

Two New Portrait Heads with Priestly Crowns from Perge

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The Perge Excavations, carried out by Istanbul University since 1946, have yielded nearly 40 sculptural portraits, most of which were published over the years¹. In 2005 two new portrait heads, one depicting a man and the other a woman, were recovered from the west side of the main north-south colonnaded street between the transverse streets J7 and J9 (Fig. 1). At this area the colonnaded street widens significantly to take the form of a piazza. The finds came from the north end of the west portico of this piazza near the doorway at a depth of 0.25 m (Figs. 2-3)². In their close vicinity were a few statue fragments including a hand. Both heads wear crowns surmounted by small busts, like the statue of the female *euergetes* Plancia Magna, who was and still is a well-known representative of Perge, and the statue of a prominent man associated with the west gallery of the Macellum (also known as the Agora)³.

The male head (Antalya Museum, inv. 2005.82A) is sculpted out of fine-grained white marble. It has a height of 0.345 m and is quite well-preserved, apart from the damage on the right eyebrow and the busts decorating the crown (Figs. 4-7).

The head, slightly turned to its left, portrays a man possibly in his early forties. He has a narrow face and a low forehead. The eyes are shadowed by prominent brows with schematically delineated hairs. The upper eyelids are partially closed giving the subject a relaxed or even a sleepy look. The irises are incised, while the heart-shaped pupils are drilled with double holes (Fig. 8). Below the aquiline nose, the mouth is small, but the lips that are separated with a deep drill channel are full (Fig. 9). The soft groove in the middle of the lower lip accentuates the fleshiness. The depressions in the forehead, below the eyes, and in the cheeks are meticulously rendered, a feature more distinctive on the right side of the face. In addition, a deep crease runs beneath the outer corner of the right eye,

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¹ İnan 1965; İnan 1974; İnan – Rosenbaum 1966, 29, 36, 47, 53, 260, 273, 275; İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, 45-46, 64-66, 225-237. In addition to the above, numerous publications have commented upon the Perge portraits through the years.

² Abbasoğlu 2006; Özdizbay 2008, 144-145. I briefly discussed the two portraits in The Second International Dokimeion Marble Sculpture Symposium together with others wearing priestly crowns from Perge; see Delemen 2008. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Haluk Abbasoğlu, the Director of the Perge Excavations, for the permission and support he kindly extended to this research, Assistant Prof. Dr. Sedef Çokay-Kepçe and Dr. Aşkın Özdizbay for always being there for me, and Aynur Tosun for her generous assistance at the Antalya Museum.

³ On Plancia Magna and her statue (Antalya Museum, inv. A3459), see e.g. Mansel 1975, 74-75; İnan 1974, no. 1; İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, no. 225; Boatwright 1991; Şahin 1999, nos. 117-125; Rumscheid 2000, no. 32. For the male statue from the Macellum (Antalya Museum, inv. 10.23.72), see Mansel 1975, 87-88; İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, no. 230; Fittschen 1984, no. 230; Rumscheid 2000, no. 33.

which is not repeated on the other side. That the surface plasticity is more powerful in the right half of the face must have resulted from the position of the head on its statue. The side turned towards the viewer (Fig. 5) was treated with greater care. Overall, the flesh is soft and polished.

The hair is full and tousled. Thick “S”- and comma-shaped locks fall low onto the forehead with a parting immediately to the right of the center. It should be added that none are undercut. The thicker locks of the layers above are parted at an oblique line more to the right and form an irregularly whirling pattern. In the front, all locks are differentiated with a wide drill bit. Small bridges are left in some of the drill channels. Also noteworthy are the round holes made with the drill at numerous places, some deeper than the others. To articulate internal strands of hair, the sculptor cut shallow grooves in the voluminous locks. On the temples, the hair is brushed away from the face, covering half of the ears. The locks on the sides lack detailed execution. The short and wavy beard is full and plastically rendered, although the drilling is more superficial compared to the hair. The moustache, on the other hand, is thin and neat with a conspicuous gap in the middle. In short, the rougher surfaces of the hairy parts create a contrast of varying degrees as opposed to the polished softness of the skin.

