



BYZANTINE ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE FROM RHODIUS VALLEY IN THE HELLESPONTUS*

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ABSTRACT

One of the common features of the Byzantine coastal cities and settlements in the Hellespont is that they had a natural port on the coast of the strait. These ports were generally located at the mouth of the valleys formed by the streams that reached the Hellespont. One of the important valleys is the Rhodius Valley on the Anatolian coast of the middle section of the Strait. Rhodius is nourished by the brooks coming from Kirazlıdağ, Aladağ and Kayalıdağ. Its length is approximately 40 km and it is the largest valley in the middle section of the strait. It reaches the plain via the front parts of Atik Hisar. There is a Byzantine castle in the southwest of the place where it reaches the plain. This castle shows the importance of the valley in the Byzantine period. It has the characteristics of a valley with a narrow floor. By the alluvia it had carried, it formed the coastal plain over which today's Çanakkale developed. In the section where Rhodius-Sarıçay poured into the sea was the ancient city of Abydos which we know - from the resources of the period - had been a large Byzantine polis. The architectural ruins of the city of Abydos failed to reach the present day. However, during our surveys, we documented numerous stone works of the Byzantine period in the lower section of the valley. These works have the quality of contributing to the understanding of the qualities of the city of Abydos and of the other Byzantine settlements in the lower section of the valley and to the settlement of localization problems. In this study, the stone works with architectural and liturgical uses that we detected in the lower section of the Rhodius Valley will be evaluated together with their finding locations.

Key Words: Hellespontus, Rhodius, Abydos, Saraycık, Çanakkale.

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HELLESPONTUS'DAKİ RHODIUS VADİSİNDE BİZANS MİMARİ PLASTİKLERİ

ÖZET

Çanakkale Boğazı'ndaki Bizans kıyı şehirlerinin ortak özelliği boğaz kıyısında bir limana sahip olmalarıdır. Bu limanların yeri genelde Çanakkale Boğazı'na ulaşan akarsuların oluşturduğu vadilerin ağzıdır. Vadilerin ise Bizans döneminde yoğun iskan edildiği anlaşılmaktadır. Bizans döneminde yoğun iskan edilmiş vadilerden biri orta Boğaz bölümünün Anadolu kıyısındaki Rhodius (Sarıçay) Vadisidir. Rhodius, Kirazlıdağ, Aladağ ve Kayalıdağ'dan gelen derelerle beslenir. Uzunluğu yaklaşık 40 km.'dir ve boğazın orta bölümündeki en büyük vadidir. Atik Hisar önlerinden ovaya çıkar. Ovaya çıktığı yerin güneybatısında bir Bizans kalesi yer alır. Bu kale vadinin Bizans dönemindeki önemini gösterir. Dar tabanlı bir vadi karakterine sahiptir. Taşdığı alüvyonlarla bugünkü Çanakkale'nin üzerinde geliştiği kıyı ovasını oluşturmuştur. Rhodius'un boğaza döküldüğü bölümde, dönem kaynaklarından büyük bir Bizans şehri olduğunu bildiğimiz Abydos yer alır. Abydos antik şehrine ait mimari veriler günümüze ulaşmamıştır. Ancak yüzey araştırmalarımızda vadinin aşağı bölümünde Bizans dönemine ait çok sayıda taş eser belgeledik. Bu eserler Abydos şehri ve vadinin aşağı bölümündeki diğer Bizans yerleşimlerinin niteliklerinin anlaşılmasına ve lokalizasyon sorunlarının çözülmesine katkı sağlayabilecek niteliktedir. Bu eserler arasında sütun ve paye başlıkları ile çifte sütuncelerin yanı sıra liturjik işlevle kullanılan ambon balkon levhasına ait bir parça ile tempon ve levhaları bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Rhodius vadisinin aşağı bölümünde tespit ettiğimiz mimari ve liturjik işleve sahip bu taş eserler, buluntu konumları ile birlikte değerlendirilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Abydos, Sarıçay, Rhodius, Hellespontus, Mimari plastik

One of the common features of the Byzantine coastal cities and settlements in the Hellespont is that they had a natural port on the coast of the strait. These ports were generally located at the mouth of the valleys formed by the streams that reached the Hellespont. We conduct surveys on these valleys to detect and evaluate findings of the Byzantine period. The data we obtained from these surveys indicate that the valleys had been densely settled in the Byzantine period. One of the reasons for this density is the feature of the valleys that at the same time determined the direction of transportation. One of the important valleys that determined the direction of transportation is the Rhodius Valley on the Anatolian coast of the middle section of the Strait.

