



## Byzantine Architecture in the Lower City of Perge

### Perge Aşağı Şehir Bizans Dönemi Mimarisi

Ayça TIRYAKI\* , Özgü ÇÖMEZOĞLU UZBEK\*\* 

#### Abstract

This study focuses on the Byzantine buildings located in the Lower City of Perge. One of the significant structures in the city is the South Church (Basilica A), which is a three-aisled basilica with a transept and gallery, dating back to the early 5th century. Another notable church in the city, capturing attention with its large dimensions, is the North Church (Basilica B). This basilica, with its five aisles and transept, is accompanied by an atrium to the west and a narthex. Due to its size, it is believed that this structure could have served as the city's cathedral, dating to the 5th and 6th centuries. Located on the east-west oriented street of the city, the East Church (Basilica C) has managed to preserve its narthex to the west and its five-sided apse to the east. This remarkable structure, with its extraordinary length, is also among the early Byzantine churches in the city. On the north-south oriented street, a church with an inscribed cross plan (known as the Small Church) was constructed and can be dated to the 10th century. Inside the Palaestra to the west of the city, a structure with a tetraconch plan was erected. Similar to its counterparts, this edifice, believed to have been used for religious purposes, can be dated back to the latter half of the 5th century and the 6th century. The urban layout of the Lower City remained intact until the 7th century, at which point there was a decline in activity in the city. Subsequently, during the Middle Byzantine period, most likely around the 10th century, there is evidence of a limited reoccupation and settlement in the city.

**Keywords:** Perge, Pamphylia, Byzantine, Basilica, Tetraconch

#### Öz

Çalışmanın içeriğini Perge'de Aşağı Şehir'de bulunan Bizans Dönemi yapıları oluşturmaktadır. Kentin önemli yapılarından biri olan Güney Kilise (Bazilika A), en erken 5. yüzyıla tarihlenebilen üç nefli, transeptli ve galerili bir bazilika'dır. Kentte büyük boyutlarıyla dikkati çeken bir diğer kilise Kuzey Kilise (Bazilika B)'dir. Beş nefli ve transeptli bu bazilikanın batısında bir atrium ve bir de narteksi vardır. 5-6. yüzyıllara tarihlenebilen bu yapının boyutları sebebiyle kentin katedrali olabileceği düşünülmektedir. Kuzey Kilise de Güney Kilise'de olduğu gibi doğuda düz bir duvarla sınırlandırılmıştır. Kentin doğu-batı doğrultulu caddesi üzerinde bulunan Doğu Kilise'nin (Bazilika C), batısındaki narteksi ile doğusundaki beş cepheli apsisi günümüze gelebilmiştir. Yapının beden duvarlarının düzensiz kalıntıları tespit edilebilmektedir. Sıra dışı uzunluğuyla dikkat çeken bu yapı da kentin erken Bizans kiliseleri arasındadır. Kuzey-güney doğrultulu caddede, su kanalının hattı üzerinde, kanalı engelleyecek şekilde sonradan inşa edilmiş, 10. yüzyıla tarihlenebilen Kapalı Yunan haçı planlı bir kilise (Küçük Kilise) yer almaktadır. Kentin batısındaki Palaestra'nın içine, daha sonra tetrakonchos planlı bir yapı inşa edilmiştir. Benzerleri dinî amaçla kullanılmış bu yapı, 5. yüzyılın ikinci yarısı ile 6. yüzyıla tarihlenmektedir. Aşağı Şehirin kent dokusunun 7. yüzyıla kadar korunduğu ve bu dönemden sonra kentteki faaliyetlerde bir kesinti yaşandığı tespit edilebilmektedir. Bundan sonra Orta Bizans Dönemi'nde, olasılıkla da 10. yüzyıl civarında kentte sınırlı da olsa bir iskânın olduğu anlaşılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Perge, Pamphylia, Bizans, Tetrakonchos, Bazilika

\* **Correspondence to:** Ayça Tiryaki (Assoc. Prof. Dr.), Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Art History, Istanbul, Türkiye. E-mail: aycatir@istanbul.edu.tr ORCID: 0000-0001-6141-6550

\*\* Özgü Çömezoglu Uzbek (Assoc. Prof. Dr.), Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Art History, Istanbul, Türkiye. E-mail: ozgu@istanbul.edu.tr ORCID: 0000-0002-8895-5084

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### Genişletilmiş Özet

Pamphylia bölgesinin önemli kentlerinden biri olan Perge'de yerleşim, Akropolis ve Aşağı Şehir olarak adlandırılan bölge olmak üzere iki alanda yoğunlaşmıştır. Bu çalışmanın içeriğini Aşağı Şehir dokusu içinde yer alan Bizans Dönemi yapıları oluşturmaktadır. Bu yapılar arasında biri kentin katedrali olan beş kilise ve bir de işlevi kesinleşmemiş bir trikonkhos bulunmaktadır. Birbirini kesen kuzey-güney ve doğu-batı doğrultulu iki ana cadde boyunca konumlanmış Roma Dönemi kent dokusu Erken Bizans Dönemi'nde bozulmamış, bir takım değişiklik ve eklemelerle kullanımı devam etmiştir. Şehir kapısının yakınında, agoranın güneyinde yer alan Güney Kilise (Bazilika A) üç nefli, transeptli ve galerili bir bazilikadır (F. 2-F. 4) ve kireçtaşı kesmetaş bloklar ve az miktarda küçük moloz taşlarla inşa edilmiştir. Yapının batısında kare planlı, dört tarafı portiko ile çevrili bir de atriumu bulunmaktadır. Narteksi olmayan kilisenin naosuna atriumdan doğrudan giriş sağlanmaktaydı. Arkeolojik verilere göre nef ayrımını sağlayan sütunların tuğladan kemerlerle birbirlerine bağlandıkları öne sürülebilmektedir. Nefleri ayıran stylobatların üzerinde, daha sonraki bir evreye ait olan ve nefler arası geçişi engelleyen moloz duvarlar ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Yapının içten yarım yuvarlak apsisi ve apsisin iki yanında ikişer mekân biriminden oluşan pastophorion odaları vardır. Kilise doğuda düz bir duvarla sınırlandırılmıştır. Kilise synthrononunun ve doğu duvarının mermer levhalarla kaplı olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Transept kolları beden duvarlarının dışına taşmaktadır ve yan nefler transept kollarını sarmaktadır. Bu düzenleme, yapının planını T formuna dönüştürmektedir. Kilisede bulunan mimari plastik elemanlar arasında 5-6. yüzyıla tarihlenen örneklerin olması, yapının mimari özellikleriyle de örtüşmektedir (F. 10a, F. 10b). Bu veriler ışığında kilisenin en erken 5. yüzyıla ait olabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Kuzey-güney doğrultulu sütunlu ana caddenin batısında konumlanmış bir diğer anıtsal bazilika, Kuzey Kilise (Bazilika B)'dir. Beş nefli ve transeptli bu bazilikanın boyutları sebebiyle kentin katedrali olabileceği düşünülmektedir (F. 11-F. 13). Duvarlarında düzgün kesme taş ve devşirme blokların kullanımının yanı sıra bol miktarda tuğla, kiremit kırıkları ve harç dikkati çekmektedir. Özellikle doğu duvardaki izlerden duvarların kaplama levhalarla örtülü olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Yapının batısında bir atrium ve bir de narteks yer almaktadır. İçten yuvarlak apsisinin iki yanında iki katlı pastaphorion odaları yer bulunmaktadır. Yapı doğuda düz bir duvarla sınırlandırılmıştır. İç ve dış yan nefler birbirinden farklı genişlikte, dış yan nefler transepti sarmayarak düz bir koridor şeklinde devam etmektedir. Bu özellikleriyle dış yan neflerin katekümenerin kullanımı için koridor niteliğindeki mekânlar oldukları öne sürülebilmektedir. Kuzey Kilise'nin 5.-6. yüzyıllarda inşa edildiği önerilebilmektedir.

Aşağı Şehrin doğu-batı doğrultulu sütunlu caddesinin kenarında, 100 m kadar uzunluğa ulaşan bazilikal planlı bir başka kilise daha mevcuttur (F. 20, F. 21). Batısındaki

narteksi ile doğusundaki beş cepheli apsisi tespit edilebilen Doğu Kilise'nin (Bazilika C) beden duvarlarının düzensiz kalıntıları günümüze gelebilmiştir. Duvar yapısındaki büyük bloктаş ve tuğla kullanımı, yapıyı Erken Bizans Dönemi'ne tarihlenmektedir. Doğu Kilise, uzunluğu ile alışılmışın dışında bir örnek oluşturmaktadır.

