

THE ANCIENT CITY OF LAODICEA



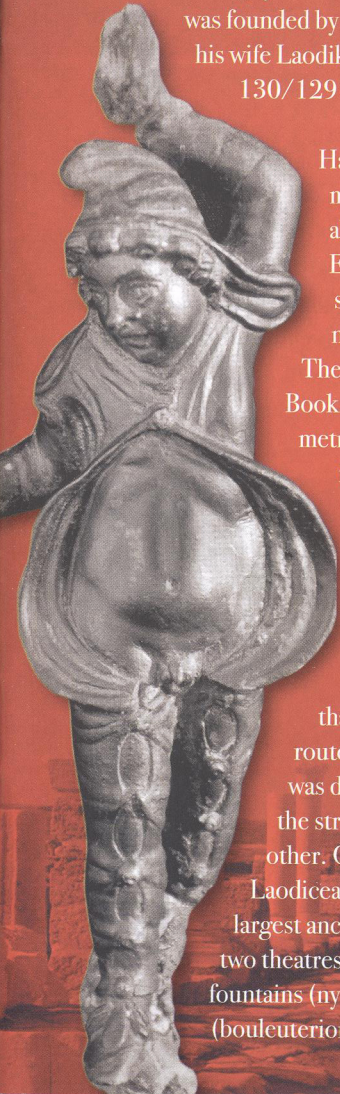
DENİZLİ MUNICIPALITY





THE ANCIENT CITY OF LAODICEA

The Ancient City of Laodicea (ad Lycum), or Laodikeia, is located in the area of Eskihisar, Goncalı and Bozburun Streets, 6 km north of Denizli. In the fertile plains of the Lycos River, Laodicea lies on a high plateau surrounded on three sides with rivers Lycos (modern Çürüksu) in the northeast, Kapros (modern Başlıçay) in the southeast and Asopos (modern Gümüşçay – Goncalı Deresi) in the northwest. The Hellenistic city was founded by the Seleucid King Antiochus II in the name of his wife Laodike, around mid third century BC. And finally in 130/129 BC, the region became part of Rome.



Having suffered from earthquakes and rebuilt many times through history, the city was finally abandoned after a severe earthquake in the reign of Emperor Focas (r. 602–610 CE) and its citizens settled in Denizli – Kaleiçi and Hisarköy on the north slopes of Mt. Salbakos (modern Babadağ). The city homed one of the Seven Churches of the Book of Revelation and thus, she became one of the metropolitan sees in the Byzantine period. Excavations in Laodicea show that the city was a settlement continuously from Chalcolithic Period (Copper Age, 5500 BCE) to 7th century CE. The name of the settlement was in orderly Rhoas, Diopolis (City of Zeus) and Laodicea.

The most important income of the city was trade thanks to her location on the crossroads of trade routes. The foremost trade was that of textiles. The city was designed on the Hippodamic, or grid plan, where the streets cross at right angles or run parallel to each other. Covering an area of about five square kilometres Laodicea boasts with her remains encompassing the largest ancient stadium of Anatolia (measuring 285 x 70m.), two theatres, four bathhouse complexes, four agoras, five fountains (nymphaea), two monumental portals, council house (bouleuterion), temples, churches and monumental streets.



EASTERN BATH 07

On the north side of the Syria Street are the remains of the East Baths on a higher elevation. Dated to the Roman period (2nd Century CE), the building has a central layout built with piers, arches and vaults. It comprises an apodyterium (changing hall), frigidarium (cold hall), tepidarium (lukewarm hall) and a caldarium (hot hall). The flat area extending to the west of the structure may be an agora (marketplace).

SYRIA GATE 21

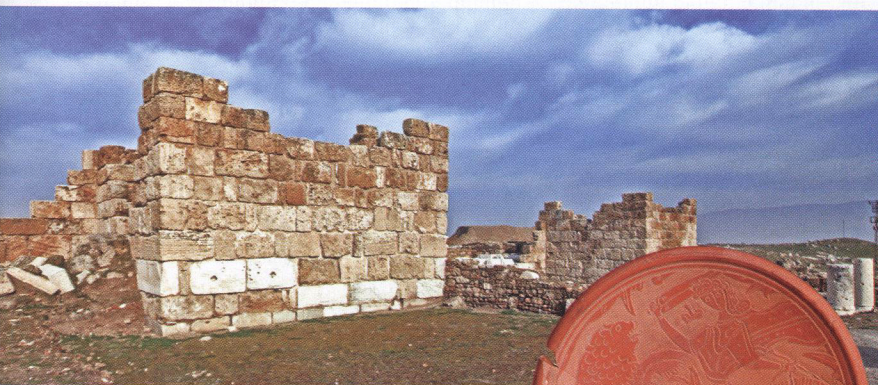


Just to the south of the modern entrance to the site lie the remains of the Syria Gate. The gate had three archways built with cut travertine blocks. It was built in the Doric order in 84–85 CE during the reign of Emperor Domitian (r. 81–96 CE) and it is contemporaneous with the Frontinus Gate in Hierapolis.