Rhodius is nourished by the brooks coming from Kirazlıdağ, Aladağ and Kayalıdağ. Its length is approximately 40 km and it is the largest valley in the middle section of the strait (Fig. 1). It reaches the plain via the front parts of Atikhisar. There is a Byzantine castle in the southwest of the place where it reaches the plain (Türker 2001). This castle shows the importance of the valley in the Byzantine period. It has the characteristics of a valley with a narrow floor. By the alluvia it had carried, it formed the coastal plain over which today's Çanakkale developed. In the section where Rhodius poured into the sea was the ancient city of Abydos which we know - from the

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resources of the period – had been a large Byzantine polis. The architectural ruins of the city of Abydos failed to reach the present day. However, during our surveys, we documented numerous architectural sculpture of the Byzantine period in the lower section of the valley. These works have the quality of contributing to the understanding of the qualities of the city of Abydos and of the other Byzantine settlements in the lower section of the valley and to the settlement of localization problems. In this study, the architectural sculptures we detected in the lower section of the Rhodius Valley will be evaluated together with their finding locations.

The most significant Byzantine city in the middle section of the strait is Abydos (Türker 2010). Abydos is one of these bishopric centers that were subordinated to Kyzikos as of the 5th century. A seal belonging to Abydos bishop and priest Theodosios archaeologically proves that the settlement was a bishopric. It is understood that Abydos was turned into a metropolis in 1084. The seals belonging to Abydos metropolitans Michael and John Proedros in this period are found. The name of Abydos metropolitan had been used in written documents until the twelfth century.

Many researchers point out the west shores of the Nara cape's southern mountainous region as the location of Abydos in the strait. It is suggested that its Acropolis is around Maltepe. A few finds representing Byzantine Period are scattered scarcely around Narababa Hill and west and south-west ridges of Maltepe. A significant Byzantine find is the customs stone extracted from a nearby area of the Ottoman Castle on the cape. In this region a few glazed and unglazed Byzantine ceramics can be found. The traces of a mortar stone structure with a circular plan on Narababa indicate the presence of a tower there. Today the dense foresting activities in these areas complicate the following of the tracks on the surface. The travelers having visited the region also stated that they had seen the wall of the castle. Gouffier mentions in his study the ruins in Abydos and illustrates them. Kiepert's map shows as the location of Abydos the neighborhood around Saral Hill and Zinar Ağılı in the south-west of Dalyan Cape. Karacaören village is located in the southeast of this region (Türker 2010).

Işıklar Village

Byzantine stone works were detected at the cemetery and in the village. The works at the cemetery area include a slab of an ambo balcony, double columns, numerous column shaft fragments and a baluster. On the slab that is understood to have been used in an ambo balcony is a Latin cross situated on a sphere in relief technique (Fig. 2). This motif was widely used on different groups of works in the 5th to 6th centuries (Möllers 1994, fig. 1-2; Ötüken 1996, taf.2, 20.4). A slab of an ambo podium with an identical composition was detected both in Eceabat, one of the settlements in Çanakkale, and Çanakkale Archaeology Museum (Türker 2006, 613-625). Slabs of ambo podiums with an identical composition are also seen on the ambos of Ravenna San Apollinaire in Nuovo (Deichmann 1969, Abb.88) and San Apollinaire in Classe (Laurent 1899, 206-279) churches, on an ambo brought to Berlin from Iznik (Ötüken 1996, taf.16.3), at Suleyman Pasa Mosque in Iznik (Bauer and Klein 2004, Abb.12), in Iznik Museum (Barsanti 2004, fig.84a), in Büyükdere, İstanbul (Fıratlı 1952, Abb.34), and in Crete and Rhodes (Jakobs 1987). This composition are also seen a reused baluster on the Nara Castle (Fig. 3). Through a comparison with its parallels, the work we examined can be dated to the 6th century.

A broken double column we detected at the cemetery is understood to have belonged to the early Byzantine period too (Scranton 1957, pl.23; Niewöhner 2007, fig. 244). There is a soffit motif on the front face and on one of the lateral faces of a baluster in this area. The short edges are smooth in one of the soffits, whereas they are concave in the other one. The upper section of the baluster is smooth and there is no trace of the column base. Depending on this, it might be stated that it was used in a low templon. From the slab cavities, it is determined that it was a baluster used at the corner of the templon.