Kuzey-güney doğrultulu sütunlu caddenin doğu-batı doğrultulu cadde ile birleştiği bölgenin hemen güneyinde, Kapalı Yunan haçı planlı bir kilise yer almaktadır (F. 24, F. 25). Bu küçük boyutlu yapı caddenin ortasından geçen su kanalını engelleyecek şekilde yerleştirilmiş olduğundan kanalın kullanılmadığı dönemde yapılmış olmalıdır. Kilisenin apsisinin kuzeyinde ve güneyinde duvarın içine açılmış birer niş yer almaktadır. Haç planlı naosun kubbesi dört sütunla desteklenmiştir. Yapıya giriş batı duvarındaki kapıyla sağlanmaktadır. Ayrıca kuzey duvarında da bu yönden bitişik Roma anıtına bağlanan bir açıklık vardır. Yapının duvarlarında kaba yonu ve devşirme kesme blok taşlar kullanılmış, düzensiz yerleştirilen taşların araları tuğla kırıklarıyla doldurulmuştur. Duvarların bazı kısımları sadece tuğla malzemeye örülmüştür. Yapının apsisinin kuzey duvarında fresko izlerine rastlanmıştır. Elimizdeki verilere göre kilisenin 10. yüzyılda inşa edildiği önerilebilmektedir.

Doğu-batı doğrultulu cadde üzerinde, kentin batısında yer alan Palaestra'nın içine, daha sonra tetrakonkhos planlı bir yapı inşa edilmiştir. Bu yapı Palaestra'nın kuzey duvarını kesme de kullanımını engellemeyecek bir konumdadır (F. 28). Bu özellikleriyle Tetrakonkhos inşa edildikten sonra, işlevi değiştirilse de Palaestra'nın kullanımının devam ettiği söylenebilir. İçten ve dıştan dört yapraklı yonca planı gösteren bu yapı, dört yönde apsis benzeri dört eksedradan oluşmaktadır. Merkezde yonca planı çevreleyen bir dehlizi bulunmaktadır. Eksedralar, çevre dehlizine ikişer sütunla açılmaktadır. Tek katlı ve olasılıkla ahşap çatıyla örtülü Tetrakonkhos, Palaestra'nın taşları kullanılarak inşa edilmiş, bu blok taşların arasında moloz taş, tuğla ve tuğla kırıkları kullanılmıştır. Benzerleri dinî amaçla kullanılmış bu yapı, 5. yüzyılın ikinci yarısı ile 6. yüzyıla tarihlenmektedir.

Aşağı Şehir'de Bizans Dönemi'ndeki bu yapıım faaliyetlerinin yanı sıra, Güney hamamın ve Agora'nın merkezindeki Tholos'un onarım ve eklemelerle kullanımının devam ettiği anlaşılmaktadır. Kent surları dışında kalan Tiyatro ve Stadion'un da 5-6. yüzyıllarda kullanıldıklarına dair veriler vardır. Aşağı Şehrin kent dokusunun 7. yüzyıla kadar korunduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Perge kenti büyük olasılıkla 616 yılındaki depremle büyük hasar görmüştür. 10. yüzyıla tarihlenen Küçük Kilise, bu dönemde kentte sınırlı da olsa bir iskânın olduğunu göstermektedir.

## Introduction

Excavations in Perge initially began in 1946 under the direction of Professor Arif Müfit Mansel. Subsequently, Professor Jale İnan, a faculty member of the Department of Classical Archeology at Istanbul University, took charge of the excavations. In 1988, Professor Haluk Abbasoğlu conducted further excavations. Between 2012 and 2019, the Antalya Archeology Museum undertook research at the site. Since the 2020 season, the excavations of the ancient city have been under the direction of Professor Sedef Çokay Kepçe from the Department of Classical Archeology at Istanbul University<sup>1</sup>.

The ancient city of Perge, one of the most important cities of the Pamphylia Region, is within the borders of Antalya, standing 18 km northeast of the city center. The Acropolis, where the city of Perge was established, rests upon a hill positioned between Katarraktes (Düden) in the west and Kestros (Aksu) in the east. Studies conducted at the site have unveiled evidence of an initial settlement dating back to the Late Neolithic and the Chalcolithic eras. During the middle of the Hellenistic period, the settlement expanded from the acropolis towards the southern plain. The Lower City witnessed remarkable urban development, especially in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. Historical records indicate that the city of Perge, which now stands 11 km away from the sea, had direct access to the coastline in ancient times through a port located on the Kestros River<sup>2</sup>.

One of the most significant events in the process of Christianization of the city is the visit of Saint Paul to Perge on his journey, probably between the years 45-49. It is known that Saint Paul preached in Perge while returning from his journey to Pisidia<sup>3</sup>. According to the information given by W.M. Ramsay, Saint Paul, accompanied by Barnabas and Ioannes, first came to Perge while travelling from Cyprus to Antioch of Pisidia and on his return journey, after preaching in Perge, he proceeded to the port of Attaleia (Antalya) and then continued his travels to Antakya<sup>4</sup>.

1 The study conducted during 2021-2023 for this article has been carried out with the permission of Prof. Dr. Ş. Sedef Çokay Kepçe (Permission date 16.01.2023) The authors of the article have participated as art historians in the excavation team of the ancient city of Perge in the Aksu District of Antalya Province in the year 2023. (According to the letter dated 31.05.2023 with the reference number 3836766 from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums)

2 Aşkın Özdzibay, "Pamphylia-Perge Tarihi ve Roma İmparatorluk Dönemi Öncesi Perge'nin Gelişimi: Güncel Araştırmalar Işığında Genel Bir Değerlendirme," *Prof. Dr. Haluk Abbasoğlu'na 65. Yaş Armağanı EUERGETES*, ed. İnci Delemen, Sedef Çokay Kepçe, Aşkın Özdzibay, Özgür Turak (Antalya: Suna-İnan Kıraç Research Center for Mediterranean Civilisations 2008), 840; Işıl Rabia Işıklıkaya, "Perge Mozaikleri. Macellum, Güney Hamam ve Geç Dönem Meydanı Doğu Portiği" (PhD Diss., Istanbul University, 2010), 41.

3 Hansgerd Hellenkemper and Friedrich Hild. *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004), 263.

4 William Mitchell Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1895), 53, 70; Evangelou I. Galani, *Ιστορία της Περγής. Πολιτική και Εκκλησιαστική (Istoria tis Pergis. Politiki kai Ekklesiastiki)* (Αθήνα: Ίδρυμα Μειζονος Ελληνισµού, 2003) (Athens: Idrima Meisonos Ellinismou, 2003), 123.

Perge appears on the episcopal lists since 314. The conflict between Perge and Side led to the division of the Pamphylia metropolis into two separate centers. Pamphylia Prima emerged with Side as its metropolis, while Pamphylia Secunda, was established with Perge as its metropolis<sup>5</sup>. It is considered that this division occurred between the second (381) and third ecumenical (431) councils. The Council of Cartagena in 411 further supports this timeline, as it mentions the name of Perge<sup>6</sup>.

Perge holds another significant event in the history of Christianity, which is the martyrdom and burial of three soldiers Theodoros, Socrates and Dionysus, along with Theodoros' mother, Philippa. They were martyred in Perge in 140<sup>7</sup>. Additionally, there are records of nine more martyrs who were killed in Perge during the reign of Diocletian (284-305). These martyrs are Leonitos, Attos, Alexandros, Kindeos, Mnisitheos, Kyriakos, Minaios, Katsinos and Eukleos<sup>8</sup>.

According to Prokopius, Emperor Justinian (527-565) built a hospice in the *emporium* of the commercial port of Perge, dedicated to Saint Michael<sup>9</sup>. Perge was damaged by an earthquake in 616<sup>10</sup>. The coins from around the year 616 indicate a period of hiatus following the reign of Emperor Heraclius (610-641), suggesting that important structures in the city were preserved until that time. This earthquake may be the same one that struck cities like Ephesos, Sardis and Aphrodisias in 616<sup>11</sup>.

5 Galani, *Ιστορία της Περγης. Πολιτική και Εκκλησιαστική*, 133; Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 362; William Mitchell Ramsay, *Anadolu'nun Tarihi Coğrafyası*, trans. Mihri Pektaş (Istanbul: Ministry of Education, 1960), 464.