A veil covers the back of the head and the neck support. This part of the head is summarily carved. At the top, rough tool marks are visible.

On the tousled hair and the veil, is a thick and slightly rounded crown with seven small adjoining busts attached to its front. Apparently the details on the busts are not merely lost due to wear but were unscrupulously rendered in the first place. From the right end of the crown to the left, the busts show the following traits:

1. Female. Clothed. Mantle pulled over the head. Full face (Fig. 10).
2. Male. Paludamentum attached with a fibula on right shoulder. Head missing. Traces on neck may indicate beard.
3. Missing.
4. Male. Paludamentum attached with a fibula on right shoulder. Head missing.
5. Male. Cuirassed. Edge of paludamentum draped over left shoulder (Fig. 11).
6. Male. Paludamentum attached with a fibula on right shoulder. Head missing.
7. Female. Clothed. Head missing.

Literary sources and archaeological data bear testimony to the fact that priests and priestesses involved in diverse cults wore special costumes and crowns or wreaths on festive occasions throughout antiquity⁴. Among the priestly *insignia*, crowns adorned with small busts⁵ compose a fairly compact group evidently confined to Asia

⁴ Turcan 1992, 37-38, 41, 51, 55, 111, 115, 164-165, 169, 181, 238-239; Rumscheid 2000, 8-11; Smith – Lenaghan 2008, 14, 75-76, 92 and nos. 7, 17, 21, 39.

⁵ İnán – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, 38-47; Meischner 1981, 165; Price 1984, 170-171. In a recent study on crowns and wreaths as attributes of status in the Roman Empire, Jutta Rumscheid observes that the busts on crowns can represent either various divinities or the emperor and the members of his dynasty. She maintains that the crown with busts does not necessarily indicate that the person wearing it functions as a priest or priestess but as an *ag-onothetes* or *stephanephoros* etc. who is responsible for organizing and financing games. According to Rumscheid, the fact that an individual could bear both priestly and magisterial duties led scholars to the misconception that this type of crown was confined to priesthood; see, Rumscheid 2000, 9-11, 36-39, 49-51, 109-110. However, the archaeological and epigraphic data from Perge do not validate this proposal.

Minor⁶. When used in the cults of divinities, the busts on the crown represented the divinity in question and his/her *paredroi*. Priests and priestesses of the imperial cult, on the other hand, had crowns that carried the busts of the emperor and the imperial dynasty. The busts described above are void of any divine attributes; instead, the paludamentums on the men and especially the cuirass and paludamentum on no. 5 clearly imply imperial character (Fig. 11). In consequence, it is possible to connect the head with the statue of an imperial priest, which would be the second in Perge after the one excavated at the west gallery of the Macellum⁷.

As mentioned above, the recent find comes to notice with its skilful workmanship. The bone structure, the flesh that stretches over projections and sinks over depressions, and the skin that is very smooth except for the line under the right eye are sensitively modeled. Contrasting the rough texture of the beard and hair against the softness of the skin, a feature observed with the Perge head, is designated by scholars as a crucial idiom of Antonine portraiture⁸. Within this framework, the head from Perge approximates Marcus Aurelius's portraits⁹ in facial features –particularly the eyes, nose, and mouth–, although the hair departs from them both in the shape of the locks and in its overall arrangement. Thick “S”- and comma-shaped locks making a whirling pattern above the forehead appear in the late Hadrianic and early Antonine times¹⁰. The early portraits of Marcus Aurelius dated to that particular era provide supporting evidence in this respect. Marcus as a teenager in the Capitoline Galleria 28 type and as a young prince in the Uffizi – Toulouse type both have curly hair, with a whirl of locks slightly off-center to the right above the forehead,¹¹ which coincides with the pattern on the Perge head regarding its position and general configuration. The difference arises from the shape of the components, curls as opposed to “S”- and comma-shaped locks. The slightly off-center parting on the fringe is attested in portraits from the time of Antoninus Pius also, though styled out of short curls and narrow drill channels¹². It has been repeatedly affirmed that the portraits from Perge –in fact, from Asia Minor in general– diverge from their contemporaries especially in their hairstyles and execution details¹³. The sculptors and workshops in this region could express their creativity freely, making use of their strong artistic traditions. This must be the case with the present portrait. Another trait that comes to notice on the Perge find is the shortness of the beard in contrast with that of the mature Marcus Aurelius. The parallels of this feature occur yet again in his immediate forerunners¹⁴. Despite the variations in the