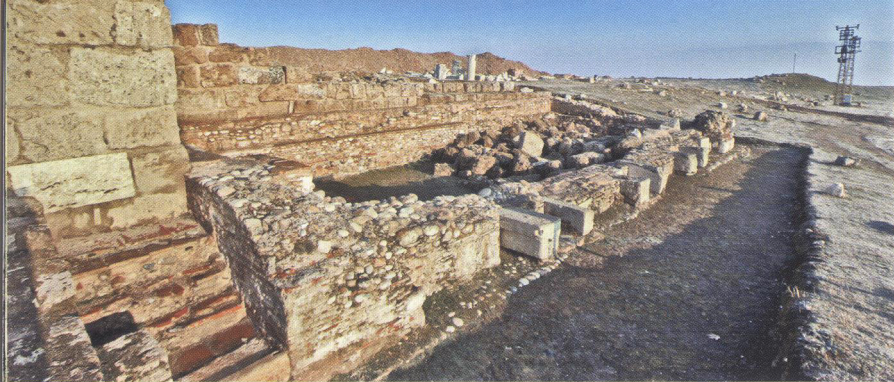


EAST BYZANTINE GATE 30

It is located on the Syria Street. In 395–396 CE, Emperors Theodosius (r. 378–395 CE) and Arcadius (r. 395–408 CE) decided to build fortifications around the city. Architectural blocks from Roman structures were reused in the construction of the gates, walls and towers. The gate is flanked with square-shaped towers projecting out from the walls. There are two passageways of the gate – one is larger to allow horse carriages and the other is much narrower used by the pedestrians. The restoration work on the towers involved some reconstruction of the walls reaching a height of 5–6m.

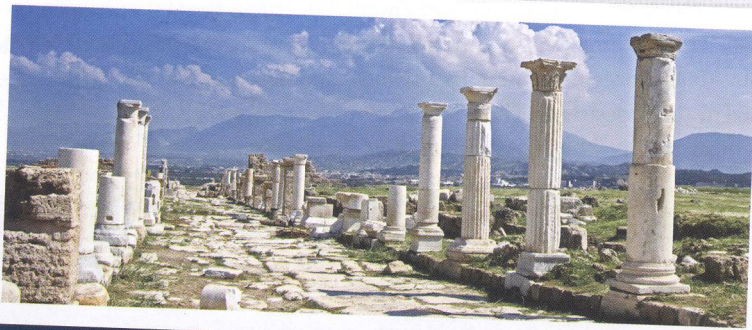


*Laodicea, a city
of culture and art*



EAST BYZANTINE FOUNTAIN 31

The rectangular fountain (nymphaeum) measures 21.50 x 9.85m on the exterior and 18.70 x 6.80m on the interior. It adjoins the north tower of the East Byzantine Gate and the fortifications and extends in the north–south direction. It was built in the early fifth century CE. The structure supplied water to those living outside the city walls or those arriving from outside.



THE SYRIA STREET 11

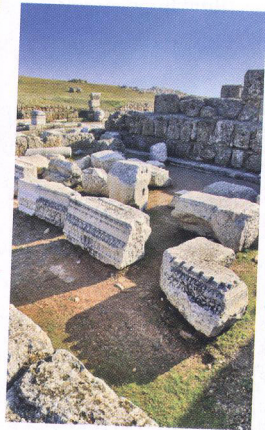
The 900–meter–long main street stretching from the city centre to the Syria Gate on the east is called the Syria Street. The excavations made clear the construction phases related with the earthquake of 494 CE and until the abandonment of the city. The sewage canal runs underneath the middle of the street which is flanked with colonnades rising on a single– or two–step platform with shops behind. The section of the street extending from the East Byzantine Gate to the Caracalla Fountain on the west is flanked with House A, Temple A, Fountain A, Propylon I and shops on the north side and with shops and Central Agora on the south side.



PROPYLON I 27

The monumental portal Propylon I is located in the Syria Street opposite the west corner of the Central Agora. It forms a recess toward north from the street.

It is understood to have been built in the late Severan period. Propylon I was damaged greatly in the earthquake in the reign of Diocletian (r. 284–305 CE) and subsequently rebuilt. It fell completely in the earthquake of 494 CE and rearranged thereafter staying in use until the seventh century.



CARACALLA NYMPHAEUM 10

This monumental fountain is located at the junction of the Syria Street and the Stadium Street leading south. Thanks to its location on a corner, it has two facades and an unusual layout. It was built in honour of, and dedicated to, Emperor Caracalla (r. 211–217 CE) on the occasion of his visit to Laodicea. The ancient structure is among the major structures of its time.



HOUSE A 38

House A is located in the side alley leading to north from the Syria Street. The building comprises an inner courtyard and interconnected rooms with three houses and shops. Fresco remains observed on the walls indicate that the building was used as a house in the third and fourth centuries CE.

