

Stadia of Anatolia

EX ORIENTE LUX

Introduction

The stadia are known to be the architectural spaces for gymnastic competitions and festivities of hellenic character from the first Olympic Games, 776 B.C. onwards, regularly celebrated every four years until, the last one which was prohibited by Emperor Theodosius 1st, in 394 A.D. as they were pagan traditions against the ethics of the new religion "Christianity".

As a terminology "Stadion" is used to define the measure of length of 600 feet, the name of the running competition of that distance, and also is the name of the building itself, where the competitions were held.

As a metrology: although the foot and the stadion units were different in various geographical-cultural areas and time, the ratio of 1/6 of the competition ground was shaped as 1 plethron/1 stadion, with the measures of 30x180 m, 32x192 m. (Egyptian, Persian-Babylonian, Roman, Olympian foot ...)

As orientation, they were running eastwards, – ex Oriente Lux – and the long axe was generally East-West oriented at the beginning until the Roman era. During the Roman Empire the North-South direction was preferred wherever it was possible. (Plate: 2)

Cultural roots of competitions/games/celebrations in Anatolia

Anatolia, the melting pot of the civilisations and the bridge between east and west throughout the ages, was strongly influenced in antiquity by surrounding cultures. These influences on athletic competitions, spaces for public performances, ritualistic ceremonies and celebrations can be summarised as follows:

Egypt: Tradition of Sacred-Procession Road to the Temple, rituals, operational guidelines and established standards for competitions, either ethical or spatial organisation, which contributed cultural ethic and great deal to establish the standards of Panhellen competition areas in Greece.

Mesopotamia: The famous procession-sacred road leading to Ishtar Gate at Babylon, where acrobatic spectacles, musical, ritualistic performances were held, and swimming competitions on river Tigris.

Troy: The celebrations; the cult of heroes and ancestors, competition tradition at funeral ceremonies.

Hittit – Assyria: The competitions in wrestling –which is still going on traditionally in Anatolia –, hunting, heavy weight lifting, horse and chariot riding, with the well-known horses of Haranu and Cappadocia.

Persia: The concept and creation of "Paradeisos" –huge gardens by the Satrapes for hunting, sport and pleasure purposes, competitions on archery, Djirrit–javelot throwing on the horseback-, etc...

Greece: The panhellenic gymnastic, musical and theatre competitions –Agonistica–, the united concept of education and the sport –Kalokagathia– and creating the types of buildings suitable to these functions as Stadia, Theater, Gymnasium, Palaestra, Academia, Stoa, etc...

Phrygia – Lydia: The strong tradition of open air celebrations ceremonies of "Black Stone" of the Cult of "KYBELE", the musical and dance performances as competitions and festivities, originating the concept "LUDI" which means "GAME" to the Roman world are significant contributions.

Ourartou: It was a tradition "sine qua non" of presenting the famous bronze caldrons of Ourartou, to the winners of the competitions in Olympia and elsewhere in Antiquity...

Rome: The philosophy and the forms of Latin way of life, – modus vivendi a la romana – the concept of "GAMES" and "CELEBRATIONS" replaced professionally in Anatolia the idealistic system of "Competitions", from 133 B.C. until 394 A.D. The buildings were transformed, reshaped and built accordingly to the necessity of space required for Roman performances of Ludi Latini, Ludi Circenses, ludi plebei, venationes, munera, gladiators, wild beasts fights and naumachea, etc... Greek type of games/competitions were also practised as "Ludi Graeci". The existing Stadion buildings were hosting these events with the Theaters.

Architectural Evolution and Typology of Anatolia Stadia

There is no architectural stone historic evidence of stadion in Anatolia before the 2nd century B.C. Probably the competitions were held at the open spaces outside the city walls and temporary wooden seats were used by the people. The prosperous life under Pergamon Kingdom and PAX ROMANA of Roman Empire, helped a great deal in the evolution and typology of the existing 32 Stadia of Anatolia. The most concentrated regions are: Ionia, Caria, Phrygia-Lydia, Lycia and Pamphylia. (Plate 1)

A – HELLENISTIC STADIA OF ANATOLIA: (Plate 3)

The stadia at Miletus, Priene, Didyma, Kadyanda and Arycanda are dated to Hellenistic Period, 2nd – 1st centuries, B.C. The PROCESSION ROAD tradition is still alive, even at the reduced scale at KADYANDA with the temple nearby, and the strong religious cult of Apollo is reflected in the construction of a TEMPLE – STADION at DIDYMA, in the 1st century B.C., to the south of the temple.