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We detected an impost in the garden of a house in the village (Fig. 4). On one of the short edges of the marble impost is a cross pattern in relief technique. Plainly engraved imposts of a similar type are widely seen among the finds of the early Byzantine period (Türker 2009; Tezcan 1989, fig.447; Niewöhner 2007, nu.179-182; Wright 1997, 183).

We determined a slab used as a reused material at the laundry for common use in the village (Fig. 5). The composition on this marble slab consists of equilateral quadrangles situated in a rectangle. The motif inside the equilateral quadrangle at the center is invisible as this section was abraded. The ends of the equilateral quadrangles also end smoothly. On the slabs with a rhomboid motif that is understood to have been considerably widely used on the slabs in the early Byzantine period, a palmette or a stylized plant is generally included at the ends of the equilateral quadrangles and either a plant or an animal motif is included at the center. Slabs with this composition are available in Tirilye (Mango and Ševčenko 1973, 238), İznik (Ötüken 1996, Taf.14.1), and İstanbul (Guiglia 2005, 178). This slab, used as a reused material in the Işıklar village, can also be dated to the 6th century, upon its comparison with its parallels (Eyice 1956, 71; Ulbert 1969, fig.1e; Scranton 1957, pl.19.1).

Sarıcaeli Village:

During our studies in Sarıcaeli, we detected stone works in the village and at the cemetery. Stone works of the Byzantine period, which had been both used as reused materials on the walls of the buildings and dispersed in the village, were documented in the village. The works used as reused materials include column shafts, balusters and double columns. The column shafts used as reused materials on the wall are unfluted and of an upward-narrowing type and their lower sections have a single annulet. Besides the reused items, column capitals and numerous column shafts are also found in the village.

One of the baluster is on the garden wall of the primary school in the village. Only one lateral face of the baluster is visible. On this face is a slab cavity with a width of 8 cm. The second baluster is on the wall of the fountain belonging to the village mosque. There is a composition of vertically arranged palmette motifs on the front face of the baluster (Fig. 6). A baluster with a similar arrangement despite the difference in the types of their palmette motifs was documented in Mustafa Kemal Paşa (Ötüken 1996, taf.5.2). The style of the palmettes on the baluster in the Sarıcaeli village bears a close resemblance to the palmettes on the mullion in the Diaconicon at the southern church of Fenari İsa (Mango and Hawkins 1964, fig.35). The work we examined bears a resemblance to these 10th century mullions both in terms of its motif style and measurements and can be considered in the same period.

The double column used on the wall of a house was made of gray veined white marble and is in good condition (Fig. 7). In the lower section, the base was formed with a frame. The capital was separated from the shaft by means of a frame. The capital contains a motif that extends up to the abacus and is identified as a stylized acanthus leaf (Auzepy 2007, fig.15,16; Duval and Marin and Metzger 1994, pl.VIII, III.a.2-4, a.15). Some 14 specimens of this type were detected in Bursa (Ötüken 1996) and it is thought that they might have been produced at the workshops of the capital city. An identical type of column among the works in Şile is also dated to the early Byzantine period (Peschlow 2002). Its resemblance to these works indicates that the double column we examined might also be dated to the same period. When the measurements of the work are evaluated, it is understood that it was prepared in order to be used at a window.

The impost column capital preserved in front of the coffee house in the village was hollowed out during the second use (Fig. 8). Each face of the capital was bordered by a frame. The same arrangement is repeated on the opposite faces. Two of them contain an arrangement

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consisting of a palmette in the middle and half palmettes connected with them in the lower section on both sides. On the other two faces is a cross inside a locket in the middle. There is a half palmette on each of the two sides of the cross and they are connected with the locket, where the crosses are present, by means of two branches, each extending from the lower section. A capital with an identical composition with this capital is included in the finds of Umurbey. The capitals bear a close resemblance in terms of their measurements, decoration motifs and technical and stylistic features and can be dated to the middle Byzantine Period.

A double column we documented in the village is in good condition except for small fractures on the capital. The base was formed with two frames in the lower section. The capital was also separated from the shaft by means of two frames. A decoration of acanthus leaves was included on the capital.