However, storage jar (pithos), discharge hall and canal and brick flooring indicate alterations which transformed the building to a workshop in the fifth and sixth centuries.

Three phases of use have been identified in the complex. The complex has sitting rooms with pools designed for drinking wine accessed behind the shops on the north portico, wells for cooling the wine and storerooms behind. Excavations brought to light many things related with trade such as balances, weights and coins, which indicates that Laodicea was very improved in trade.



*The trade centre
of the Ancient Era*

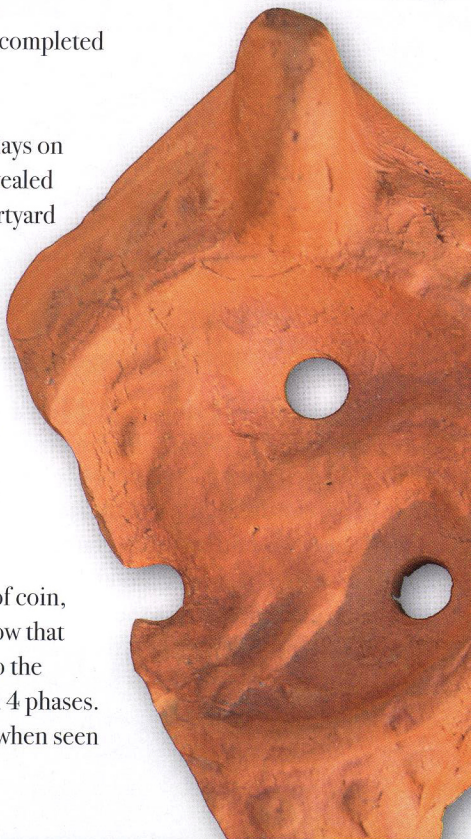


Excavations started in 2006 and completed in 2010 season.

House A were built up on insula lays on 2000 m² and the excavations revealed 38 places, 4 shops, peristyle courtyard and 2 passageways belonging to three houses.

With its peristyle courtyard, ancient fountain, pool, oven and other areas, House A reflects the architectural plan and style of typical Roman Imperial Period civil dwelling.

The architectural features, finds of coin, pottery, glass, bone and metal show that House A was used from 3rd CE to the beginning of 7th century CE with 4 phases. House A has a neat and tidy look when seen from the outside.





STREET WATER DISTRIBUTION CENTRE 39

Located at the corner of a side alley leading north from the Syria Street, this centre was used when the city shrank in size following the earthquake in 494 CE. Built with reused architectural elements, the centre measures 2.10 x 2.40m. and there is a baked clay pipe supplying the water, a small pool and distribution lines showing that the water was distributed from the pool to four directions via a triple strainer system.



PERISTYLE HOUSE WITH CHURCH 57

The building complex named peristyle house with church is located in the south of the North Theatre and the last building at the end of the northwest of the Temple East Street which connects to the theatre. After 2010 and 2011 excavations it is understood that the east side of the house which faces the Temple East Street has a special church for inhabitants of the house. There is naos room whose dimensions are 7.00 x 9.00 m. and there are rooms of endonartheks (8.00 x 3.50 m.) eksonartheks (8.50 x 4.00 m) at the south of the naos room. There is also peristyled courtyard (16.00 x 17.00 m. in dimensions) where located at the west of the places covers east side of the house and linked rooms which open to the courtyard.



NYPHAEUM A 32

Also known as the Fountain of Septimius Severus, Nymphaeum A is located in the north side of the Syria Street. This rectangular fountain extending in the east–west direction covers one block of the Hippodamic layout and measures 41.60 x 14.30m. The rectangular pool was surrounded with the two–store construction on three sides; the lower store was of Composite order while the upper store was of Corinthian order. The architectural façade, the parapets with profiled crowns and bases rising on a two–stepped podium are of marble.

The main pool was filled by three taps on the long side and one tap on each of the short sides placed in niches. Furthermore, a lion statue placed on the east and west ends of the fountain facing the street. This monumental fountain is a grand structure with its polychrome wall facings and brown, grey marbles, located opposite the Central Agora.

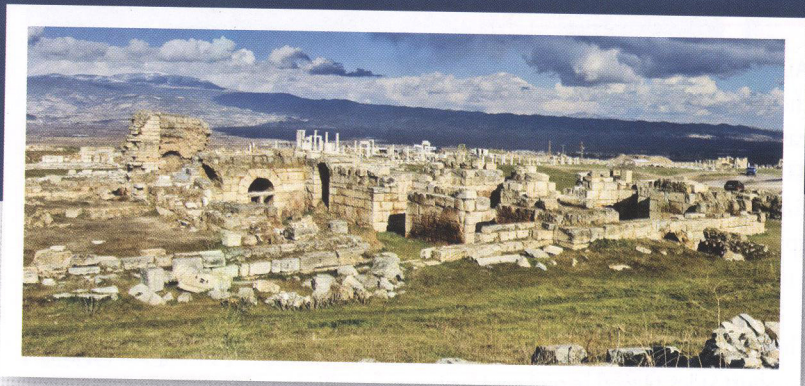


*The city that introduced
civilisation to Europe*



CENTRAL AGORA 28

Located on the south side of the Syria Street, the Central Agora is a rectangular area of 112 x 60m surrounded on three sides with porticoes rising on a two-stepped platform. To the south of the south portico is the wall of the Central Baths. Behind the east and west porticoes are the doorways to the shops. The roofs of the porticoes are placed on the walls of the shops in the east and the west.