PERGAMON: Gymnasium – Stadion, 147 B.C.

Although it was one of the most important and prosperous cities of the antique world, there is no evidence of a Hellenistic Stadion in Pergamon, but the most significant monumental GYMNASION – STADION of all times, on these terraces for ado-

lescents, young and adults- as were also the competitions – is to be found at the Middle City of Pergamon, and is dated to the reign of Evmenos 2nd at 147 B.C.

There are insignificant remains of a Roman stadium near river Selinus at the lower city. Pergamon was one of the two cities during the Roman Empire, in Provincia Asia, which had an “Amphitheatre” building with CYZIKOS.

MILETUS: 150 B.C.

The eldest hellenistic stadion of Anatolia is at Miletus. It goes back to 150 B.C. and is a very important example of building which has survived the centuries, avoiding big alterations and maintaining the authenticity of its hellenistic historic evidence. The city of Miletus is on plain ground, near the seashore, and is designed according to the Hippodamos Plan, in grid system. The stadion is one of the important centers in the middle of the city. The building is generated by two elevated retaining walls, which helps the formation of natural two-sided slopes to the arena and the parados walls at the entrance. One of the most significant architectural features is the Hellenistic entrance door to the west. The East Door is an addition of 3rd century A.D. The building is east – west oriented, the starting sills – Hysplex – is to be found “in situ”. The parapet wall height is 70 cm from the arena level. The arena is rectangular with a curvature of 1/100. The building can easily be restored, by deviating the road passing through, and using the material in situ for anastylosis.

PRIENE: 130 B.C.

Designed on a hillside the city of Priene in Hippodamos plan. The stadion is at the south of the city next to the lower Gymnasium and on a terrace retained at the south by city walls. Priene is one of the best examples of the Hippodamos Grid-planned architectural cities on the hillside. The building still maintains all its Hellenistic design elements in situ. Worth to be mentioned: The Xystus – doric Stoa – and Parados to the north, the entrance gate to the gymnasium, starting sills – Hysplexes – of Hellenistic and Roman periods, one entire Keile, with stairs up and seats, rectangular arena on east – west direction. The parapet wall is 70 cm high from the arena level. The building requires only the maintenance works and presentation for rehabilitation. The anastylosis of a part of Xystus can be realised without difficulty. The retaining city walls of the arena terrace are in good condition.

ARYCANDA: 1st century B.C.

Reflects the type of Priene, but in a composition with the theatre. The arena is half on terrace wall, rectangular in shape and east – west oriented. The seats are on the slope in one side, looking south.

ROMAN STADIA OF ANATOLIA: (30 B.C. – 394 A.D.)

a) Late Hellenistic – Early Roman:

Although the Kingdom of Pergamon became a part of the Roman World in 133 B.C. by heritage, the Provincia of Asia could only be established after the Mithridatic Wars and the First games of Roman tradition started in Ephesos Stadium in 80 B.C.

The existing buildings of the Metropolitan cities like Ephesos, Magnesia and Maendrum which have Hellenistic infrastructure with sitting places on the slopes (one sided or two) were enlarged with additional parts in the Roman Period.

EPHESOS:

The stadium, lying south of the vedius gymnasium, was the scene of all kinds of ceremonies, athletic contest, chariot races, and gladiatorial fights. Seats for the spectators on the south side were constructed on the slopes of Mt. PION, i.e. present – day PANAYIRDA, those on the north were built over a vaulted substructure. Since the stone seats were used to build the city wall around AYASOLUK. In the early Christian era, the stadium was reduced to ruins. Only the west side of the stadium has so far been excavated. Judging by the pillar bases lying on the ground, entry to the stadium was gained through an arcade. Recovered inscriptions reveal that the stadium was erected in the reign of Emperor Nero (A.D. 54 – 68) probably on the same layout as the previous one, on east – west main axis, and on the slopes in one part at the south. Among the pillar bases near the entrance were found poorly – fashioned marble vases representing sport trophies, and plaques decorated with designs of olive branches and rabbits, all these date from a period when alterations were carried out, in the 3rd or 4th century A.D. Gladiatorial fights and the baiting of animals for amusement took place at the eastern end of the stadium.

The prosperity and the wealth coming from mainly the period of Pax Romana, under Roman Empire, developed three types of Roman Theatres in Anatolia with the main axe at North-South direction generally. (Plates 2, 4)

a) The Stadion – Amphitheatron, mentioned by Strabo at the beginnings of 1st century A.D. for NYSSA, was fitting very well the necessities of Roman life under Nero, and Flavius Dynasty Vespasianus, Titus, Domitianus and double sphendonea type was dominant in APHRODISIAS and LAODICEA.