6 Galani, *Ιστορία της Περγης. Πολιτική και Εκκλησιαστική*, 133.

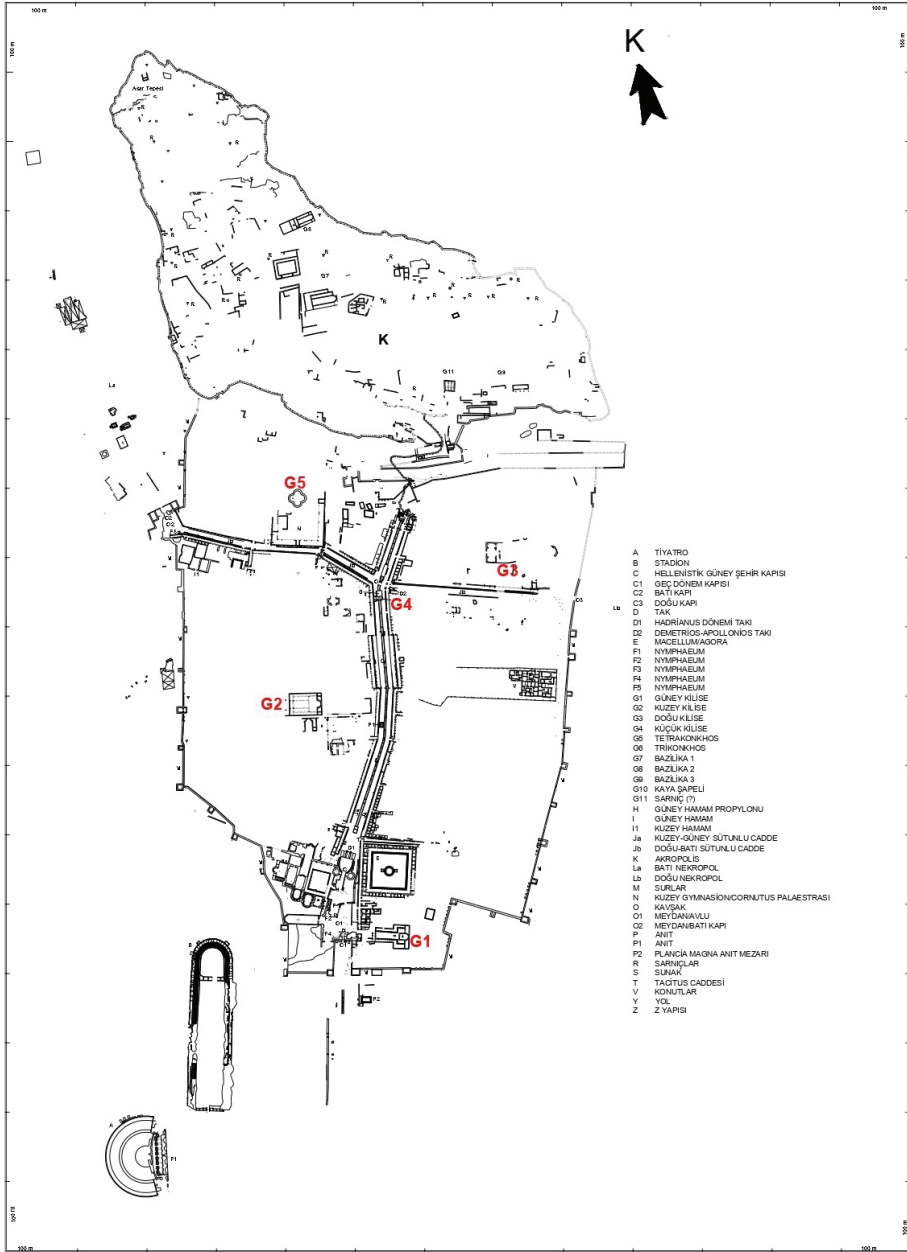
7 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 363; Galani, *Ιστορία της Περγης. Πολιτική και Εκκλησιαστική*, 131.

8 Galani, *Ιστορία της Περγης. Πολιτική και Εκκλησιαστική*, 131.

9 Clive Foss, "The Cities of Pamphylia in the Byzantine Age," *Cities, Fortresses, and Villages of Byzantine Asia Minor* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorum, 1996), 18.

10 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 362.

11 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 372.



F. 1: The city plan of Perge: G1- South Church. G2- North Church. G3- East Church. G4- Small Church. G5- Tetraconch. (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive)

In the early 7<sup>th</sup> century, Perge held the status of a metropolis, but from the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, it was referred to as “Perge and Sillyon”<sup>12</sup>. The bishoprics of

12 Vincenzo Ruggieri and F. Nethercott, “The Metropolitan City of Syllion and its Churches,” *Jahrbuch der*

Perge and Sillyon were eventually merged, forming a single metropolis. These bishoprics were represented by metropolitans in the synods of 680/681, 692, 754 and 787. In the late 8<sup>th</sup> century, the name “Leon” appears on a seal as the “Metropolitan of Sillyon”<sup>13</sup>. Although the exact date of the merger of the two cities as a metropolis remains uncertain, a letter from Patriarch Nikephoros (806-815) refers to Sillyon as a merged metropolis with Perge. This union is also mentioned in the 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council held in 815. Subsequently, the names of both cities were mentioned together as a single metropolis<sup>14</sup>. This status was confirmed during the Council of Constantinople of 869, and it continued until the Turkish domination. In a text from the time of Andronikos (1328-1341), it is stated: “The second of Pamphylia, also known as Pergis, is called Syllaios ...”<sup>15</sup>. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, following the arrival of Turks, Attaleia (Antalya) became the religious center of Pamphylia<sup>16</sup>.

### 1. Urban Fabric in the Lower City During the Byzantine Period

The lower city of Perge, situated south of the Acropolis, maintained a straightforward urban layout. Enclosed by walls, the city featured two collonaded main streets aligned in both the north-south and east-west directions (F. 1). Along these streets, numerous public buildings, mostly from the 1st and 2nd centuries, were situated<sup>17</sup>. Notably, the theatre and stadium are located outside the city walls. These structures, originally built during the Roman imperial period, endured into the Christian period, and remained in use, with a significant number of them retaining their original functions<sup>18</sup>. Among the Christian buildings of the lower city, there are five churches, including the city’s cathedral, along with a Triconch featuring a civic character. The monumental architecture of the North Church and the South Church with its transepts and galleries, the unusually long form of the East Church, and the rich plan design of the Tetraconch which is rare in early Byzantine architecture, highlights Perge’s esteemed position while the Small Church, which belongs to the middle Byzantine period, indicates the last point reached in the life of the city with its location and dimensions. This article will provide a detailed examination of the churches in the lower city, which hold significant importance in illustrating the development of Perge during the Late Antiquity and Byzantine periods. Additionally, a brief overview of the Roman period structures, which continued to be utilized in the Byzantine period, will be included to offer a comprehensive understanding of the city’s urban fabric as a whole.

*Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 36 (1986), 142. Bülent İşler, “Sillyon’un Bizans Dönemi Dini Yapılaşması,” *Yüzyet Arařtırmaları Işığında Sillyon ve Çevresi*, ed. Murat Tařkıran (İstanbul: Ege Press, 2020), 153-154.

13 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini* 8. *Lykien und Pamphyliden*, 362.

14 Galani, *İctoria tıes Perıgıes. Politika kai Ekklesiaftika*, 134.

15 Galani, *İctoria tıes Perıgıes. Politika kai Ekklesiaftika*, 135.

16 Adnan Pekman, *Perge Tarihi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Press, 1973), 45.

17 Ařkıım Özdizbay, *Perge’nin M.S.1-2. Yüzyıllardaki Geliřimi*, (Antalya: Suna-İnan Kıraç Research Center for Mediterranean Civilisations, 2012).

18 Foss, “The Cities of Pamphylia in the Byzantine Age,” 14-18.



F. 2: Aerial view of the South Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)

### 1.1. South Church (Basilica A)

Situated just south of the *agora/macellum* and northeast of the late-period city gate, this particular building is considered one of the earliest churches in the city, likely constructed as a congregational church. In 1908, Hans Rott, during his initial visit to the area, examined the structure and drew up a plan<sup>19</sup>. The first excavations were started in 1986 by Metin Ahunbay under the supervision of Jale İnan. Throughout two excavation seasons, studies were conducted in specific sections of the church, focusing on the southern part of the transept and the western end of the south aisle<sup>20</sup>. Finally, in 2016 and 2017, the church was completely uncovered by the Antalya Archaeology Museum, except for a portion of the atrium.

The basilica is oriented in an east-west direction and spans approximately 75 m in length. It features a three-aisled transept and a gallery (F. 2). Except for the eastern wall of the building, the western wall was almost completely demolished, while the northern and southern walls were preserved up to 1 m above the ground. The apse wall survived up to the second-floor level (F. 3). Various-sized cut limestone blocks were used on the walls of the church. Small amounts of rubble stones were inserted into the gaps between the stones to secure them in place. There is hardly any mortar visible in the thin joints. Stones placed vertically throughout the thickness of the wall

19 Hans Rott, *Kleinasiatische Denkmäler aus Pisidien, Pamphylien, Kappadokien und Lykien* (Leipzig: Dietrich, 1908), Abb.18.

20 Jale İnan, "Perge Kazısı, 1986 Çalışmaları," *IX. Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı (6-10 Nisan 1987, Ankara)* (Ankara: Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism Press, 1988), 2: 212; Jale İnan, "Perge Kazısı, 1987 Yılı Çalışmaları," *X. Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı (23-27 Mayıs 1988, Ankara)* (Ankara: Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism Press, 1989), 2: 188.