⁶ İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, 38; Meischner 1981, 165; Rumscheid 2000, 7, 47. Also see, Smith – Lenaghan 2008, no. 7.

⁷ See *supra* n. 3.

⁸ See e.g., Kleiner 1992, 269-277; Kreilinger 2003, 110; Smith – Lenaghan 2008, 22-23 nos. 26, 28, 30.

⁹ Wegner 1939, 33-47; Fittschen – Zanker 1985, nos. 75, 78-82; Kleiner 1992, 270-272; Schröder 1993, no. 70; Kreilinger 2003, 104, 108. Also see, İnan – Rosenbaum 1966, nos. 44, 45, 232.

¹⁰ İnan – Rosenbaum 1966, no. 111; İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, no. 260. Also see, Rumscheid 2000, nos. 6-7, 70.

¹¹ Fittschen 1999, 16, 28; Kreilinger 2003, 107.

¹² Wegner 1939, 24-25; Fittschen 1977, nos. 26-27; İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, no. 53; Kleiner 1992, 268-269; Schröder 1993, nos. 58-59; Kreilinger 2003, 97, 100.

¹³ See e.g., İnan 1965, 6; İnan – Rosenbaum 1966, 16-17; Meischner 1981, 166; Fittschen 1999, 78; Riccardi 2000; Smith – Lenaghan 2008, no. 28.

¹⁴ Wegner 1939, 16; Wegner 1956, 7-73; Fittschen 1977, nos. 26-27; Kreilinger 2003, 91, 95-97, 100. Also see, Fittschen 1999, 29-31 ve B32, B33, B35, B37 (Marcus Aurelius as the crown prince); Oppen 2008; Smith – Lenaghan 2008, no. 25.

hair and beard, the impact of the physiognomic iconography and psychological expression that discriminate Marcus Aurelius's portraits can be appreciated clearly on the Perge head. On account of the deep incisions and drilling in the eyes,¹⁵ the portrait will be assigned to the end of Marcus Aurelius's or to the beginning of Commodus's reign, ca. A.D. 180. With this dating in mind, the busts adorning the crown may be linked hypothetically with Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Faustina Maior and Faustina Minor¹⁶.

The female head (Antalya Museum, inv. 2005.81A), which was retrieved from 0.29 m south of the male head, is made of medium-grained white marble. The present height of the find is 0.275 m. It is broken diagonally from the top to the right ear (Figs. 12-14). A fragment that comprises the right temple has been joined to the head, but the upper part is still missing. The eyebrows, nose, lips, and chin are battered.

The head that portrays a woman in her late forties or early fifties is slightly turned to its right. The face is round with full cheeks. The surviving facial features include a high forehead, arched eyebrows, and large eyes. The eyes slant downwards and are almost sagging (Fig. 15). This inclination is stronger in the right eye. The partially closed upper lids are sharply defined with a drill channel above. The irises are deeply incised. The pupils glancing upward are made from double drill holes. There is a small bridge between the holes in the right pupil. The tear-ducts also show drilling, which is more emphatic in the left eye. The careful modeling of the left eye compared with the right should be related to the position of the head on its statue, a case also observed with the male head above¹⁷. The nose is broken off, but the surviving traces indicate that it was quite fleshy. The nasolabial lines, the pouches at the corners of the slightly smiling mouth, and the double chin are realistically rendered. The surface is smoothly finished, but the polish is not preserved.