CENTRAL BATHS 5

Located to the south of the Central Agora, the Central Baths has a covered area of 89.60 x 57.60m occupying four blocks in the Hippodamic system. The complex comprises caldarium (hot hall), tepidarium (lukewarm hall), frigidarium (cold hall) and apodyterium (changing hall) and on the north with a second apodyterium and frigidarium peculiar to Laodicea. On the west is the triple arched entranceway. The complex is dated to the Roman Imperial period. Following its collapse with the earthquake of 494 CE, it served other functions until the abandonment of the city in the early seventh century CE.



TEMPLE A

12

The structure is located on the north end of the rectangular courtyard surrounded with porticoes on the north side of the Syria Street. The temple is a prostylos with four spirally fluted columns in the front and measures 27.75 x 13.60m. It was built with travertine blocks on a high podium and faced with marble. The temple precinct occupies the area of two blocks in the Hippodamic layout. Built in the Antonine period (second century CE) and repaired in the Severus period, the temple was heavily renovated in the reign of Emperor Diocletian (284–305 CE). Excavation findings indicate that the structure was used as an archive in the 4th Century CE.

Temple was used as religious archive of Ladoicea Church when the Christianity was accepted as official religion in the 4th century CE (the time of Great Constantinus, r. 306-337 CE) and temple was destroyed after the earthquake in 494 CE.

19 columns in total have been restored and raised including Prostylos columns and columns portico of courtyard that preserved in a few number. Stairs and their parapets located at two sides have been restored. Naos gate which is the entrance gate have been restored as to anastylosis (original condition) and temple gained three dimensional visions with the raising of side walls. The upper part of vaulted place which is located under the naos (sacred room) closed with steel construction and unbreakable glass.



THE WEST THEATRE 9

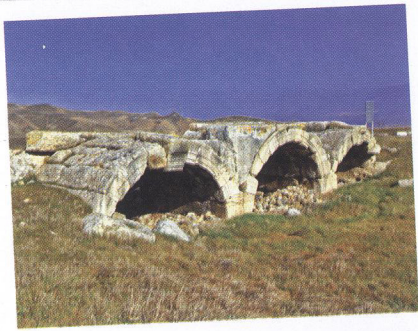
The structure was built entirely in earth following the Hellenistic tradition. The stage building stands to a height of 6–7 m. The cavea is divided into nine kerkides with seven stairways. The lower part of the cavea is of marble and has 23 rows of seats while the upper part is of travertine and has 19 rows of seats. It has a capacity for about 8000 people. Originally built in the Hellenistic period, the structure went through various repairs and stayed in use until the seventh century.



THE NORTH CHURCH 15

In the flat area, facing the Lycos plains, between the two theatres the North Church was built next to the temple at a later date. The North Church was built with travertine blocks in the three-aisled basilican layout with an apse. Possibly built in the late fifth century CE (after 494 CE), it stayed in use until beginning of the seventh century.





THE EPHESUS GATE 19

This Roman Imperial period gate located on the west was built in the reign of Emperor Domitian (r. 81–96 CE) and is the best-preserved one of the four monuments built at this time. Typologically this gate resembles the Frontinus Gate in Hierapolis.



THE NORTH THEATRE 8

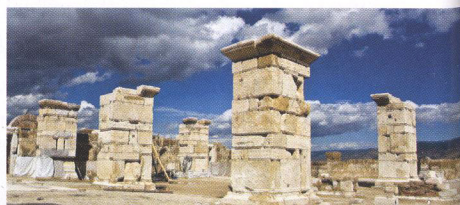
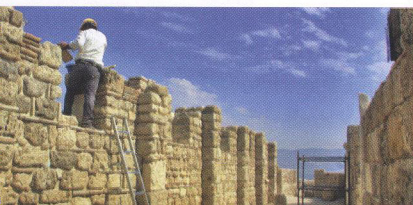
The North Theatre is built in second century CE. Facing the Lycos plains below to the northeast, the building is built entirely into the hillside. Although many rows of seats have slipped away from their original positions and some were removed for quarrying and lime making purposes, a total of 19 rows in the lower cavea and 27 rows in the upper cavea can be identified today. Based on the diameters of the cavea, we can conjecture 9 kerkides in the lower and 16 kerkides in the upper cavea. The diazoma in the middle is 2.30m. wide and the diameter of the cavea is 110m. while the stage is arc-shaped and the orchestra is wide. The names of associations and leading families are found incised on the rows of seats. The capacity is about 12,000 people.