The works at the cemetery include a large number of column shaft fragments and 6 specimens of double columns. Two different types of column shafts were detected. The first one was of an unfluted shaft type, whereas the second one was of a spiral shaft type. Parallels of the column shafts with a spiral shaft form can be detected among the works dated to the early Byzantine period (Mango ve Sevchenko 1973, fig.104; Foss 1979, fig.38; Kitzinger 1946, fig.166; Filipova 2006, fig.112, 115, 119; Duval and Marin and Metzger 1994, pl.XIX, V.b.6; V.b.11). The double columns were documented in broken condition and as being partially embedded in soil because they had been used with a second function as tombstones like the column shafts. According to their parallels, they can be dated to the early Byzantine period. However, it is hard to make any detection about their places of use as they were found in broken condition.

Saraycık Village,

Byzantine stone works were documented at the village square, at the cemetery and in the garden of the village mosque in Saraycık. Columns form a significant group among these works. The lower and upper sections of the upward-narrowing type of columns with an unfluted shaft have annulets. A Latin cross relief situated on a sphere is found on the shaft of a column in the garden of the mosque.

In addition, two column capitals brought to Çanakkale Archaeology Museum from the Saraycık village were documented during our studies in the museum. One of them is of the type of Ionic capitals. The volutes were quite schematically engraved. There is an egg pattern composition on the echinus sections of the capital. On the pulvinus are acanthus leaves horizontally stacked on both sides of the balteus. This pulvinus composition is frequently seen on the Ionic impost type of column capitals widely used in Byzantium in the 5th to 6th centuries. The way of engraving on the Ionic volutes resembles that of the capital dated to the 5th century at the northern church of Alikı (Herrmann and Barbin 1993; Sodini and Herrmann 1977). This capital can be evaluated among the 5th century specimens in terms of its decoration style and composition.

The second capital, however, is of the type of basket capitals (Fig. 9). The basket weave covers the whole surface in the lower section of the capital. The upper section separated from the basket-weave lower section by means of a frame is broken and the arrangement on this section is not entirely visible. However, it is understood that there are leaved cross patterns situated on a rectangular unit on the vertical axes in the upper section. There are fractures in the sections remaining between these patterns and the upper section of the capital is incomplete. Therefore, it cannot be seen what kind of an arrangement was included in the areas remaining between the crosses. It is known that two capitals of a similar type are found in the Museum of Hagia Sophia in İstanbul (Kähler 1967, fig.18; Kitzinger 1946, 69; Ebersolt 1921, 30). On these capitals, the lower section has a basket-weave decoration, whereas the upper section contains an eagle figure at the

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corners as well as a cross pattern inside a locket in the sections remaining between the eagles (Fletcher 1905, fig.89E; Kautzsch 1936, taf.32.522). An identical type of capital is located in İznik (Kesoglu 1972-73, 290); Antalya (Alikı 1984, pl.17c); Cairo (Kautzsch 1936, taf.32.523), Bargala (Aleksova and Mango 1971, fig.37-38); Thessaloniki (Panayotidi, 1970-72, pl.34); Rhodes (Orlandos, 1952, fig. 267); St. Marco in Venedik (Deichmann 1981, 1-7). The capital in St. Clemente in Rome is of an identical type, but this time monogram was used instead of the cross pattern (Lethaby 1971, fig.22; Farioli 1982, fig.93). It might be thought that an eagle figure might have been included in the original version on each of the broken sections on the capital we examined. These capitals are dated to the late 5th century- the early 6th century (Lethaby and Swainson 2004, 157; Kautzsch 1936, 182-210;).

Numerous stone works of the Byzantine period were detected on the surface and as partially embedded in soil in the area known as the 'Tekke locality'. Some two fragments, which were found in dispersed condition, belonging to an Ionic impost type of column capital among the documented works were detected and joined during our study. However, one-fourth of it is still missing. The capital was regularly hollowed out during the second use. There are two mutually situated palmettes on the echinus. The composition on the pulvinus cannot be fully understood as the surface was abraded. On the front face of the impost is a cross pattern at the center. One of the lateral faces is preserved and there is no decoration on this section. The capital bears a resemblance to the capitals dated to the second half of the 6th century in terms of its form characteristics.

Some 5 impost pier capitals were documented among the works. They are undecorated capitals with regularly formed faces. They bear a resemblance to the piers with a cross pattern dated to the early Byzantine period in terms of form and measurements. On the side of one of the fragments is a flute with a width of 5.5 cm that was probably formed during the second use. This flute indicates that the impost might have been used as a reused material to function as a base. This fluting was probably needed to place the slabs of the balustrade between the supports (Peschlow 2006, fig.10).