The gently wavy hair is parted in the center and combed back over the ears, leaving only the earlobes free. Apparently it is fastened in a bun at the nape. Shallow drill channels are used to differentiate the hair strands. The bun and the neck support are covered by a veil, similar to that on the preceding find. The sculptor neglected detailed workmanship at the top and back of the head and left crude tool marks (Fig. 16).

Over the hair and veil is a thick and rounded crown with five small busts attached to its front at regular intervals. The severely damaged busts show the following arrangement, from the right end of the crown to the left:

1. Male. Mantle (paludamentum ?) covering shoulders and chest. Head missing.
2. Male. Mantle (paludamentum ?) covering shoulders and chest. Head missing.
3. Missing.
4. Female. Clothed. Head missing.
5. Female. Clothed. Head missing.

¹⁵ İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, 315; Fittschen 1982, 64 n. 58; Smith – Lenaghan 2008, 21-23 nos. 26-28, 30; Waelkens 2008. Cf. Fittschen 1999, 18 and n. 135; Kreilinger 2003, 96, 108.

¹⁶ On the dynasty, see Kienast 1990, 134-151.

¹⁷ It should also be added, however, that asymmetrical features in the eyes are identified as a hallmark of Antonine portraiture; see Fittschen 1982, 62 and n. 52. Also see, Smith – Lenaghan 2008, no. 15.

If the mantle on the male busts is in fact a paludamentum, then the crown can be associated with the imperial cult. Since it is not possible to identify securely either the divine or imperial nature of the busts at this point, the secondary evidence offered by the priestly crowns on the other finds from Perge may be taken into consideration. Indirectly all three can testify to imperial character for the crown on the new female portrait.

The female portrait, recognizably inferior in execution to the male, has her hair similar to the style worn by Faustina Minor in her portraits of the seventh type, which was created in A.D. 161¹⁸. But the hair on the Perge head is composed of larger and gentler waves. Concerning the empress's seventh type, the fact that the hair on some portraits shows shallower drill holes –as also paralleled on the Perge find– than others is viewed as resulting from the individual styles of diverse workshops rather than date¹⁹. Furthermore the head from Perge draws close to Faustina Minor's seventh type due to the shape of the face, brows, and eyes too. Out of the nine portrait types of Faustina Minor, the seventh type appears to have won the greatest popularity. Compared with the rest, it is not only represented by more numerous examples but is also repeated over a longer period of time, including posthumous versions –i.e. after A.D. 175; especially a group of *capite velato* portraits²⁰. In conjunction with this, the eye markings help anchor the female portrait from Perge at ca. A.D. 180²¹. Based on this dating, it could be surmised that the busts surmounting the crown represent Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Faustina Maior, and Faustina Minor²².

With the recent discovery, the portraits of prominent Pergaeans wearing priestly crowns reach a total of four, lending the third place to Perge after Ephesos and Aphrodisias among the cities of Asia Minor. The excavations in the western portico of the piazza on the north-south colonnaded street have also yielded statue and inscription fragments, some of which may be connected to the two new heads. It is highly probable that the inscription fragments, to be published elsewhere, will contribute to a secure identification of the subjects depicted in the portraits. In spite of the evidence pointing to disparate hands on the two portrait heads, the common date of ca. A.D. 180, the proximity of the findspots, the comparability in scales and positions, as well as the consistency between the *insignia* imply that their statues were originally displayed together –perhaps in the piazza on the colonnaded street or in a civic building nearby.

¹⁸ Fittschen 1982, 55-59 pls. 127-34; Kleiner 1992, 280. Also see, Wegner 1939, 54-55; İnan – Rosenbaum 1966, nos. 46, 47 (Fittschen 1982, 64 n. 58 maintains that this find from Perge is a private portrait dating from the Hadrianic times), 287; İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, nos. 134, 311.

¹⁹ Fittschen 1982, 58. Cf. Fittschen – Zanker 1983, nos. 104-116.