LAODICEA CHURCH 52

The church was found and totally excavated in 2010 excavation season. Laodicea Holy Excursion Church is located according to the grid system in the northeast part of the city that is on the street of leaving to the Syria Street and leading to the North Theatre. The church is placed northeast of the Temple A. The church covers one insula in east-west orientation and there is one each fountain related with church on the southwest and northeast streets.

Laodicea Church has a unique plan in the history of Christianity and has 11 apses: one looks to east (to synthronon), five looks to north and five looks to south (two of them looks narthex). Huge supports between niches at the bordering north and south walls of Naos are connected each other with arches for carrying a roof statically. The Naos consisting of 10 support covered with travertine marble blocks, rooms for prothesis and Diakonikon (preparation places for religious rituals), ambon (lecture rostrum), bema (the most sacred place which has an altar), synthronon where the main apse is located looking to the east (the sitting place for religion officers and hymn choirs).



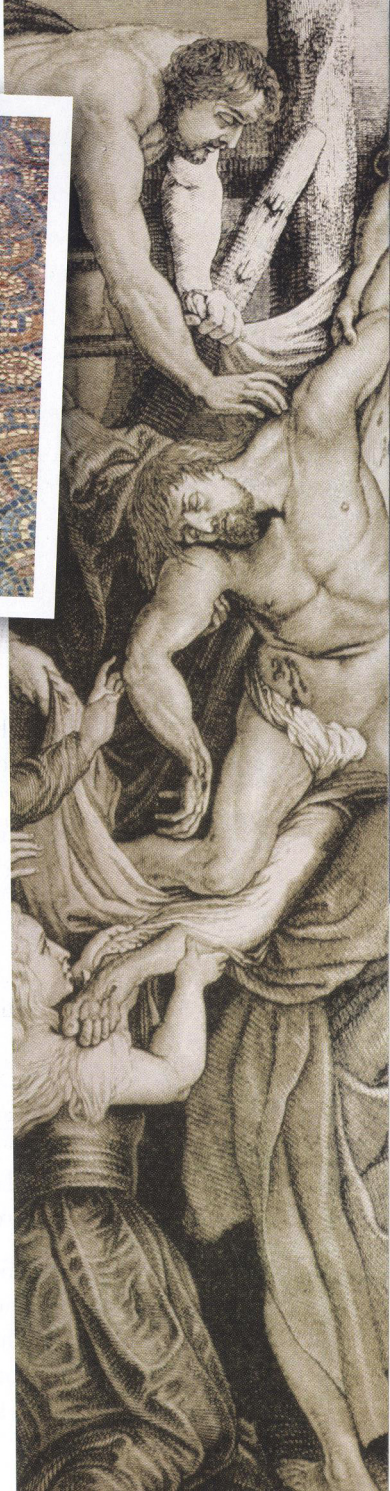


The church has two entrances in two streets in the north and the south. Narthex is oriented in north-south direction and 3 gate leads to Naos. Naos is divided into 3 naves (corridor) as north, central and south.

North and south naves have vegetable and geometric mosaic floor. Floors of central nave and postoforion have an opus sectile pavement (made of marble covers with geometric ornaments). Moreover, church walls are ornamented with fresco panels.

One of the most important parts of the church baptistery is one of the oldest and best preserved examples of the history of Christianity. The church was damaged by earthquake in 494 CE and repaired.

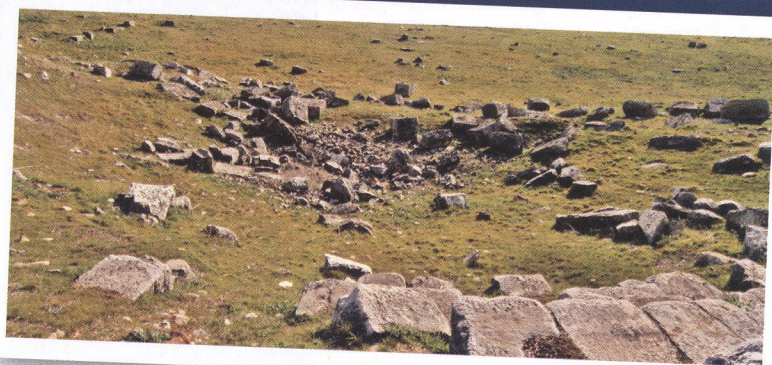
It was completely destroyed by the earthquake in the period of Emperor Focas (r. 620-610 CE).





THE SOUTH BATH - GYMNASIUM COMPLEX 2

One of the best-preserved ancient monuments in Laodicea, this complex was built with cut travertine blocks of high quality workmanship. The complex measures 133 x 75m. and has the layout of “cascaded twin baths” peculiar to the region. Furthermore it stands out for its connections with the stadium on the south and the agora on the north. This complex also served those exercising or competing in the stadium. According to its inscription the complex is dedicated to Emperor Hadrian and his wife Sabina and built on the occasion of their visit to Laodicea in 135 CE in the proconsulship of Gargilius Antiquus.