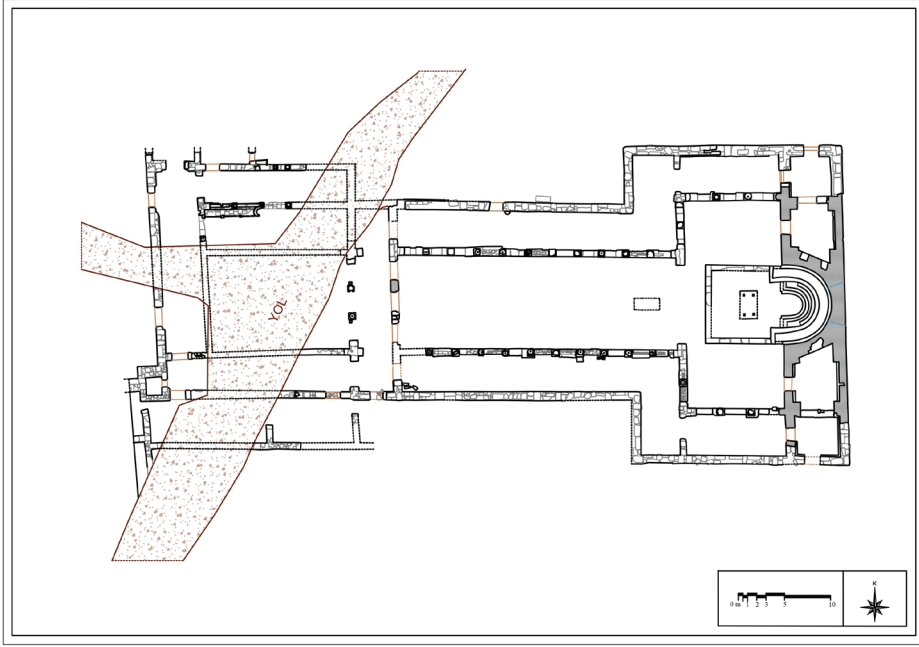


were likely used to serve as beams, especially on the south and north walls of the structure.



**F. 3:** General view of the South Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)

Located to the west of the structure is a square-planned atrium surrounded by a portico on all four sides (**F. 4**). Due to the presence of a pathway that currently passes through the middle of the atrium today, this specific section of the courtyard remains unexcavated. There was direct access from the atrium to the naos of the church, which lacked a narthex. The east portico believed to have served as a narthex, provided entry to the nave through a tribelon, while the side aisles were accessible through separate doors.



F. 4: The plan of the South Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2023)

The naos is approximately 20 meters wide and is divided into three aisles by ten opposing columns on each stylobate. The nave, with a width of 10 meters, is twice as wide as the side aisles. Square-sectioned pedestals, some of which are reused, along with column bases, are used on the 20-30 centimeters high stylobates separating the aisles (F. 5). During the excavations conducted under the supervision of Jale İnan, the remains of brick arches in the south aisle were uncovered<sup>21</sup>. Although it is currently unknown, it is reasonable to think that the columns in the gallery floor or within the nave were likely connected by brick arches. Rubble walls of varying heights, ranging from 0.30 and 0.35 meters, belonging to a later architectural phase, were revealed on the southern and northern stylobates (F. 6). This architectural practice, which obstructs the passage between the aisles, finds its closest geographical parallels in the Lycian Region, as evidenced by recent surveys and excavations. In the episcopal church of the ancient city of Rhodiapolis, rubble walls measuring 0.50-0.75 meters in height were found between the column bases on the stylobates separating the aisles, and it was determined that parapet slabs were placed on top of these walls creating a barrier in the intercolumniation with a height exceeding 1.75 meters<sup>22</sup>. The Olympos Episcopal Church and the Tlos City Basilica, both exhibiting similar plan characteristics

21 Jale İnan, "Perge Kazısı, 1987 Yılı Çalışmaları," 2: 212, Figure 51.

22 Ayça Tiryaki, "Rhodiapolis Piskoposluk Kilisesi'nde İşlevi Tartışmalı Mimari Düzenlemeler: Yüksek Nef Ayrımı ve Oturma Sekileri," *TÜBA-KED* 10 (2012), 24-26.

with the Perge South Church, have also rubble walls from a later phase, unearthed in the intercolumniations. In the case of Olympos, similar to Rhodiapolis, it has been determined that an intercolumniation of approximately 1.85 meters high (with stylobate, walls, and slabs) was constructed, which not only obstructed the passage between the aisles but also impeded the view of the congregation<sup>23</sup>. Likewise, at the Tlos Basilica, it was discovered that in a subsequent architectural phase, the spaces between pedestals and the column bases on the southern and northern stylobates were filled with rubble walls<sup>24</sup>. Although the arrangement of the high barriers in the intercolumniations, which is rarely encountered in the inventory of Byzantine religious architecture, is considered suitable for catechumens<sup>25</sup> who were not allowed to witness the Eucharistic liturgy, the reason for its presence in some churches and absence in others remains unknown<sup>26</sup>. The original heights of the rubble walls in the intercolumniation of the Perge South Church are yet to be determined, and it remains unknown whether parapet slabs were used on these walls. Therefore, it will be clarified in our future research whether these walls were intended for liturgical purposes for catechumens or served as spatial divisions in the structure.

23 Gökçen Kurtuluş Öztaşkın and Sinan Sertel, "Olympos Piskoposluk Kilisesi'ndeki Nef Ayrımı Düzenlemeleri ve Levha Yanı Uygulaması," *Adalya* 20 (2017), 357-373. For the same arrangements observed at Churches 1 and 3 in Olympos, see, Gökçen Kurtuluş Öztaşkın and Seçkin Evcim, "Early Byzantine Churches in Olympos," *Arkeoloji ve Sanat* 161 (May-August 2019), 151.

24 Taner Korkut and Satoshi Urano, "Detailed Description of the Basilica: The Nave, Narthex, Atrium, and Other Rooms," *The City Basilica of Tlos*, ed. Taner Korkut and Satoshi Urano (İstanbul: Koç University Press, 2020), 21-22.

25 Catechumens, individuals who received specific religious education in anticipation of baptism and embracing Christianity, were allowed to participate in the initial segment of the liturgy. However, before the commencement of the Eucharistic liturgy, which constituted the second part, they were required to leave the naos. While they could listen to the Eucharistic liturgy, their non-Christian status prohibited them from actively witnessing it. See Robert F. Taft, "Catechumenate," *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1: 390-391; Thomas F. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), 127.

26 On the high intercolumniation in early Byzantine basilicas, see Urs Peschlow, "Dividing Interior Space in Early Byzantine Churches: The Barriers between the Nave and Aisles," *Thresholds of the Sacred. Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screen, East and West*, ed. Sharon E. J. Gerstel (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2006), 53-71.



F. 5: The southern stylobate on the east, view from the northeast (A. Tiryaki, 2022)



F. 6: The rubble walls on the southern stylobate, view from the southwest (The Antalya Museum Archive, 2016)

At the eastern end of the structure, there is a semi-circular apse measuring 8.61 meters in width and 5.21 meters in depth, enclosed within a straight wall. On either side of the apse, there are spaces referred to as pastophoria. The apse window has collapsed, but the preserved dimensions of the window opening indicate that it was a twin-arched window. Within the apse, there is a *synthronon* with five steps, construc-

ted of brick and rubble stone (F. 7). It is evident from the *in-situ* examples that the steps were covered with marble slabs. In front of the synthronon, there is a U-shaped templon consisting of stylobates. The floor of the templon was covered with marble revetments. The remains of the altar table can be observed in the center of the bema (F. 8).



F. 7: General view of the synthronon (The Antalya Museum Archive, 2016)



F. 8: General view of the apse (The Antalya Museum Archive, 2016)

The presence of holes in the stones visible on the eastern wall indicates that the walls were originally covered with marble. *In-situ* examples of marble cladding can be seen in the lower sections of the eastern wall, where reused stone blocks were also employed.

Flanking the apse is the *prothesis* and *diaconicon*, each consisting of two chambers, which exhibit a simple form. These *pastophorion* rooms, each accessed from the west through two separate doorways, have partially intact western walls that reach up to the second-floor level, preserving the entrances that lead to the church's gallery (F. 9). Arched windows can be observed on their eastern walls, while niches are present on the side walls adjacent to the apse. Pendentive remains of the dome vaults of the *pastophoria*, preserved *in-situ*, can still be seen. *Diakonikon* opens to the outside of the church with a door in the south and a *prothesis* in the north.



F. 9: The eastern facade of the South Church, view from the northeast (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

Churches with a straight wall at the east end are encountered predominantly in Cilicia and Isauria, and these types of structures are spread as far as Syria<sup>27</sup>. The spaces adjacent to the apse of the Perge South Church are relatively simple examples compared to the churches in Cilicia<sup>28</sup>. Due to its proximity to Cilicia, churches in the Pamphylia region commonly feature the arrangement of the apse and adjacent chambers within a flat wall. Perge North Church, Basilicas 1 and 2 in Perge Acropolis, Antalya Cumanun Mosque and North Church in Lyrboton Kome are representative examples of this type in the region<sup>29</sup>.

27 Hansgerd Hellenkemper, "Early Church Architecture in Southern Asia Minor," *Churches Built in Ancient Times*: *Recent Studies in Early Christian Archaeology*, ed. Kenneth Painter (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1994), 217.

28 Stephen Hill, *The Early Byzantine Churches of Cilicia and Isauria* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorum, 1996).

29 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 326, 365, 369-370; Gamze

The transept section, measuring around 33 x 16 meters, is situated between the apse and the naos, encompassing the sacred area of the church. Extending beyond the naos in a north-south direction, the transept merges with the apse and side chambers to the east, creating a distinctive T-shaped layout for the structure (F. 4). The side aisles embrace the arms of the transept from the south and north, extending towards the eastern wall of the naos without any interruption. Krautheimer describes the Perge South Church as a structure with a “Shortened Cross Transept”<sup>30</sup>. He states that this form is a shortened variation of the Cross Transept type, in which the transept is surrounded by aisles on three sides<sup>31</sup>. The characteristic feature of this type is that one or both sides of the transept are bounded by aisles<sup>32</sup>. In the case of the South Church of Perge, it is also seen that the transept is encompassed by side aisles on both sides.

