



## Summary :

The Gymnasium of Termessus, the so-called "Lower Gymnasium", by contrast to the Gymnasium at the Agora of the city, belongs to the type of baths-gymnasiums found at the east provinces of the Roman Empire. The exact date of its foundation remains unknown. However, a number of 2<sup>nd</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD inscriptions have survived.

## Date

2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD

## Geographical Location

Termessus, Pisidia

## 1. Location and Ground Plan of the Building

The monumental complex of the **Gymnasium** of **Termessus** stands at the northeast part of the city, to the north of the **Agora** and the **Theatre**. The ground plan reveals a large building with an emphasized longitudinal axis, measuring 91.10 x 35.30 m and with a SW orientation. Along the southwest side, behind the facade, there are nine successive and quite long (14.50 m) rectangular rooms. The next two oblong halls are parallel to each other (50.84 m long, and a width of 12.80 m for space B and 8 m for space C). Massive **pillars** supporting the vaulted ceiling rise at regular intervals along their long sides, while wide **niches** with arched crowns are formed between them. The successive rooms behind the facade were also roofed with **barrel vaults**. The spaces communicated through wide openings (doors). A large area (D), adjacent to the last southeast room and of almost the same width, though longer than the successive rectangular rooms, was added in the Roman years.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Masonry

The front of the building follows the **pseudo-isodomic** rectangular system of masonry and was made from limestone. Along the facade there are successive pillars, at intervals of approximately 2.50 m, with a richly decorated **cornice**. Niches and gates are formed between them at regular intervals. The niches are surrounded by semi-columns and have arched crowns. Access to the spaces of the Gymnasium was through wide gates. Shallow rectangular decorative niches opened above the cornice, at the tympana of the barrel vaults that roofed the halls of the Gymnasium. The axial arrangement observed at the front side corresponds to the layout of the rooms of only the south part of the building, including the three rooms of almost identical dimensions, while at the north part there is no correspondence between the arrangement of the front side and the separate rooms behind it.<sup>2</sup> The rest of the building's walls followed a less strict **opus quadratum system**, while some of them are a rather interesting and unusual example of masonry, where independent rows of opus quadratum alternate with **rubble masonry**. All walls were covered with **mortar**.<sup>3</sup>

## 3. Identification

The monument was safely identified with the gymnasium by G. Lanckoronski and his associate E. Petersen, thanks to the dedicative and honorary inscriptions found in the area of the building.<sup>4</sup> However, its architectural plan does not follow the usual type of the Greek gymnasium with **palaestra**, where the different spaces are arranged, whether neatly or not, around a central peristyle courtyard (e.g. palaestrae at Olympia and Delphi, Gymnasium of Delos, **Upper Gymnasium of Pergamon**).<sup>5</sup> In Termessus, the arrangement of the separate spaces, the vaulted roof of the rooms and the large space with the **hypocausts** at the southeast corner of the building classify the monument into the category of the baths-gymnasiums of Asia Minor – monuments combining the principles of the Greek gymnasium with the new needs of the Roman world for **thermae**. Unlike the thermae of the West, the baths-gymnasiums of Asia Minor do not conform to any strict rules of architectural design. They have a wide range of ground plans and are classified according



to the similarities noticed in the separate features of their architectural plans.<sup>6</sup> The plan of the Gymnasium of Termessus follows the same principle of composition as the [Thermae of the Harbour in Ephesus](#) and the complex of Bath-Gymnasium at the northeast corner of the Stadium of [Laodicea](#) in [Phrygia](#),<sup>7</sup> where the hot and cold rooms are arranged in two oblong parallel zones.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, in Termessus the hot rooms, with the [caldarium](#) at the centre, are arranged on an outer zone (A). The inner zone consists of the two large oblong rooms (B and C), where the [frigidarium](#) might have been. Such rooms, characterized by oblong shape and a vaulted roof supported by pillars, with rectangular niches form between them, are a common feature of all Roman thermae.<sup>9</sup>

#### 4. Decoration

Works of art, such as statues of gods and heroes, [Hermaic stelae](#) and paintings, usually adorned the different areas of the gymnasiums and thermae of the ancient world.<sup>10</sup> Statues of [gymnasiarchs](#) stood before the northeast wall of room C of the Gymnasium of Termessus, as evidenced by their inscribed bases preserved along the wall, while statues of notable citizens of the city possibly embellished the niches of the south facade.<sup>11</sup> An inscription embedded in the front wall of the Gymnasium reports a statue of the god [Eros](#), who, as Athenaeus testifies,<sup>12</sup> together with [Hermes](#) and [Heracles](#), were the three patron gods of the palaestra.