THE SOUTH AGORA 34

The South Agora measures 135 x 90m and is located between the Bouleuterion and the South Baths to both of which it is connected. Postaments and other architectural elements reflect the stylistic features of the second century CE. Thus, it is estimated that the South Agora, the South Baths complex and the Bouleuterion were designed as a single project and built in honour of Emperor Hadrian’s visit in 135 CE.

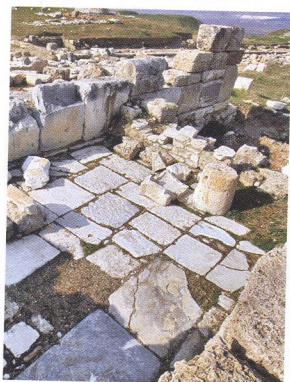


SACRED AREA PORTICOS 58

Located in the south of the North Church, Sacred Area Porticos is a monumental structure located on a three-level crepidoma. Attic-Ion plates, pillars, korinth heads, architraves, frescos and geison-sima were used in the structure. There must have been temples and altars in the Sacred Area, measuring 250m x 100m. These structures fell down in the direction of northeast due to the earthquake. According to the excavations, the landfill in the area consisted of boulders, bricks, and roof tiles (stroter) and ceramic pieces. The red pieces of ceramics were used in daily dishes and religious unguentariums. Thus, the structure was used for daily needs as well as its religious use.

WATER DEPOT 55

Water depot provides water needs of monumental fountain (B Nymphaeum). Its dimensions are 4.70 x 7.10 m. Originally water was canalled from Water Distribution Terminal II until near the depot with travertine blocks. In the Late Period, terracotta pipes were used. Water in the depot first fed B Nymphaeum in the west, and provided the Latrina's water need.





Located in the south of the Ancient City of Laodicea and east of the Stadium and the South Baths complex, the Water Distribution Terminal I (castellum aquae) lies at an altitude of 278m above the sea level. Its preserved height is about 7m. The water came to this terminal from the Başpınar spring in Denizli via the twin travertine pipeline on the west slopes of Eskihisar village in the south.

WATER DISTRIBUTION TERMINAL 2 (CASTELLUM AQUAE)

26

The second terminal is located about 430m north of the first one and at an altitude of 291m above the sea level. It is in the best topographic location to supply water to the city. Thus, it is a bigger and more complicated structure that supplied the most of the city. The blockage to the northwest of the Water Distribution Terminal II was built with creek stones and lime mortar and dates to the Late Antiquity. Extant remains must belong to the Roman and Late Antique period.





STADIUM 4

The Ancient City of Laodicea was one of the major trade centres of the Ancient Period. The city built many monuments and paid much attention to art, culture and sports.

The stadium, one of these monuments, is located in the south of the city and extends in the northwest–southeast direction. It measures 285 x 70m. Its capacity is estimated to be about 20–25,000 people.

Built entirely of marble and in the ground, the monument has two sphendones (round ends). According to its inscription the stadium dedicated to Emperor Titus (r.79-81CE). Mostly the rows of seats in the north, in the southwest and in the western sphendone have survived in better condition.

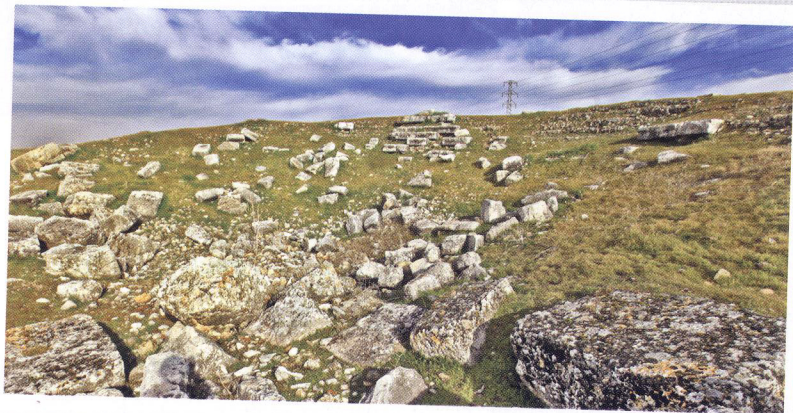




WEST BATHS

6

A good example of baths with cascaded layout is located about 50m. east of the Aphrodisias Street. It extends in the east–west direction and measures 70 x 36m. The frigidarium (cold hall), tepidarium (lukewarm hall) and caldarium (hot hall) can be clearly seen in this monument.