²⁰ Fittschen 1982, 57.

²¹ İnan – Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, 315; Fittschen 1982, 64 n. 58; Rumscheid 2000, no. 62; Smith – Lenaghan 2008, 21-23 nos. 26-28, 30; Waelkens 2008. Also see, Fittschen 1999, 18 and n. 135; Kreiling 2003, 96, 108.

²² See *supra* n. 16.

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Öz

Perge'den Büstler Tacı Taşıyan İki Yeni Portre Baş

2005 yılında Perge'nin ana arterlerinden kuzey-güney doğrultulu Sütunlu Cadde'den biri erkek, diğeri kadın olmak üzere iki portre baş açığa çıkarılmıştır. Eserlerin buluntu yeri, Sütunlu Cadde'nin genişleyerek meydan görünümü aldığı kesimde, batıdaki ön galerinin kuzey girişi yakınına rastlamaktadır.

Erkek başı (Antalya Müzesi, env. 2005.82A) uzunca yüz, alçak alın, güçlü kaş kemeri, iri gözler, düşük gözkapakları, kemerli burun ve dolgun dudaklara sahiptir. Alında, göz altlarında ve yanaklardaki çöküntüler ustalıklı biçimlendirilmiştir. Gözlerin ve ağzın yanı sıra, gür saçlarda ve kısa sakalda matkap kullanılmıştır. Ten perdahlanmıştır. Başın arkası, ense desteğini de içerisine alacak şekilde bir örtüyle kaplanmış ve yedi büst içeren bir taçla süslenmiştir. Büstlerdeki emperyal ikonografi, portrenin bir imparator kültü başrahibini betimlediğine işaret etmektedir.

Ten ile saç ve sakal dokuları arasındaki karşıtlığa dayanılarak Antoninuslar dönemi ile ilişkilendirilen baş, saç modelinde atölye/sanatçı geleneğinden kaynaklanan farklılıklar gösterir. Yüz kesiti, fizyonomi öğeleri ve yoğun ruh hali ise, Marcus Aurelius portrelerinin etkisini yansıtmaktadır. Eser, sıralanan benzerliklerin ve göz işçiliğinin yardımıyla Marcus Aurelius döneminin sonuna – Commodus döneminin başına, İ.S. 180 civarına tarihlenmelidir.

Kadın başı (Antalya Müzesi, env. 2005.81A) yuvarlak yüzü, yüksek alnı, yay biçimli kaşları, iri ve sarkık gözleriyle dikkat çeker. Gözlere ait bazı ayrıntılar matkapla çalışılmıştır. Burun ile ağız çevresindeki torbalanma ve dolgun gerdan gerçekçilikle biçimlendirilmiştir. Dalgalı saçlar ortadan ayrılıp ensede toplanmış, başın arkası örtülmüştür. Saçların ve örtünün üzerinden geçen taçta beş büst sıralanır. Büstlerin tanrısal ya da emperyal niteliği ayırt edilememekle birlikte, Perge'de bulunmuş benzerleri dolayısıyla ikinci olasılık üzerinde durulabilir.

Kadın başı, önceki eserle eş düzeyde bir ustalığın ürünü değildir. Saç modeli, Faustina Minor'un İ.S. 161 yılında ortaya çıkan portre tipine yaklaşıp. Yüzün, kaşların ve gözlerin biçiminde de Perge buluntusuna benzerlikler içeren bu tip, posthumus eserlerde tekrarlanmıştır. Bu durum ve göz işçiliği, Perge portresini İ.S. 180 civarına atfeder.

İki yeni buluntuyla, büstler tacı taşıyan önemli Pergelilere ait portrelerin sayısı dörde yükselmekte, Perge böylelikle Ephesos ve Aphrodisias'ın hemen ardından gelmektedir. Eserlerin İ.S. 180 civarına tarihlenmesi, buluntu yerlerinin yakınlığı, boyut, duruş ve *insignia* yönünden uyumları, orijinalde bir arada –belki Sütunlu Cadde'nin genişlemesiyle oluşan meydana veya çevredeki kamusal bir yapı ya da alanda– konumlandıklarına işaret sayılabilir.