The T-shaped piers, located at the junction where the nave and transept stylobates meet on either side of the opening into the transept, as well as the L-shaped piers at the corners of the transept, have been well preserved. Two pedestals were found *in-situ* on each of the transept arms, with one pedestal positioned between each of the T and L-shaped piers. These supports can be observed to be connected to the piers on the apse wall. At the eastern end of the intercolumniation, slab bases were uncovered *in-situ*, and groove marks were observed on the T-shaped piers. It can be seen that the passage from the aisles to the transept was closed off using parapet slabs.

The transept, which has no antecedent in ancient Roman architecture, was added as a separate section between the apse and the aisles in the Christian Basilica architecture. Consequently, there are varied perspectives regarding the purpose and necessity of this space. This transverse space, which offers a large area to the east of the church, is believed to have emerged as a *memoria-martyrion* or as a separate section for the congregation to present their offerings<sup>33</sup>. Furthermore, it is widely held that its incorporation into basilica architecture was intended to expedite the distribution of bread and wine to the large congregation during the Eucharistic liturgy<sup>34</sup>. Buchwald, on the

Kaymak, *Die Cumanun Camii in Antalya* (Antalya: Suna-İnan Kiraç Research Center for Mediterranean Civilisations, 2009) 152-153; Orçun Erdoğan, *Pamphylia Lyrboton Kome Işığında Geç Antik Çağ'da Akdeniz Kırsalı*, (Adana: Hatay Mustafa Kemal University Press, 2019), 91.

30 Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 110.

31 Krautheimer identifies four types of transepts in his typology. The first type, described as the “Continuous Transept”, features a transverse rectangular space between the apse and the naos without any architectural elements interrupting it. The second type, known as the “Tripartite Transept”, divides the central section in front of the apse into separate parts through columns, arches or piers, creating three distinct sections within the transept. As mentioned above, the third type is the “Cross Transept”. The fourth type, which includes the Perge South Church, is a variation of the third type, known as the “Shortened Cross Transept” type. See. Krautheimer 1969, 59-60.

32 Richard Krautheimer, “The Transept in the Early Christian Basilica,” *Studies in Early Christian Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: New York University Press, 1969), 59-60.

33 Krautheimer, “The Transept in the Early Christian Basilica,” 60.

34 Gökçen Kurtuluş Öztaşkın, “Olympos Antik Kenti Episkopeion Yapı Topluluğu” (PhD Diss., Anadolu Uni-

other hand, emphasizes that this space is functional in any case, providing a wide area at the location of the altar<sup>35</sup>.

Krautheimer states that the transept, which exhibits various forms, was built between the 4th and 6th centuries, with a notable increase in its usage occurring from the second half of the 5th century. He emphasizes that the shortened cross transept form, designed for the needs of the Eucharistic liturgy and the presentation of offerings by the congregation, was extensively utilized especially between 470 and 550<sup>36</sup>.

The absence of tombs or relics in the sanctuary of the South Church of Perge, as in the City Basilica of Patara, indicates that the transept was not specifically constructed as a memorial or martyrion<sup>37</sup>. In the examples of Patara and Olympos, the emphasis has been on the liturgical purpose of the transept. It is considered that at the end of the Eucharistic liturgy, the large congregation approaching the transept would receive the wine and bread in the aisles on the north and south arms of the transept. They would then present their offerings and continue moving eastward to exit the church. This arrangement allowed for faster and more efficient circulation of the congregation during the liturgy, facilitating their participation and worship<sup>38</sup>. The same liturgical arrangement is likely to have existed in the South Church of Perge.



F. 10: Pilaster Capitals from the South Church (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

In the ongoing inventory of architectural sculptures of the South Church, the pieces found in the transept have been evaluated. Among these examples, pilaster capitals

versity, 2013) 205.

35 Hans Buchwald and Matthew Savage, "Churches," *Churches in the Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia*, ed. Philipp Niewöhner (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 133.

36 Krautheimer, "The Transept in the Early Christian Basilica," 65.

37 Burcu Ceylan and Orçun Erdoğan, "Transept – Litürji – Devinim – Kurgu: Patara Kent Bazilikası Örneği," *Uluslararası XIX. Orta Çağ ve Türk Dönemi Kazıları ve Sanat Tarihi Araştırmaları Sempozyumu (21-24 Ekim 2015)*, ed. Ceren Ünal and Cengiz Gürbıyık (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Press, 2019), 354.

38 Ceylan and Erdoğan, "Transept – Litürji – Devinim – Kurgu: Patara Kent Bazilikası Örneği," 354; Öztaşkın, "Olympos Antik Kenti Episkopeion Yapı Topluluğu," 205.



known as “mask acanthus” in architectural plastic literature (F. 10a), and acanthus leaves in *Theodosian* style have been documented (F. 10b). The mask-like faces, formed by the interlocking of acanthus leaf lobes on the surface of the capitals became a distinctive feature, particularly in the workshops of Constantinople during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. These standardized Corinthian capitals were exported from the Capital to various regions of the empire<sup>39</sup>. *Theodosian* capitals, on the other hand, are associated with the reign of emperor Theodosius II and are characterized by fine-toothed and pointed acanthus leaves. This type of capital, widely spread throughout the Mediterranean Basin, is generally dated to the 5th century<sup>40</sup>. The historical context of these examples aligns with the architectural features of the South Church.

Based on the plan type of the church and evaluation of the stone finds so far, it is thought that the church belongs to the 5th century at the earliest.

## 1.2. North Church (Basilica B)

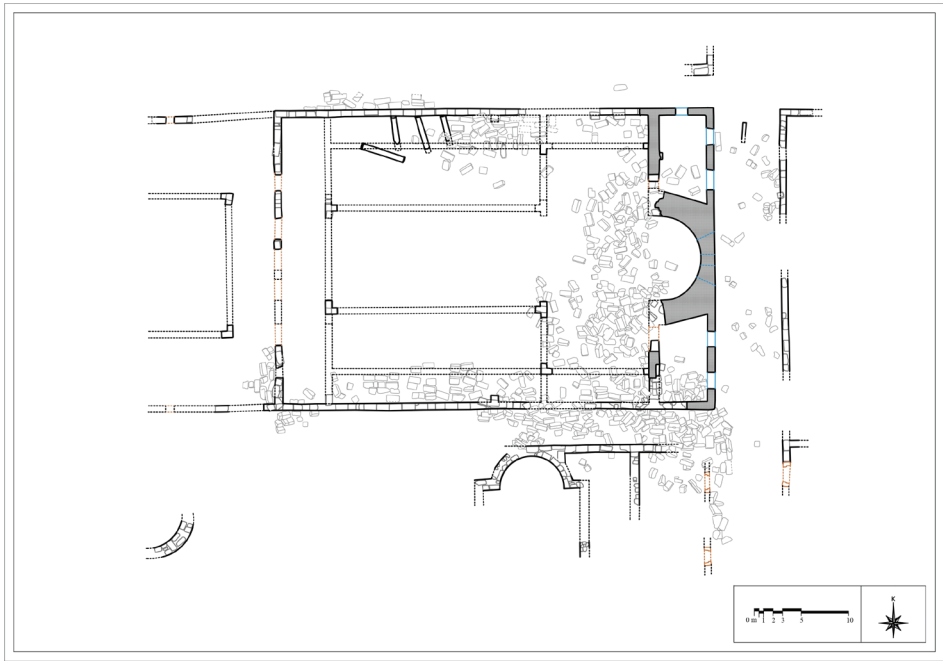
The North Church is a monumental basilica situated in the middle of the lower city, west of the colonnaded street running in a north-south direction (F. 11). H. Rott examined the building during his visit to Perge in 1906 and drew a plan of the church with five aisles and a transept<sup>41</sup> (F. 12). Due to its size, it is thought to have served as the cathedral and Episcopal Church of the city. The presence of the remains belonging to a complex of buildings, including spaces with apses, particularly on the southern part of the building, provides further support for this identification<sup>42</sup>.

39 William Earl Betsch, “The History, Production, and Distribution of Late Antique Capital in Constantinople,” (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1977) 190-191; Claudia Barsanti and Alessandra Guiglia, “Late Roman and Early Byzantine Capitals,” *The Sculptures of the Ayasofya Müzesi in Istanbul: a Short Guide*, ed. Claudia Barsanti and Alessandra Guiglia (İstanbul: Ege Press, 2010), 83; For the typology of Corinthian capitals of this leaf form, see Rudolf Kautzsch, *Kapitellstudien: Beiträge zu einer Geschichte des spätantiken Kapitells im Osten vom vierten bis ins siebente Jahrhundert* (Berlin: W. De Gruyter, 1936) 51-64.