APHRODISIAS: The stadion is one of the impressive public building and certainly one of the best preserved of its kind, anywhere. It is located in the north-west quarter of the city, the arena was 262 m long and 59 m wide and could accommodate about 30.000 spectators. The construction systems and approaches of these stadia still reflect the Greek tradition of using natural and artificial slopes and retaining walls system. Vomitorias and loggias and upper galleries were added in Roman way. Circus and amphitheatres were not seen very often in ANATOLIA. Probably the Stadion generated and reshaped buildings were also used for these purposes. There are only two amphitheatres in Anatolia: One in Pergamon, the other at CYZICOS.

NYSSA: The city was probably founded in the first half of the 3rd century B.C. Strabo, who was born 63 B.C. in Amasia and who died after A.D. 21, studied in this city. He gives a short but clear description of the city. The gymnasium mentioned by Strabo near the stadion was certainly not as large as this one. The present-day ruins belong to a building with a palaestra, erected in late Roman times. The stadion structure is 44m wide and 165m long. It may be the “amphitheatre” quoted by Strabo. Strabo, in using that word, doubtless meant a “Stadion Amphitheatroa” which was curved at both ends (double sphendonea).



Plate I: Stadia of Anatolia in Antiquity (After Akurgal, Ilhan, Saltuk)

In Alphabetical Order

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|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. AIZANOI | 12. LABRANDA | 23. RHODIAPOLIS |
| 2. ANAZARBOS | 13. LAODICEIA | 24. SAITTAI |
| 3. APHRODISIAS | 14. LETOON | 25. SARDEIS |
| 4. ARYCANDA | 15. MAGNESIA | 26. SELEUCEIA |
| 5. ASPENDOS | 16. MILETOS | 27. SELGE |
| 6. BLAUNDOS | 17. MYNDOS | 28. SILLYON |
| 7. DIDYMA | 18. NYSA | 29. SMYRNA |
| 8. EPHEOS | 19. PERGAMON | 30. THEANGELA |
| 9. KADYANDA | 20. PERGE | 31. TLOS |
| 10. KEDRAI | 21. PITANE | 32. TRALLEIS |
| 11. KIBYRA | 22. PRIENE | |

By Regions

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. AIOLIS: Pitane | V. LYDIA: Blaundos, Nysa, Saittai, Sardeis, Tralleis |
| II. IONIA: Didyma, Ephesos, Magnesia, Miletos, Priene, Smyrna | VI. LYCIA: Arycanda, Kadianda, Letoon, Rodiapolis, Tlos |
| III. CARIA: Aphrodisias, Kedrai, Labranda, Myndos, Theangela | VII. MYSIA: Pergamon |
| IV. CILICIA: Anazarbos, Seleuceia | VIII. PAMPHYLIA: Aspendos, Sillyon, Perge |
| | IX. PHYRIGIA: Aizanoi, Kibyra, Laodicea |
| | X. PISIDIA: Selge |

b) Single –Sphendonea- ROMAN STADIA: In the 2nd century A.D. a cultural revival and return to Greek way of life, traditions and forms started with the Emperor HADRIANUS (117-138) and single sphendonea type of Greco-Roman period came in fashion. The most perfect example of Roman Stadia in ANATOLIA is at PERGE. Pamphyllian Stadia of SELGE, ASPENDOS, SILLYUM are on the same type and with typical Roman construction systems: with stone vaulted substructures. STADIA have generally followed the change of concepts of the theatres and their architectural elements. The parapet wall between the arena and the first row of seats which was almost insignificant in Hellenistic Stadia, is elevated to 1.50 m generally.

PERGE: It's one of the best preserved stadiums of antiquity, being second only to that of Aphrodisias. Probably erected in the 2nd century A.D. the well-preserved rows of seats supported by barrel vaulted construction had a seating capacity of 12.000 spectators.

The entrance of the arena (34x234 m) lay at the southern end, but the monumental gateway, only a few fragments of which have been discovered, is no longer in existence.