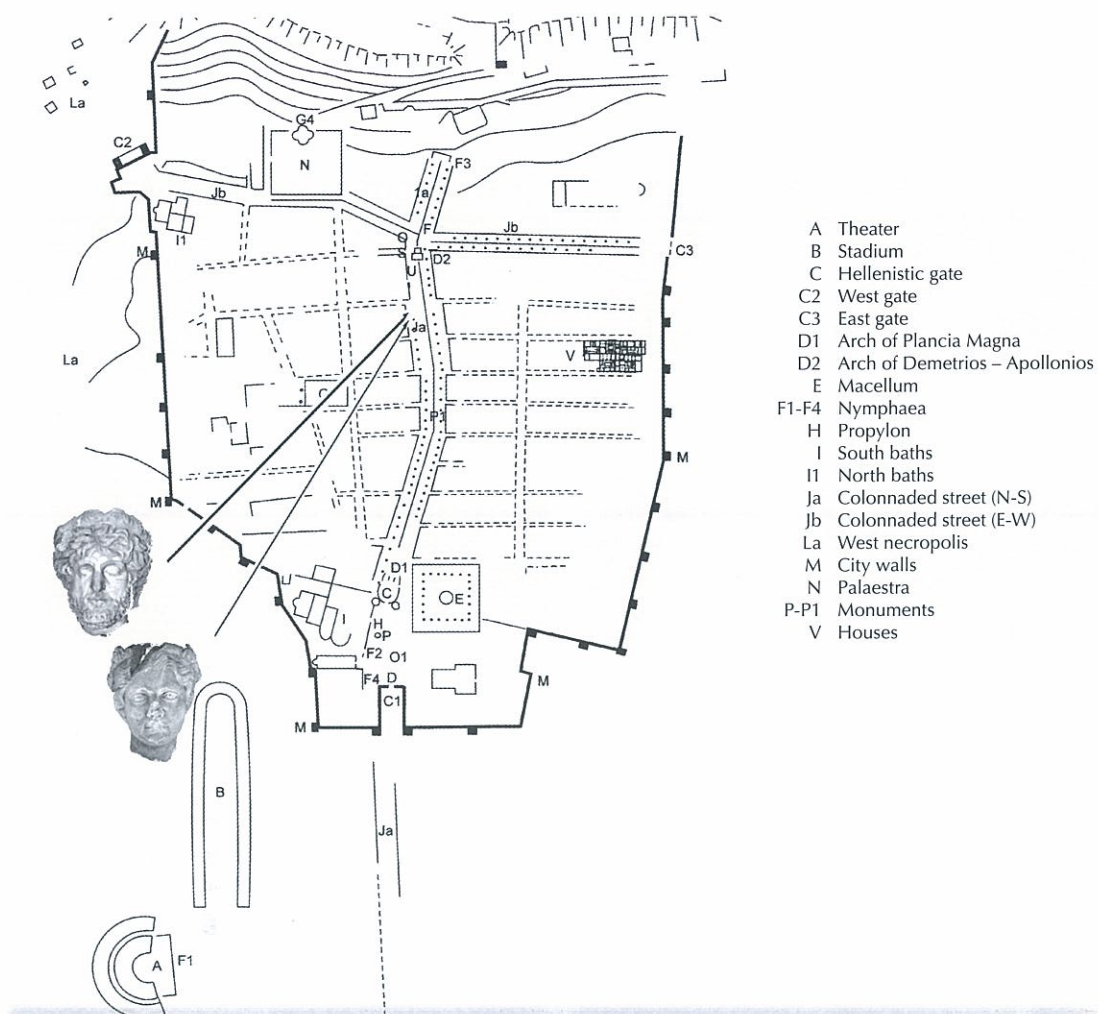


Fig. 1 Perge, Lower City. The findspots of the two portrait heads with priestly crowns (Archive, Perge Excavations).