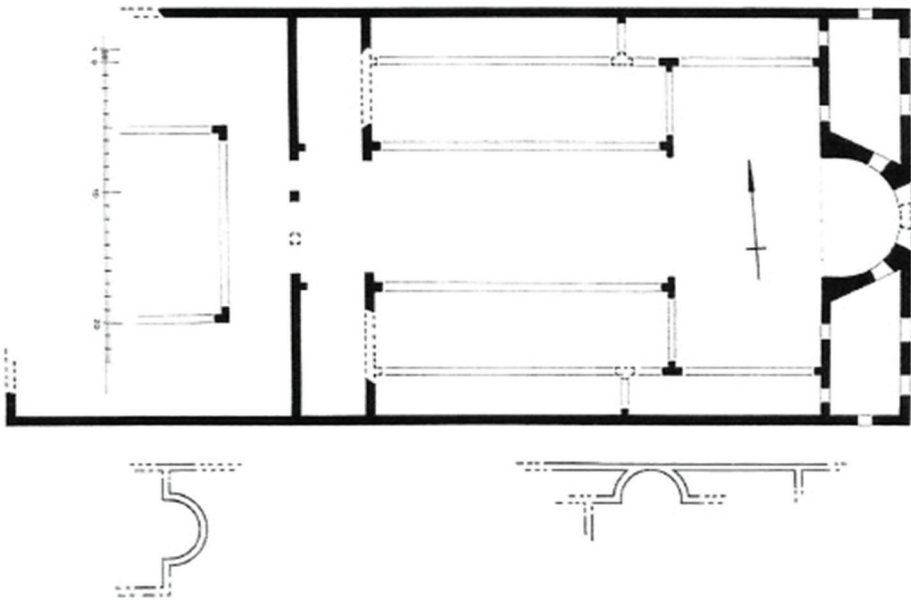
40 Ann Terry, “The Sculpture at the Cathedral of Eufirasius in Poreč,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 42(1988), 22-23. Çiğdem Temple, “Demre Aziz Nikolaos Kilisesi’nde Bulunan Ajur Tekniğinde “Theodosian” Tipinde Sütun Başlıkları,” *Bizans ve Çevre Kültürler: Prof. Dr. S. Yıldız Ötügen’e Armağan*, ed. Sema Doğan and Mine Kadiroğlu (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Publications, 2010), 357. For the *Theodosian* capitals, see Kautzsch, *Kapitellstudien: Beiträge zu einer Geschichte des spätantiken Kapitells im Osten vom vierten bis ins siebente Jahrhundert*, 115-139; Urs Peschlow, “Kapitelle,” *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, vol. 20 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2004), 96-98.

41 Rott, *Kleinasiatische Denkmäler aus Pisidien, Pamphylien, Kappadokien und Lykien*, 50-53.

42 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 370; Peter Grossmann, “Zur Typologie des Transepts in frühchristlichen Kirchen,” *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 51(2008), 103.



F. 11: The plan of the North Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)



F. 12: The plan of the North Church (Rott, *Kleinasiatische Denkmäler aus Pisidien, Pamphylien, Kappadokien und Lykien*, Abb.21)

The church, including the narthex, has a rectangular plan measuring approximately 47 x 31 meters (F. 13). The eastern wall of the structure is still standing, while the southern and northern walls are partially collapsed, and the western wall is completely demolished. The walls consist of neatly cut stones and reused blocks. Unlike the South Church, a considerable number of bricks, shards and mortar were used between the stone blocks. The presence of clamp holes and *in-situ* iron clamps, particularly prominent in the eastern wall, indicates that the walls were covered with stone revetments.

In the current state of the building, the remains of the northern and southern walls of the atrium in the west can be observed, albeit with great difficulty, while the boundary of the western wall could not be determined due to the dense vegetation. Only the pier located in the southeastern corner of the courtyard portico has been preserved. To the east of the atrium lies a narthex measuring 31 x 5 meters. Access to the naos of the church is provided with an 8.7 m wide opening from the narthex.



F. 13: Aerial view of the North Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)

Due to being covered with the stones of collapsed walls, it is quite difficult to observe the plan features of the rectangular naos, which is approximately 31 meters wide. The pilasters of the ruined western wall can still be seen on both sides of the opening that provides access to the naos. The pilasters facing east project outward to accommodate columns, creating a width of approximately 10 meters for the nave (F. 14). A pilaster engaged to the northeastern wall of the naos also belongs to the support system of the north outer aisle providing us with measurements regarding the width of the outer side aisles. Additionally, four granite columns belonging to the north outer aisles can be seen in a fallen position (F. 15). It can be deduced from the dimensions of the church and the pilasters detectable on the current state of the walls

that the structure consists of five aisles. The pier with a T-shaped section can be seen on the southeastern part of the naos, aligned with the southern pilaster on the west wall. According to H. Rott's plan, a similar pier was also detected in the north. These T-shaped piers are significant indicators marking the beginning of the transept at the eastern end of the nave. These remnants found on the ground allow us to determine the arrangement of the naos and the form of the transept.



**F. 14:** The pilasters of the western wall, view from the northeast (A. Tiryaki, 2022)



**F. 15:** The northern wall of the North Church, view from the south (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

The eastern side of the building, similar to the South Church, is terminated by a straight wall that encloses the apse and the pastophoria on both sides (F. 16). However, unlike the South Church, the apse of this building features three windows. These windows are positioned at the second-floor level, while the side windows open onto the second floor of the pastophoria (F. 17, F. 18). The remains of the brick arches can be seen in the window openings. Two-story pastophoria consists of two spatial units. In particular, in the northern side chamber (prothesis), the remains of brick vaults on the first floor can be observed (F. 19). Traces on the western wall of the prothesis indicate that repairs were carried out, with the wall covered in rubble stone. Passageways connect these pastophoria to the transept and the aisles, each through a separate doorway. Additionally, they open to the outside with three windows at the first-floor level.



F. 16: The eastern facade of the North Church, view from the southeast (A. Tiryaki, 2022)



F. 17: The apse of the North Church, view from the west (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

Based on the plan drawn by H. Rott and the available data, a complex basilica architecture is encountered. Firstly, different widths of side aisles emerge. Generally, in early Christian Basilica architecture, the nave is twice as wide as the side aisles, while the side aisles have similar widths. However, in this structure, the outer side aisles are arranged in narrow widths, while the inner side aisles are constructed with a width of 6 meters, twice the measurement of the outer side aisles. The design of the outer side aisles, depicted as corridors in H. Rott's plan, suggests their potential use for catechumens. These corridors could have served as spaces where the catechumens gathered before the Eucharistic ceremony began. It was common for catechumens to withdraw from the nave and gather in these spaces to listen to the service. The usage of narrow corridors for catechumen purposes is also seen in similar examples, such as the churches in Salamis and Kourion in Cyprus<sup>43</sup> and in Olympos in Lycia<sup>44</sup>. Another noteworthy example of such corridors can be found in the Episcopal Church of Side. Upon examining the church plan, it becomes apparent that the structure, initially perceived as five-aisled, actually consists of a three-aisled naos with separate corridors delimited by walls to the north and south of the naos<sup>45</sup>. The presence of these corridors suggests a similar function as seen in Perge North Church.

The outer side aisles, approximately 3 m wide, continue uninterrupted, and surround the northern and southern edges of the transept, while the inner aisles enclose

43 Arthur H. S. Megaw, "Byzantine Architecture and Decoration in Cyprus. Metropolitan or Provincial?," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), 62, 68.

44 For the *catechumenon* in Church 1 in Olympos, see Öztaşkın and Evcim, "Early Byzantine Churches in Olympos," 151.

45 Şener Yıldırım, "Side Antik Kentinin Bizans Dönemi Dini Mimarisi," (PhD Diss., Anadolu University, 2013), 111.

the western edge of the transept. Therefore, the North Church is evaluated within Krautheimer's classification of shortened cross-transept structures in terms of its transept form<sup>46</sup>. However, these transept-form structures have a three-aisled naos, as in the South Church, and exhibit a distinctive design in the transept. Regarding the naos layout and transept form seen in the North Church, no similar example has been found for this structure. Thus, it can be thought that the most important Christian building of the city, the Episcopal Church, follows a unique liturgical order and displays some local architectural features. Various forms of transept structures were built in the second half of the 5th century and the second half of the 6th century, especially in the eastern provinces of the empire<sup>47</sup>. Additionally, a Corinthian capital discovered on the surface was dated to the 5th and 6th centuries<sup>48</sup>.

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46 Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 110.

47 Krautheimer, "The Transept in the Early Christian Basilica," 65.

48 Giulia Grassi, "Scultura Architettonica e Spolia Marmoree della Panaghia di Antalya nel Quadro della Produzione Artistica dell'Asia Minore Meridionale in Epoca Paleobizantina," *Costantinopoli e l'arte delle Province Orientali*, ed. Fernanda de Maffei, Claudia Barsanti and Alessandra Guiglia Guidobaldi (Roma: Edizioni Rari Nantes, 1990), 98, Tav. 51.



**F. 18:** The side window of the apse, view from the north (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

Based on the available information, it can be stated that the North Church, which lacks any known comparable examples, was built during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, a period characterized by significant prosperity in the city.





F. 19: The western wall of the prothesis, view from the southeast (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

### 1.3. East Church (Basilica C)

Located to the northeast of the lower city, the structure faces the southern slope of the acropolis and is situated just north of the east-west collonaded street. On the west side of the approximately 100-meter-long structure, some spaces are considered to have been used as a narthex, while remains of an apse can be found on the east side (F. 20). Irregular wall remains are visible in both the southern and northern sections. Due to the difficulty of tracing the main walls of the building, the exact width of the building could not be determined.