Below the seats of the east side, thirty chambers are to be found, opening to the outside and possessing communication doors. The spectators passed through every third chamber, which led to the arena. The remaining twenty rooms served as shops. On the walls are inscribed the shopkeepers' names or their trades.

c) STADIA-THEATRE UNITED COMPLEXES: As spectacle buildings, theatres and stadia buildings were planned outside the city walls near to each other, wherever it was possible. There are strong historic evidences that this concept flourished in the late Hellenistic period. In the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. one finds the big stadion-theatre united complexes at Aizanoi, Sardeis and Pessinus; the famous cities of Phrygia and Lydia where there are very old traditions of open air celebrations and competitions (Ludi) in cultural continuity. The addition of gates, like at Ephesus, Miletus are also typical of the 3rd century A.D.

In the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. modifications at the existing stadia were made to fit the necessity of space for gladiators and wild beasts fight and for horse and chariot races in two ways:

1. By eliminating two or three rows of seats from each side; which permits to have an enlarged arena and elevated seats (up to 2.5 m) all along the building.
2. By limiting the arena in one part with the sphendonea, and creating a new, reduced arena of 45 m long, in elliptical form.

CONSERVATION PARAMETERS:

1. As the stadia were continuously in use, throughout the centuries they contain historic evidences of different periods and cultures which must be respected. Any temptation of hypothetical reconstruction in the sense of "unity of style or period" must be avoided. Conservation work is essential.
2. As it has been in the case of antique theatres, criteria should be established for their preservation, conservation, maintenance, temporary adaptive use in a delicate equilibrium. The

ethic code of the Venice Charter. The recommendations: on archaeological excavations guidelines on management of archaeological sites, ICOMOS Charters on Cultural Tourism and Cultural Itineraries, and finally the monitoring system as it is in the case of World Cultural Heritage should dominate the planning phase of a "Masterplan for the Rehabilitation of Stadia in Anatolia" for long term.

CONCLUDING PROPOSALS:

1. JOINT PROPOSALS OF GREECE – TURKEY FOR STADIA:

- a) World Heritage Committee as "Series of Buildings in Both Countries".
- b) Cultural itineraries and organisation of local-regional festivities aiming at cultural tourism, and preparedness for the Olympic Games 2004 in Athens, and candidate Turkey for 2012.

1. Sensibilisation campaign for the cultural meaning of stadia in Turkey, aiming for the rehabilitation and conservation of pilot projects: Priene, Miletus and Arycanda and Perge, Aizanoi and Aphrodisias stadia.

- a) By preparing a travelling exhibition on the existing and proposed states of conservation of the above mentioned Stadia of Anatolia and also accompanied by the work of conservation and adaptive-use approaches realised in Olympia, Epidauros, Delphoi as comparison.
- b) By organisation of a Scientific Seminar/Congress on "Conservation and Rehabilitation of Antique Stadia in Mediterranean Area", with the support of EUROPEAN UNION, UNESCO, ICOMOS and WTO, WOC.

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A- HELLAS	LENGTH*	WIDTH	FORM	ORIENTATION
Olympia	191,27 m	31,60	R	
Epidauros	181,30	29,50	R	
Athen	184,96	30,26	S.S	
Delphoi	178,35	28,50	S.S	
Isthmia	178,60	28,60	S.S	
B- ANATOLIA				
STADIA				
Didyma	191,00 ?	13,50	R?	
Miletus	191,40	29,50	R	
Priene	191,40	20,00	R	
Iassus	177,00	20,00	R	
Aegae	190,00 ?	20,00	R	
Ephesos	191,40	30,00	S.S	
Perge	191,50	34,00	S.S	
Aspendos	176,70 ?	28,50	S.S	
Selge	177,00?	20,00	S.S	
Silyum	177,00?	20,00	S.S	
Magnesia ad Meandrum	185,90	31,00	S.S	
Heracleia ad Salbacus	190,00	30,50?	S.S	
STADIA - AMPHITEATER				
Aphrodisias	191,50	39,00	D.S	
Laodicea ad Lycus	192,30	34,00	D.S	
Nysa an Meandrum	192,00	44,00	D.S	
STADIA - HIPPODROMOS				
Sardis	191-240 ?	41,00	S.S?	
Aizanai	191-240 ?	46,40	S.S?	
Pessinus	191-240 ?	41,00	S.S?	