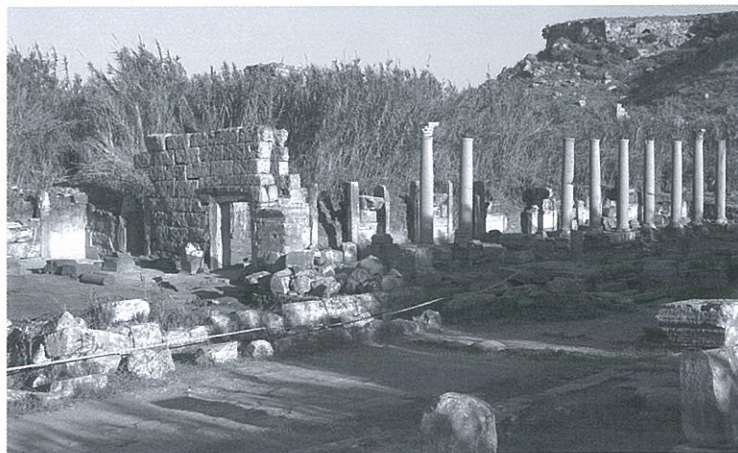
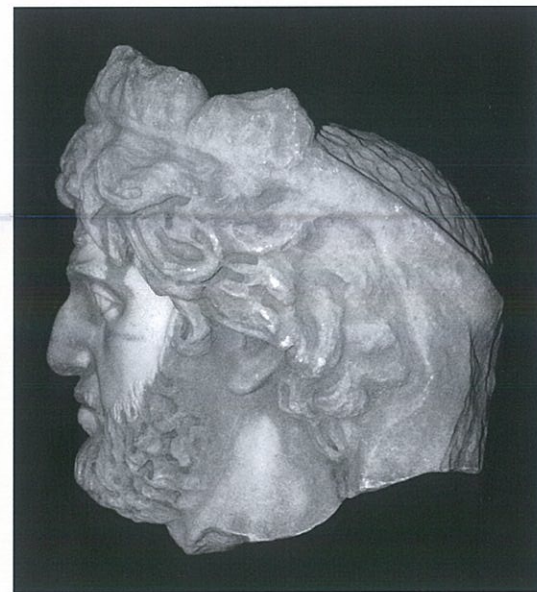
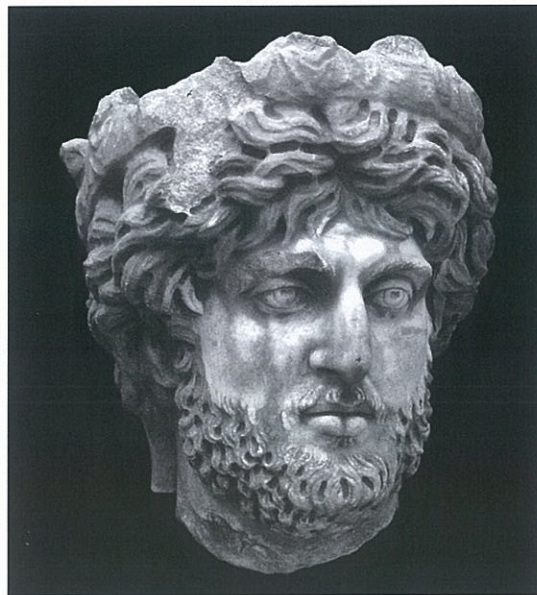
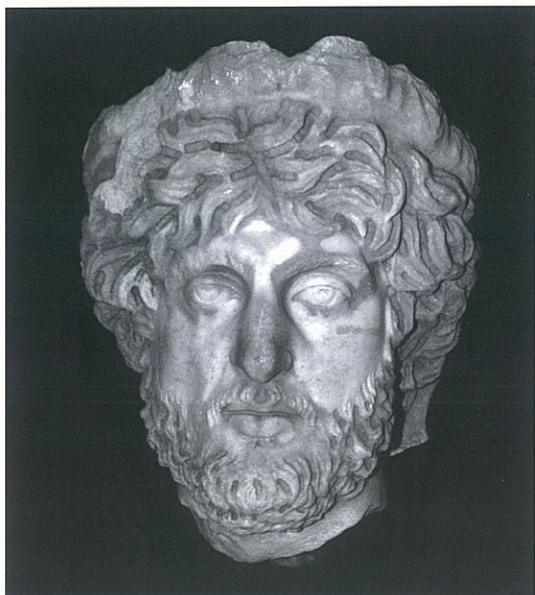