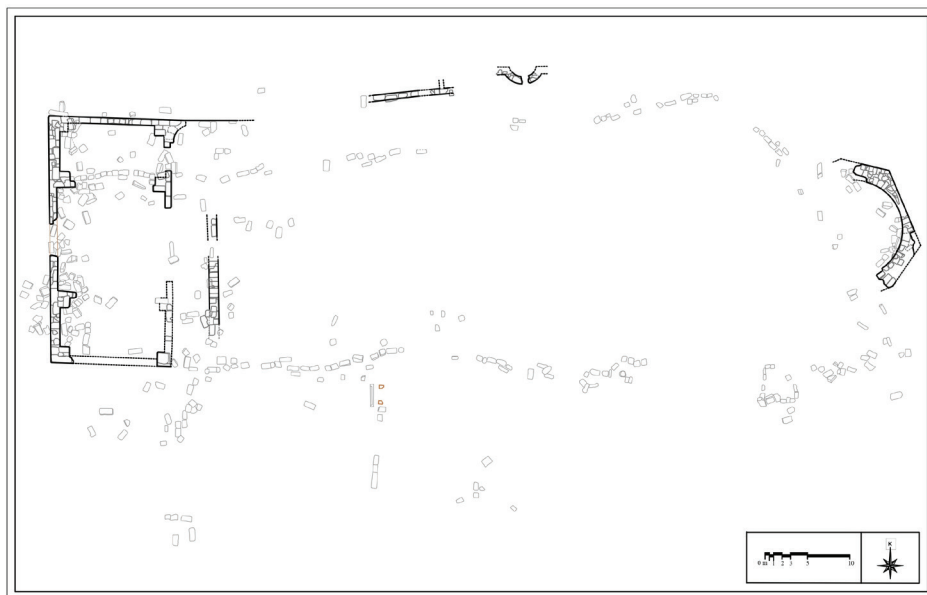
The naos of the church extends from the apse to the narthex area, spanning a length of 81 meters. On the western side, there is a narthex section divided into three spatial units measuring approximately 28 x 19 meters (F. 21). Towards the east, the remains of an apse can be seen, characterized by a semi-circular interior and five-sided exterior (F. 22). The use of large stone block and bricks in the wall structure suggests an early Byzantine dating for the structure<sup>49</sup>. Recent excavations carried out on the collonaded road to the south of the structure have revealed a lintel with cross-relief and column capitals believed to belong to the entrance of a church (F. 23). The connection of these architectural elements to the church is yet to be clarified. Further investigations in the upcoming seasons are expected to shed light on this matter.

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49 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini* 8. *Lykien und Pamphylien*, 370.



F. 20: Aerial view of the East Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)



F. 21: The plan of the East Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2023)

Small apse-like niches facing south have been identified on the northern side of the building. Currently, only one of them can be distinguished. Hellenkemper and Hild suggest that these apsidal arrangements on the north possibly belong to a bathhouse or palace building<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 370.

In terms of its dimensions, the East Church presents an unusual example, deviating from the typical norms. Churches with such monumental lengths are rarely encountered in early basilica architecture. The lengths of the basilical churches in Anatolia usually have standard dimensions, ranging from 20 meters to 30 meters in length. The longest-known basilica in Anatolia is the Church of St. Mary at Ephesus, serving as the cathedral of the city, with a measurement of 74.5 meters<sup>51</sup>. Excavations at the site, believed to be the location of the Council of Ephesus, have revealed multiple construction phases, indicating that the church was built in the early 5th century, utilizing the walls and foundations of a Roman temple with a basilical plan from the 2nd-century<sup>52</sup>. Another notable example is the Church of St. Leonidas in Lechaion, Greece, located in Corinth. This basilica, with a transept and three aisles, has an exceptional length, with the nave alone measuring approximately 80 meters, and a total length including the apse and narthex of around 115 meters. It is thought that this structure in Greece was also built in the mid-5th century<sup>53</sup>.

We currently cannot provide an answer to the questions of why this structure was built in these dimensions and what its function was, although we believe it belongs to the early Byzantine period based on its wall structure.



**F. 22:** The apse of the East Church, (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)

51 Burcu Ceylan, “Geç Antik Dönem Batı Anadolu Bazilikalari,” *Olba* 4 (2001), 191.

52 Robert Ousterhout, *Eastern Medieval Architecture: The Building Traditions of Byzantium and Neighboring Lands* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2019), 109-110; Nikolaos Karydis, “The Development of the St Mary at Ephesos from Late Antiquity to the Dark Ages,” *Anatolian Studie* 69 (2019), 181-182.

53 Ousterhout, *Eastern Medieval Architecture: The Building Traditions of Byzantium and Neighboring Lands*, 107-108; Demetrios Pallas, *Les Monuments Paléochrétiens de Grèce Découverts de 1959 a 1973* (Città del Vaticano: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1977), 167-171.



F. 23: Lintel with a cross relief (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

#### 1.4. Small Church

A small church was built adjacent to a Roman monument just south of the junction where the two collonaded streets meet, at the northern end of the north-south collonaded street (F. 24). It was unearthed during excavations in 1973 by A. M. Mansel. The church must have been built during a period when the water channel running through the middle of the street was not in use, as it is positioned in a way that obstructs the channel<sup>54</sup>.

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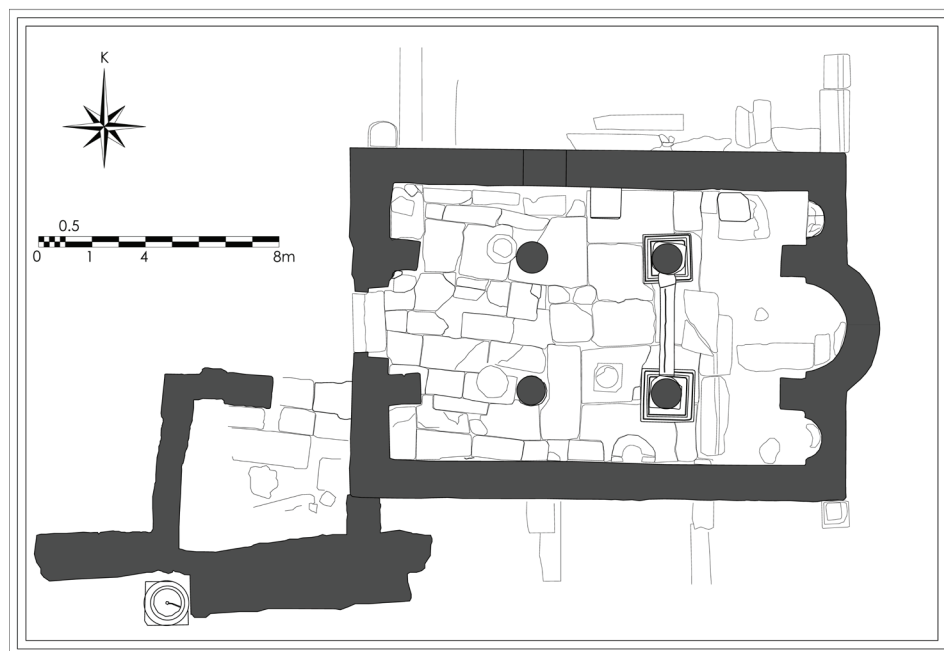
54 Özdizbay, *Perge'nin M.S.1-2. Yüzyıllardaki Gelişimi*, 87.



F. 24: Aerial view of the Small Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2022)

The church, measuring 9.26 x 6.53 meters externally, follows a simple cross-in-square plan, which was the standard plan type of the middle Byzantine period. At the eastern end of the rectangular naos, there is a semicircular apse with a width of 1.66 meters and a depth of 0.75 meters (F. 25). On the north side of the apse, there is an apsidal niche inset into the wall with an approximate width of 0.70 meters, while on the south side, there is a similar niche with a width of approximately 0.80 meters (F. 26). These niches have depths of 0.30-0.32 meters. Within the cruciform naos, four reused columns from a Hellenistic structure that supported the dome, have been found during the excavations. In addition, a parapet slab belonging to the church's templon was discovered between the two columns in the eastern part of the church<sup>55</sup>.

55 Arif Müfit Mansel, "Perge Kazısı 1973 Çalışmaları," *Belleten* 38/151 (1974), 543.



F. 25: The plan of the Small Church (ABAAM Perge Excavation Archive, 2023)

The northern wall of the church contains an opening, approximately 0.85 meters wide, which leads to the adjacent monument on the north. Pilasters positioned on the western and eastern walls of the church were placed on the same axis as the columns. Entry into the structure is provided through a 1.15-meters-wide doorway located in the western wall (F. 27). The jambs on either side of the door have been preserved *in-situ*. Furthermore, a space resembling a square, with a width of approximately 3 meters and sharing the same wall structure, has been added adjacent to the southwest of the building.