BOULEUTERION (COUNCIL HOUSE)

1

Connected with the South Agora, the Bouleuterion has a diameter of 35m including the encircling wall. The cavea's diameter is 30m. The Greco–Roman cavea faces south and 7–8 rows of marble seats can still be seen. Dated to the reign of Emperor Hadrian (r. 117–138 CE) the building has a capacity of 500–600 people.



STADIUM STREET

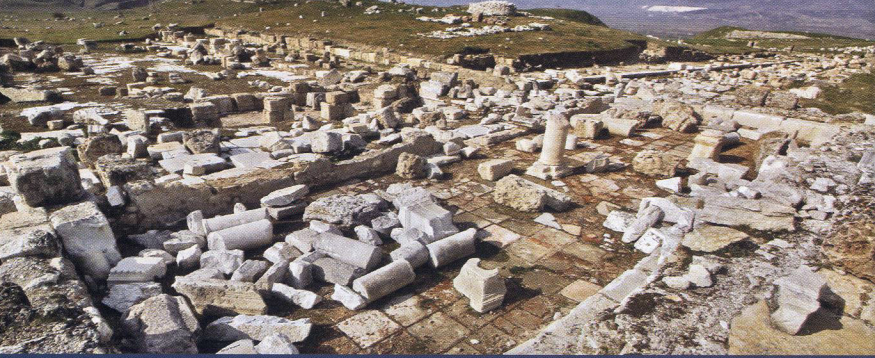
54

It is named as 'Stadium Street' because it goes to the stadium. The street crosses to Syria Street in east-west direction. There are porticos and row of shops both side of the street. Opus sectile pavements are preserved at some porticos.

Considering the fact that Stadium Street cuts Syria Street in front of Caracalla Nymphaeum, it is understood that it was re-arranged in the time of Emperor Domitianus (r. 81-96 CE) especially during the time of Proconsul S. Julius Frontinus in 84-85 CE because of the architectural relationship with Caracalla Nymphaeum. Street used with some changes continuously from the end of the 2nd century CE to the abandonment of the city in the first half of the 7th century CE.

Stadium Street is connected with West Theatre, Stadium, South Bath, Gymnasium, Ephesus Portico and Syria Street. Some part of the street that leading to West Theatre was closed in the 5th-6th century CE and the connection with Syria Street was cut.

There are many public and civilian places in the street such as Central Bath, Caracalla Nymphaeum, B Nymphaeum, Latrina (toilet), and water depots, and shops placed back of porticos.



B NYMPHAEUM

55

B Nymphaeum (fountain) is rectangular planned and its dimensions are 6.30 x 18.00 m. It is located at the east side of Stadium Street and southeast of the palestra of Central Bath. Thanks to its locations, the structures supplied water to surrounding buildings and shops on its own. The fountain has a one-store plan, oriented with relief parapets at the front. Water pipes were made of travertine for resistance of water pressure. It was built in the 1st Century CE, and used until the 7th Century CE with certain reconstructions.



LATRINA (TOILET)

55

Latrina was built in the 3rd Century CE. It is located in east side of the Stadium Street, opposite the Portico of Ephesus Street in the east and southeast adjacent of B Nymphaeum. Its dimensions are 10.40 x 17.00 m and 'L' planned. Latrina is assumed to have had 80 people capacity. Latrina has an entrance, front room (vestibulum) that is rectangular and its dimensions are 2.90 x 8.80 m. There is square planned pool (4.40 x 4.60 m) at the south part of the Latrina (10.40 x 17.00 m). Pool is open at the top and closed with lean-to roof.



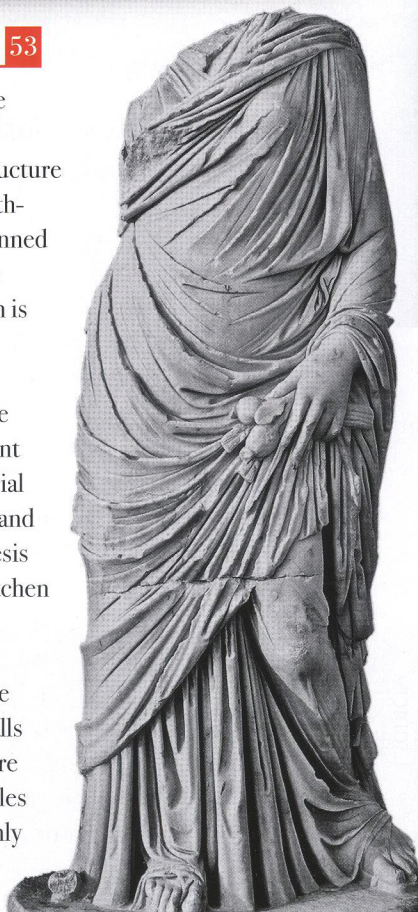
CENTRAL CHURCH

53

Central Church is located south part of the Syria Street and found by the earth radar scanning. The outer dimensions of the structure are 17.00 x 20.00 m. It is oriented in north-south direction. The church is basilica planned with three naves and differently transverse rectangular shape. The west part of church is bordered with narthex and has a fountain.