One of the impost pier capitals is distinguished from the other capitals by its measurements. This impost block has a smooth profile and its faces are regularly engraved but undecorated. In terms of its dimensions, it might be compared with the three imposts brought to Çanakkale Archaeology Museum from Umurbey. Nevertheless, these imposts have a concave cavetto. Imposts of a similar type were also used in the narthex of Hagia Eirene in Istanbul and are dated to the era of Justinian (Strube 1973, Abb.39). The impost in Saraycik can also be considered in the same period.

The double columns we detected in this area are generally of an upward-narrowing type. Their broken status except for a column does not allow us to detect their places of use. However, the measurements of the column that is in good condition show that it was used at a window.

A baluster we documented in the area could be completed by joining its three fragments found in dispersed condition. The front face of the baluster has a soffit decoration. The short edges of the soffit are concave. The rear face and one of the lateral faces are regularly engraved but undecorated. On the other lateral face is a slab cavity with a width of 4 cm. It is comprehended that the baluster was prepared to be used in a high templon. The other two balusters with a soffit decoration have survived in broken and incomplete conditions. The width and thickness measurements of each of the three balusters are the same. Depending on this, it might be thought that they might have been used in the same templon.

A pier among the works differs from these specimens in dimension and decoration (Fig. 10). The width of this pier is 24 cm, while its thickness is 42 cm. Its height is measured as 117 cm.

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A pier with an identical decoration with this pier was detected in Tahtalı (Auzepy 2007, 341-42). According to its decoration motif, the work might be dated to the early Byzantine period.

Numerous door and window jamb fragments with different profiles are found in this area. These works were probably items used as reused materials in a building and dispersed in the area after the collapse of the building. It is understood that Inci or Incir Baba Tekke was found here in the 18th century (Hasluck 1914/1915 – 1915/1916, 95). In his manuscript in 1881, Lolling spoke of an inscription in the garden of this tekke (Lolling 1881, 227-228). Chevalier gives information about the location and residents of the tekke. It is learned that in the early 20th century, the tekke was in ruins but still being visited (Le Chevalier, 1800, 14). The stone works we documented in Saraycik are probably the works that were used as reused materials in Inci Baba Tekke. Reused Byzantine stone works are also found on the walls of a 20th century building with walls preserved up to a certain level that is visible in this area today. The number and quality of the works indicate a religious institution in this area or in its close vicinity.

The fragments we detected in the lower section of the Rhodius Valley form two groups indicating architectural and liturgical uses (Türker 2010). The architectural elements include column shafts and capitals, pier capitals, double columns and door jamb fragments. The works of liturgical use include a slab of an ambo balcony, a baluster and fragments of slabs.

Of the architectural elements, fragments of column shafts were detected in a large number in the study area. They are unfluted columns and basically two types of shaft forms are observed. The first one is an upward-narrowing shaft form, while the other one is a plain shaft form. One or more annulets were used on the lower and/or upper sections in both types. There is a cross pattern on a sphere in one of the columns.

Two different types of double columns were documented. In the first one, the shaft narrows upwards. In the second one, however, the width of the column does not narrow upwards. Despite the base that is generally emphasized with two thick frames, the capital is not engraved in the double columns included in the first group. The column ends with a plain frame at the top. In the second group, however, it is detected that a monolithic capital was engraved. Two different compositions were applied on the capital. One of these compositions is a simple arrangement consisting of motifs identified as stylized acanthus leaves, while the other one is an arrangement formed with leaves of the type of acanthi used on the Corinthian capitals in the early Byzantine period. The specimens of both types were documented among the finds of the early Byzantine period in Istanbul and İznik. The measurements of the completely preserved specimens indicate that they might have been produced to be used at windows.

The column capitals are the specimens of Ionic, Ionic impost, basket and impost types of column capitals. Of them, the Ionic capital bears a resemblance to the 5th century specimens. The bird-basket capital, the parallels of which were documented in İstanbul, Rome and Cairo, can be dated to the late 5th century-the early 6th century before the era of Justinian, according to its parallels. The Ionic impost type of capital is broken; however, it is dated to the second half of the 6th century according to its form and decoration style. The impost column capital represents the middle Byzantine period.

The types of works used with a liturgical function include balusters, a slab and a fragment of the slab of an ambo balcony. The balusters have a soffit decoration except for a specimen. A baluster used as a reused material contains an arrangement consisting of vertically situated palmettes. The type of this palmette motif is of the type of palmettes seen on the 10th century ornaments at the Mosque of Fenari İsa. However, the decoration style appears as if it were an application of the same motif by local masters. Both the slab with a rhomboid decoration and the

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broken fragment belonging to the slab of an ambo balcony that we documented in the Işıklar village display the characteristic decoration compositions of the early Byzantine period.