The walls of the building have been preserved up to a height of about 1.70-2.10 meters from the ground level. Roughly hewn and spolia-cut stone blocks were used in the wall structure, with the stones placed in a rather irregular manner and the gaps filled with broken bricks. Some parts of the walls were constructed solely with brick material, particularly in the lower parts of the southern wall, while rough-hewn stone blocks were used in the upper sections. The wall exhibits a rather careless craftsmanship, and remnants of plaster can be seen on the wall surfaces. Traces of frescoes on plaster are also found on the northern wall of the apse.



F. 26: The apse of the Small Church, view from the west (A. Tiryaki, 2022)



F. 27: The west wall of the Small Church, view from the west (A. Tiryaki, 2022)

During the excavations conducted on the colonnaded street in 2005 and 2006, a grave from the Byzantine period was discovered, situated adjacent to the southern wall. Furthermore, simple brick graves were found in the vicinity of the church<sup>56</sup>.

Inscribed-cross churches were commonly used in Anatolia between the 10th and 12th centuries<sup>57</sup>. The closest example of the small church of Perge in terms of its di-

56 Aşkım Özdzıbay, "Perge'nin M.S.1-2. Yüzyıllardaki Gelişimi," (PhD Diss., İstanbul University, 2008), 173.

57 Buchwald and Savage, "Churches,"144.

mensions, architecture and plan features is the Small Harbor Church in Side. Situated in the nave of the great Basilica (AA Basilica) in the Harbor Area, this church follows an inscribed cross plan. Like the Small Church in Perge, it features a main apse with a protruding semicircular plan on the eastern wall, accompanied by apsidal niches on either side within the wall. Architectural sculptures found in discovered during the excavations of the Basilica and Small Harbor Church have been dated to the 10th century. Therefore, it was determined that the Small Church in Side was built in the nave of the Basilica in the 10th century<sup>58</sup>. Similarly, in the Lycia region, small churches of the same plan type from the middle Byzantine period can be found in cities such as Pydnaï and Apollonia<sup>59</sup>.

It is estimated that this small inscribed-cross church with four columns in Perge was also built in the 10th century<sup>60</sup> and due to the discovery of numerous Byzantine graves in its vicinity, it is presumed to have been constructed as a funerary church.

### 1.5. Tetraconch

It was constructed on the southern slope of the Acropolis, along an east-west oriented street, intersecting the northern wall of a rectangular structure known as the Roman palaestra. The structure with an interior and exterior quatrefoil form has four apse-like exedras in four directions (**F. 28**). There is an ambulatory encircling the central core of the quatrefoil plan. The exedras, approximately 10 meters wide, open into the ambulatory with two columns each<sup>61</sup>. The tetraconch, a single-story structure, was most likely covered with a wooden roof. The walls were constructed of reused large stone blocks from the Roman palaestra along with mortared rubble stones and brick fragments. The absence of clamp holes on the wall surface indicates that the interior was not covered with marble<sup>62</sup>.

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58 Yıldırım, "Side Antik Kentinin Bizans Dönemi Dini Mimarisi," 246.

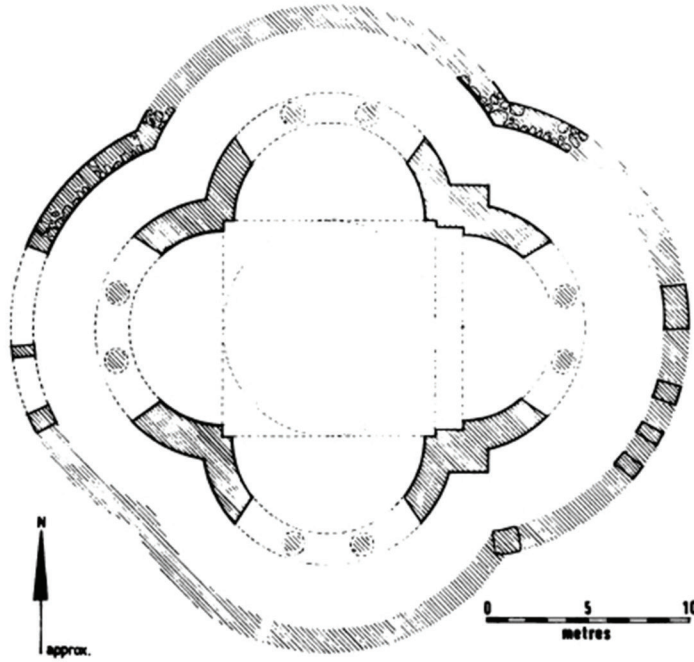
59 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 447, 823.

60 Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 370.

61 W. Eugene Kleinbauer, "The Double Shell Tetraconch Building at Perge in Pamphylia and the Origin of the Architectural Genus," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987), 277.

62 Kleinbauer, "The Double Shell Tetraconch Building at Perge in Pamphylia and the Origin of the Architectural Genus," 278-279; Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 370.





F. 28: The plan of the Tetraconch (Kleinbauer, “The Double Shell Tetraconch Building at Perge in Pamphylia and the Origin of the Architectural Genus”, Fig. 1)

The fact that the tetraconch is located to the north, leaving the large courtyard of the palaestra empty, indicates that the palaestra was still in use, even if its function had changed, during the construction of the tetraconch<sup>63</sup>.

In the early Christian period, centrally planned structures such as the tetraconch, octagon or triconch were often constructed as additional buildings adjacent to basilicas, serving as baptisteries or martyrions. However, beginning from the 5th century, centrally planned churches were also built<sup>64</sup>. Kleinbauer states that although the function of this independently constructed structure, not attached to a church, is uncertain, similar ones were built for religious purposes. Double-shell tetraconchs, such as the one in Perge, were commonly used as churches<sup>65</sup>. There are only a few

63 Kleinbauer, “The Double Shell Tetraconch Building at Perge in Pamphylia and the Origin of the Architectural Genus,” 279.

64 Semavi Eyice, “Bizans Mimarisi,” *Mimarbaşı Koca Sinan Yaşadığı Çağ ve Eserleri*, ed. Sadi Bayram (İstanbul: Republic of Turkey, Directorate General of Foundations, 1988), 46; Robert Ousterhout, “Churches and Monasteries,” *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon and Robin Cormack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 355-356.

65 Kleinbauer, “The Double Shell Tetraconch Building at Perge in Pamphylia and the Origin of the Architectural Genus,” 286.

known examples of this plan type, mostly found in the regions of Syria and Northern Mesopotamia. In Anatolia, they can only be found in Korykos and Antioch. Based on its counterparts, Tetraconch of Perge is dated to the second half of the 5th century and 6th century<sup>66</sup>.

### Conclusion

Archaeological findings and inscriptions indicate that the Roman monumental structures of the Lower City were not demolished but preserved and continued to be used in their original functions during the Late Antique and Byzantine periods. For instance, the Roman theatre and stadium of Perge are located outside the city walls. While their locations may indicate disuse in that period, the inscriptions from the 5th and 6th centuries found in these structures demonstrate that they were still being utilized in their original functions<sup>67</sup>. The South Bath, situated in the northwest of the city, stands as one of the most monumental structures of the city. Constructed in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, this architectural complex remained in use during the Late Antique period, with repairs and additions made in the 4th and 5th centuries<sup>68</sup>. The macellum/agora, located in the southern part of the city, is another prominent Roman structure in the Lower City. It has been preserved throughout the Byzantine period with several modifications. At the center of its courtyard stands the Tholos, possibly a Tyche temple, which has been carefully conserved. During the Late Antique period, a wall was added inside the structure with water outlets, indicating a different function, likely transformed into a water structure<sup>69</sup>. In late antiquity, new symbolic Christian structures were added to the urban fabric. Three basilical churches, notable for their monumental dimensions, were constructed in the Lower City. Another significant structure is the tetraconch, which is thought to be a church due to its elaborate plan. These are generally dated to the 5th and 6th centuries. No archaeological remains pointing to the 4th century have been identified yet. The Small Church, situated on the north-south colonnaded street, was built in a period when the water channels along the street were no longer in use. Based on its close counterpart, it is dated to a later period, specifically the 10th century.

In the Lower City of Perge, it can be observed that architectural and sculptural works were preserved until the 7th century AD, maintaining urban integrity. The proximity of the statue fragments to their original locations, coupled with the presence of the architectural elements in a destroyed state where they once stood, signifies that

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66 Kleinbauer, "The Double Shell Tetraconch Building at Perge in Pamphylia and the Origin of the Architectural Genus," 280, 288; Hellenkemper and Hild, *Tabula Imperii Bizantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*, 370.

67 Foss, "The Cities of Pamphylia in the Byzantine Age," 48.

68 Özdizbay, *Perge'nin M.S.1-2. Yüzyıllardaki Gelişimi*, 41.

69 Foss, "The Cities of Pamphylia in the Byzantine Age," 18; Özdizbay, *Perge'nin M.S.1-2. Yüzyıllardaki Gelişimi*, 68.

urban life was interrupted due to a sudden catastrophe. Coin finds also witnessed a disruption in the 7th century, specifically during the reign of Heraclius. Perge might have suffered damage in the devastating earthquake of 616<sup>70</sup>. Although there was no longer a large city in Perge, the presence of the Small Church signifies that there was still limited habitation on a small scale during the middle Byzantine period.

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