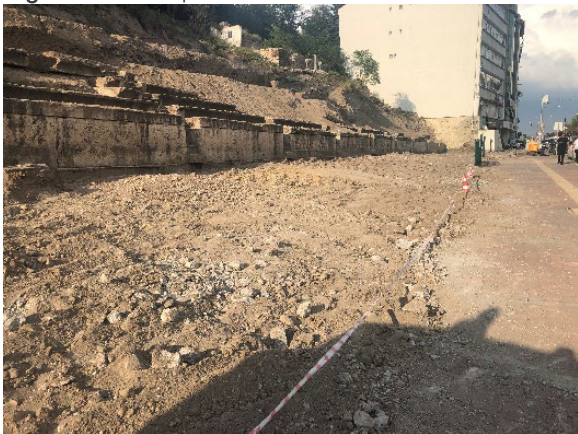


Figure 21 Store ruins removed



Figure 22 Stadium inscription (Bolu Museum)



Figure 23 Stadion inscription (Bolu Museum)



Figure 24 Stadion inscription (Bolu Museum)



Figure 25 Hook holding inscription plates



Figure 26 Bath ruins



Figure 27 Mansion (Pavilion) bath



Figure 28 Heating system



Figure 29 Architectural element



Figure 30 Architectural element



Figure 31 Column base



Figure 32 Potteries from Tranche no. 3



Figure 33 Potteries from Tranche no. 4

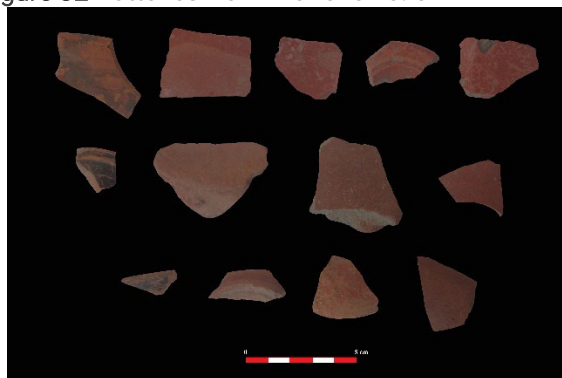


Figure 34 Potteries from Tranche no. 13

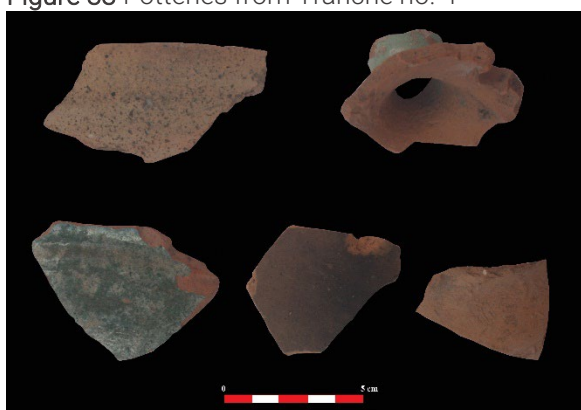


Figure 35 Potteries from Tranche no. 13



Figure 36 Metal objects from Tranche no. 4



Figure 37 Glass beads and bracelet pieces



Figure 38 Terracotta tile pieces



Figure 39 Gladiator Monument

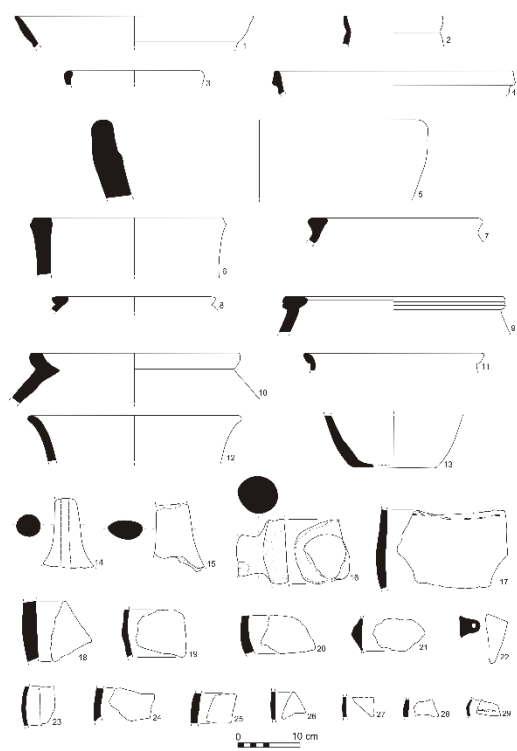


Figure 40 Potteries drawing



Figure 41 Coin (Rome)



Figure 42 Coin (Rome)