The works we examined indicate the existence of religious institutions of the early and middle Byzantine periods in the region. The small number of works dated to the middle Byzantine Period might be related to the use of early Byzantine materials as reused materials in the newly constructed buildings. If it is considered that there are limited archeological data to support the importance of Rhodius Valley the works we detected can contribute significantly to the studies to be conducted on the reconstruction of the early and middle Byzantine periods of the region.

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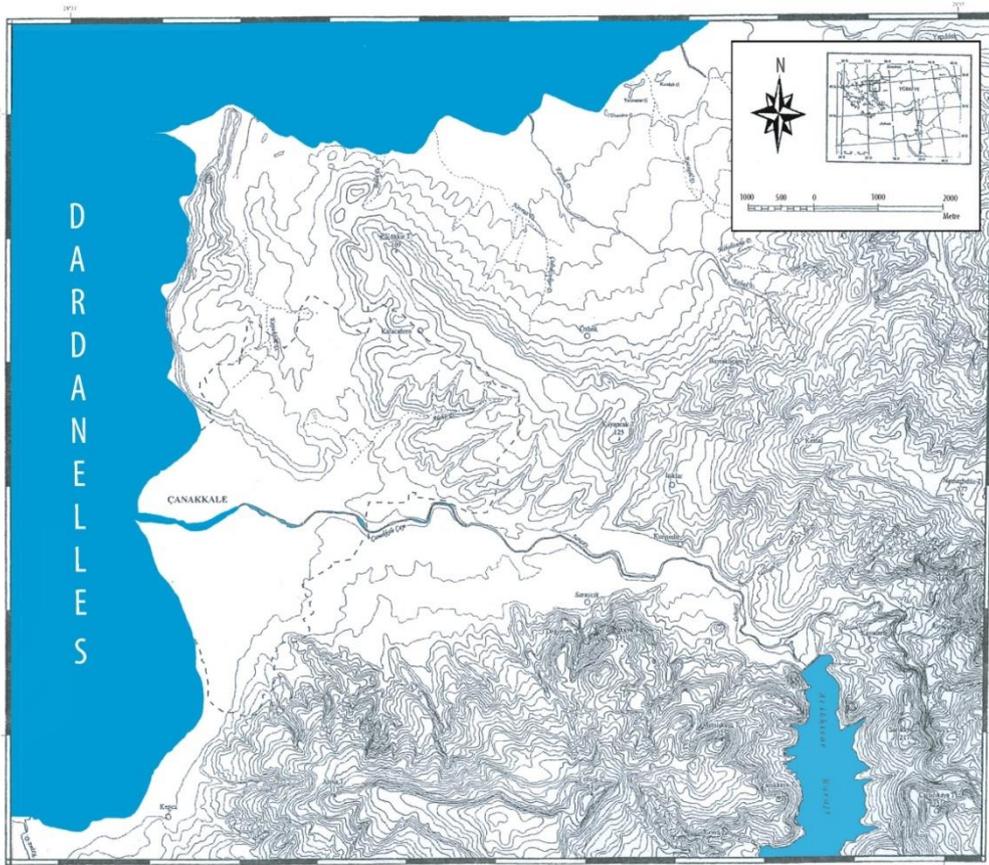


Figure 1 Rhodius Valley (Drawing by T. Türker)



Figure 2



Figure 3

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Figure 4

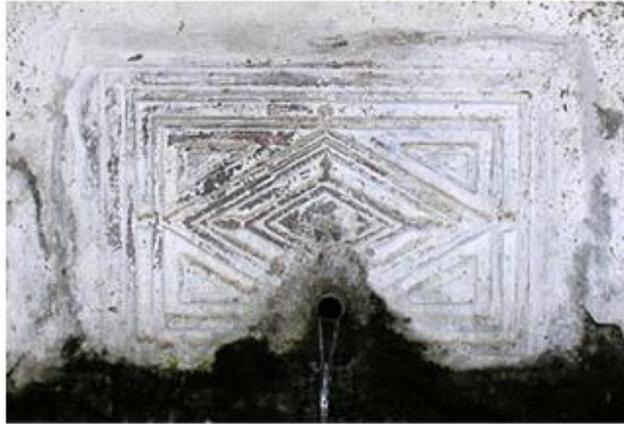


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

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Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

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