R = Rectangle S.S = Single Sphendonea D.S = Double Sphendonea * = Sphendonea's are excluded

Plate 2: Antique Stadia Arena Characteristics

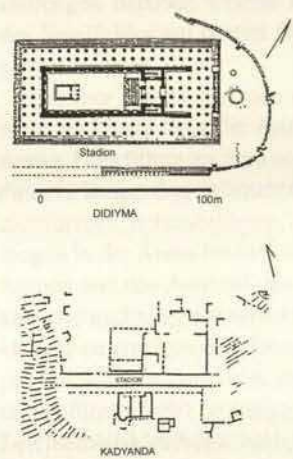
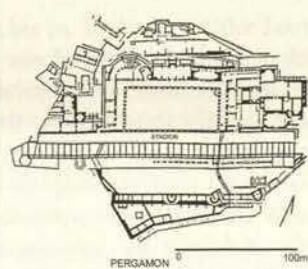
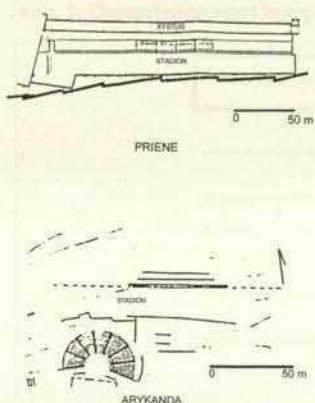
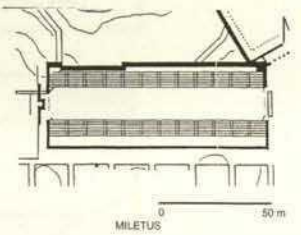
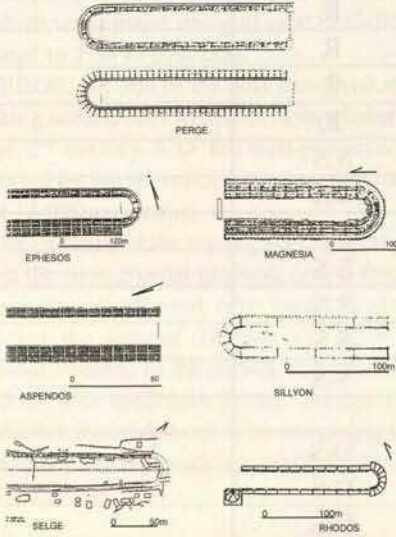
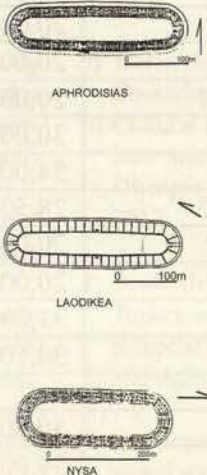
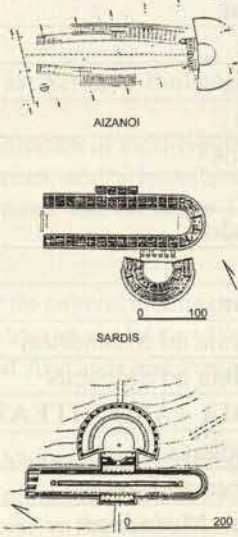
Tempel Stadion	Gymnasion Stadion	Stadion With Xystus, Paradromos and Rectangular Arena	Stadion With Two Artificial Slopes and Rectangular Arena
			
<p>0 100m</p> <p>DIDYMA</p> <p>KADYANDA</p>	<p>PERGAMON</p> <p>0 100m</p>	<p>PRIENE</p> <p>0 50 m</p> <p>ARYKANDA</p> <p>0 50 m</p>	<p>MILETUS</p> <p>0 50 m</p>
<p>Ceremony Road With Tempel</p>	<p>Keller Stadion</p>	<p>Seats In One Side On The Slope</p>	<p>With two gates of Hellenistic and Late Roman Periods</p>

Plate 3: Stadia of Anatolia – Architectural Evolution and Typology – Hellenistic Stadia (2nd B.C – 30 B.C.)

Single Sphendonea	Double Sphendonea	Theatre Stadion - Complexes
 <p>PERGE</p> <p>EPHESOS</p> <p>MAGNESIA</p> <p>ASPENDOS</p> <p>SELGE</p> <p>RHODOS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stadia</p>	 <p>APHRODISIAS</p> <p>LAODIKEA</p> <p>NYSA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Stadion - Amphitheatre</p>	 <p>AIZANOI</p> <p>SARDIS</p> <p>PESSINUS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hippodrom</p>

NOTE 1: There are only two Roman Amphitheatre in Anatolia: At Cyzicos and Pergamon

NOTE 2: The main type of Hippodrom for horse and chariot races which was used in middle ages is at BYZANTION – from Septimus Severus Period.

NOTE 3: Transformation was done in 3rd and 4th centuries for gladiations and wild beasts fights, at arena level.

Plate 4: Roman Stadia (30 B.C. – 394 A.D.)