The door of the north and central naves are on-site. Church was formed by arrangement of the structure dated to the Roman Imperial Period. There are semi-circle synthronon and pastophorion rooms on each side (prothesis and diakonikon preparing places). The kitchen is located on south side.

Floors of synthronon and pastophorion are paved with opus sectile. Lower parts of walls are covered with marble and upper sides are frescoed. Marble coverings and opus sectiles were removed after 7th century CE and only small part are preserved.





PORTICO OF THE EPHEBUS STREET

46

The streets lies in east-west direction and there are pools lying along north and south sides of the street, arched porticos rear of pools, and shops and their doors.

Portico of the Ephesus Street lies in the Ephesus Street which cuts Stadium Street. Ephesus Portico has three arched entrance that is reached with three steps from Stadium Street. The total width of Ephesus Street Portico (including porticos) is 30.60 m. and covered with marble blocks.

Portico was possibly the protocol place for festival, feast and special days. This special place is limited with arched entrance from west and Stadium Street from east. Thus, the place is closed for vehicles and arranged for pedestrians. Portico was used continuously from Late Hellenistic/Early Imperial Period to the second half of 6th century/early 7th century CE (565-612 CE).



Laodicea Settlement Plan

1. Council House (Bouleuterion)
2. South Baths-Gymnasium Complex
3. Water Distribution Terminal I
4. Stadium
5. Central Baths
6. West Baths
7. Eastern Baths
8. Northern Theater
9. Western Theater
10. Caracalla Nymphaeum
11. The Syria Street
12. Temple A
13. Circular (Rotunda) Byzantine Structure
14. Octagonal Formed East Byzantine Structure
15. The North Church
16. The Southwest Church
17. The Northwest Church
18. Four Pillared Byzantine Church
19. Ephesus Gate and Byzantine Gate
20. Hierapolis Gate
21. Syria Gate
22. Aphrodisias Gate and South Byzantine Gate
23. West Agora
24. The Round Structure in Ephesus Street (Macellum)
25. Roman Bridge over Asopos
26. 2nd Water Distribution Terminal
27. 1st and 2nd Monumental Passages (Propylons)
28. Central Agora
29. Early Byzantine Ramparts
30. East Byzantine Door and Towers
31. East Byzantine Nymphaeum
32. S. Severus Nymphaeum (Nymphaeum A)
33. Ephesus Street
34. South Agora
35. South Roman Villa
36. North Workshop
37. Southwest Temple
38. House A
39. Street Water Distribution Centre
40. Prytaneion (City Guest House)
41. The Structure next to the West
42. Theatre
43. Temple
44. Temple
45. Monumental Passage
46. Ephesus Porticos
47. South Nymphaeum
48. West Nymphaeum
49. Northwestern Byzantine Gate
50. Necropolis
51. Asopos I-II
52. Laodicea Church
53. Central Church
54. Stadium Street
55. Nymphaeum B, Latrina and Water Storage
56. Temple A Eastern Street
57. Peristyle House with Church
58. Sacred Area Porticos
59. Stadium Church
60. Rectangular Structure





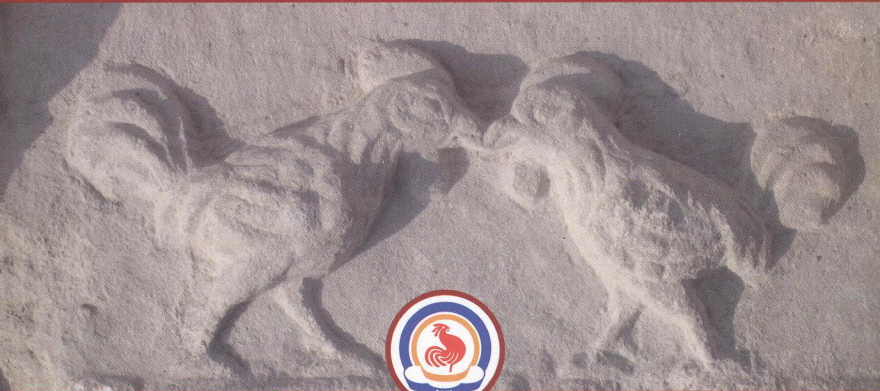
Laodicea Ancient City Excavation Committee Chairman
Prof. Dr. Celal Şimşek
Denizli, 2012





Denizli is the land of civilizations that were established thousands of years ago. The first agricultural activities started in these lands, so did the first trade, art, sport activities. Stone was formed for the first time in these lands. The first planned cities were constructed in these lands. Denizli Municipality is highly concerned with passing the unique heritage from the magnificent civilisations in its borders onto the new generations. For this aim, we have undertaken the responsibility to reintroduce the Ancient City of Laodicea, one of the major cities of the Ancient Era to the world cultural heritage. The point we have reached today is the evidence of our determination.

Osman Zolan
MAYOR OF DENİZLİ



DENİZLİ MUNICIPALITY

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