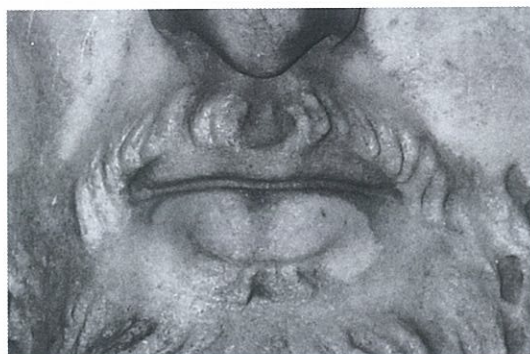
Fig. 2 Perge, the north end of the west portico inside the piazza from the southeast (Archive, Perge Excavations).



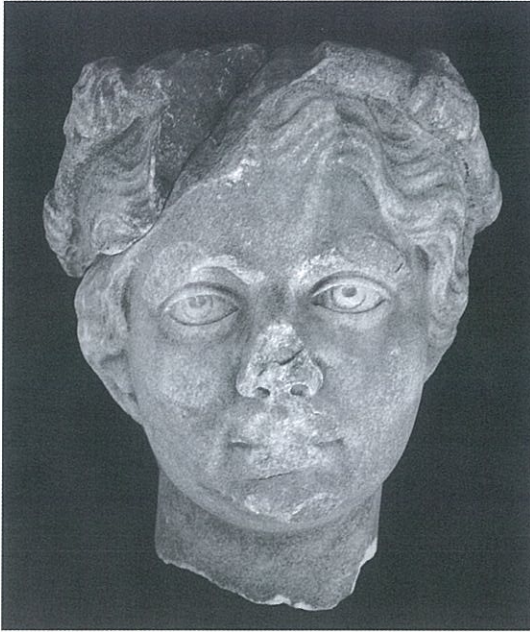
Fig. 3
 Perge, the recovery of the male portrait during the 2005 excavations (Archive, Perge Excavations).



Figs. 4-7 Male portrait from Perge, Antalya Museum, inv. 2005.82A (Archive, Perge Excavations).



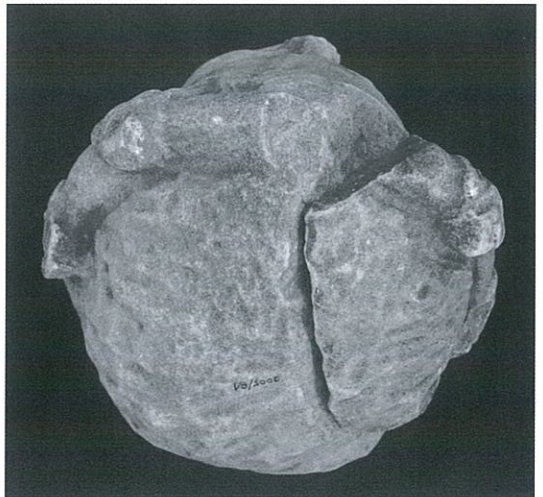
Figs. 8-11 Male portrait from Perge, details (Archive, Perge Excavations).



Figs. 12-13 Female portrait from Perge, Antalya Museum, inv. 2005.81A (Archive, Perge Excavations).



Fig. 14 Female portrait from Perge, Antalya Museum, inv. 2005.81A (Archive, Perge Excavations).



Figs. 15-16 Female portrait from Perge, details (Archive, Perge Excavations).