#### 5. Life in the Gymnasium

Although our knowledge of the organization and operation of the gymnasiums in Antiquity generally remains very restricted,<sup>13</sup> epigraphic evidence from the city of Termessus provides information about issues concerning life in the Gymnasium and the organisation of athletic games. The titles of [paidonomos](#) (supervisor of education), [ephebarchus](#), [gymnasiarch](#) as well as the institution of the [agonothetes](#) are evidenced, while some of the names of the Gymnasium's [gymnasiarchs](#) (superintendent of athletic training) and [ephebarchi](#) have been handed down. Furthermore, there are references to sport events intended for the young, such as wrestling, pankration, torch race, running, hoplite race, jumping and horse race.<sup>14</sup>

#### 6. Chronology

The exact date of the Gymnasium's foundation remains unknown. According to the masonry style, mainly of the front side, it should be dated to the Late Hellenistic or Early Imperial years.<sup>15</sup> In Roman years, the type of baths-gymnasiums was very popular, as reported by scholars, in the east provinces from the late 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD onward and mainly in the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.<sup>16</sup> In Termessus, a large number of inscriptions from the Gymnasium are dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD and the early 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD.<sup>17</sup> The date the monument was abandoned is still unidentified. It possibly followed the fate of Termessus, which thrived until the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD, while ancient testimonies and archaeological finds provide scant information about life in the city in later periods, before Termessus completely disappears from the written sources after the 5<sup>th</sup> c. AD.

#### 7. The So-called Gymnasium at the Agora

A dedicative inscription including the word "gymnasium" in plural form, possibly suggesting the existence of more than one gymnasium in the city of Termessus, was found embedded in the wall of the monument's facade.<sup>18</sup> According to this evidence, G. Lanckoronski identified the remains of a building in the area of the Agora, to the west of the Theatre and to the north of the [Odeum](#), with an earlier gymnasium. The building includes a central courtyard surrounded by stoas, with rooms behind them in an arrangement reminding of the already known palaestrae and gymnasiums of the Greek world.<sup>19</sup> Additional evidence for the identification of the building with a gymnasium is provided by the fact that dedicative inscriptions recording the names of athletes and winners as well as lists of names of adolescents were found in the area of the building and around it.<sup>20</sup>

#### 8. History of Research

The architectural plan of the Gymnasium complex of Termessus was first studied and plotted towards the late 19<sup>th</sup> c. by the first and



most important scholar of the culture of [Pisidia](#), G. Lanckoronski,<sup>21</sup> who, joined by G. Niemann and E. Petersen, recorded all the monuments of the city that were still visible and in impressively good condition. The area of the complex has never been excavated, as it happens with all the monuments of Termessus.

## 9. Actual State of Preservation

The Gymnasium complex is the first monumental building visitors meet on their way to the centre of the city through the uphill Royal street. The area is densely vegetated and rather inaccessible. However, the walls, which have survived up to a great height, are very impressive. It is worth seeing the very well preserved front side of the building with the niches, as it has survived up to a height more than 3 m, the intact central gate as well as the remains of the Roman bath at the southeast corner of the complex.

1. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), p. 60; Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), p. 273, where space D is identified with a reservoir.
2. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), p. 103.
3. Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), p. 258.
4. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), p. 60.
5. For the gymnasiums and palaestrae in Ancient Greece, see Delorme, J., *Gymnasion. Etude sur les monuments consacrés a l' éducation en Grèce* (BEFAR 196, Paris 1960), while for later bibliography, see Wacker, Ch., *Das Gymnasion in Olympia, Geschichte und Funktion* (Wurzburg 1996). For details about the meaning of the ancient terms "gymnasium" and "palaestra" and their difference, see Glass, S.L., *Palaistra and gymnasium in greek architecture* (Diss. University of Pennsylvania, Ann Arbor 1981), from p. 69 onward; as above, "The Greek gymnasium, some problems", in Raschke, W.J. (ed.), *The archaeology of the Olympics. The Olympics and other festivals in antiquity* (Madison 1988), pp. 155-173, esp. from p. 161 onward.
6. For this category of monuments, see Farrington, A., "Imperial Bath Buildings in South-West Asia Minor", in Macready, S. – Thompson, F.H. (ed.), *Roman Architecture in the Greek World* (London 1987), pp. 50- 59; Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), from p. 250 onward; Nielsen, I., *Thermae et Balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public Baths* (Aarhus 1990), from p. 105 onward; for the Gymnasium of Termessus, see n. 73.
7. Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), p. 273, fig. 258, p. 276, fig. 341.
8. Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), from p. 272 onward.
9. This type of room in Roman baths is reported in bibliography as ambulacrum, -a (or basilica thermarum for Western thermae). Oblong hall of the Roman thermae, with a usually vaulted roof, supported by pilasters arranged at regular intervals along the long walls. Rectangular niches are formed between the pilasters. Ambulacra could have served widely varying functions. Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), pp. 414, 415, n. 1, 487; Nielsen, I., *Thermae et Balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public Baths* (Aarhus 1990), p. 106.
10. Delorme, J., *Gymnasion. Etude sur les monuments consacrés a l' éducation en Grèce* (BEFAR 196, Paris 1960), pp. 362-373; Manderscheid, H., *Die Skulpturenausstattung der kaiserzeitlichen Thermenanlagen* (Berlin 1981); Ruckert, C., *Die Herme im öffentlichen und privaten Leben der Griechen* (Regensburg 1998), from p. 126 onward.
11. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), p. 60, inscriptions no. 3, 10, 11.
12. Ath., 13, 561d.
13. For the institution and the function of the gymnasium in the Greek world, see Nilsson, M., *Die hellenistische Schule* (München 1955) and the article Gautier, P., "Notes sur le rôle du gymnase dans les cités. hellénistiques", in Wörle, M. – Zanker, P. (ed.), *Standbild und Bürgerbild im Hellenismus. Kolloquium, München 24. bis 26. Juni 1993* (München 1995), pp. 1- 12. A comprehensive text, serving as an introduction to architecture and the function of the baths and the thermae of the ancient world, is Weber, M., *Antike Badekultur* (München 1996). All relevant bibliography is found in



Manderscheid, H., *Bibliographie zum römischen Badewesen* (München 1988).

14. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), from p. 33 onward, inscriptions no. 8, 9, 10, 11; Heberdey, R., "Gymnische und andere Agone in Termessus Pisidiae", in Buckler, W.H. – Calder, W.M. (ed.), *Anatolian Studies presented to Sir William Mitchell Ramsey* (Manchester 1923), pp. 195-206; Heberdey, R., *Termessischen Studien* (Wien – Leipzig 1929), pp. 39- 58; Iplikcioglu, B. – Celgin, G. – Vedat Celgin, A., *Epigraphische Forschungen in Termessos und seinem Territorium 1. Mit einem Beitrag zu den epichorischen Namen* (Wien 1991), pp. 11-14; Iplikcioglu, B. – Celgin, G. – Vedat Celgin, A., *Epigraphische Forschungen in Termessos und seinem Territorium 2. Mit einem Beitrag zu den epichorischen Namen* (Wien 1992), pp. 11-13; Iplikcioglu, B., "Epigraphische Forschungen im antiken Termessos und seinem Territorium", in Dobesch, G. – Rehrenbock, G. (ed.), *Die epigraphische und altertumskundliche Erforschung Kleinasiens. Hundert Jahre Kleinasiatische Kommission der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Akten des Symposiums Wien 23.- 25. Oktober 1990* (Wien 1993), pp. 255-263, esp. from p. 258 onward. For the Pisidian hero Solymos, in honour of whom athletic games were held in Termessus, see Kosmetatou, E., "The Hero Solymos on the coinage of Termessos Major", *Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau* 76 (1997), pp. 41-64, pl. 6-9.
15. See Rumscheid, F., *Untersuchungen zur Kleinasiatischen Bauornamentik des Hellenismus* (Mainz 1994), p. 140, n. 417 and p. 327, n. 357, where architectural components of the Gymnasium are dated to the Late Hellenistic or Early Imperial years.
16. Nielsen, I., *Thermae et Balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public Baths* (Aarhus 1990), from p. 105 onward; Yegül, F., *Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (New York 1992), p. 304.
17. Heberdey, R., *Termessischen Studien* (Wien – Leipzig 1929), pp. 39-58; Ablasoğlu H., "Yili Termessos Yuzey Arastirmalari", *Arastirma Sonuclari Toplantisi* 5:1 (1987), pp. 213-230; Iplikcioglu, B. – Celgin, G. – Vedat Celgin, A., *Epigraphische Forschungen in Termessos und seinem Territorium 2. Mit einem Beitrag zu den epichorischen Namen* (Wien 1992), pp. 11-13; Iplikcioglu, B., "Epigraphische Forschungen im antiken Termessos und seinem Territorium", in Dobesch, G. – Rehrenbock, G. (ed.), *Die epigraphische und altertumskundliche Erforschung Kleinasiens. Hundert Jahre Keinasiatische Kommission der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Akten des Symposiums Wien 23.- 25. Oktober 1990* (Wien 1993), pp. 255-263, esp. from p. 258 onward.
18. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), inscription no. 5.
19. For the gymnasia and palaestrae in Ancient Greece, see Delorme, J., *Gymnasion. Etude sur les monuments consacrés à l' éducation en Grèce* (BEFAR 196, Paris 1960), while for later bibliography, see Wacker, Ch., *Das Gymnasion in Olympia, Geschichte und Funktion* (Würzburg 1996). For details about the meaning of the ancient terms "gymnasium" and "palaestra" and their difference, see Glass, S.L., *Palaistra and gymnasium in greek architecture* (Diss. University of Pennsylvania, Ann Arbor 1981), from p. 69 onward; as above, "The Greek gymnasium, some problems", in Raschke, W.J. (ed.), *The archaeology of the Olympics. The Olympics and other festivals in antiquity* (Madison 1988), pp. 155-173, esp. from p. 161 onward.
20. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), p. 34, inscriptions no. 52, 53, 56, 58, 65- 72. The ruins of the entire west stoa and parts of the north and south stoas, which surrounded a central courtyard, have survived, as it happens with the remains of a temple-like building in the courtyard.
21. Lanckoronski, K., *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens* (Wien 1892), pp. 41-42, 60-61, 103-104, pl. XV, XVI.

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	<b>Yegül F.</b> , <i>Baths and Bathing in Classical Antiquity</i> , New York 1992
	<b>Delorme J.</b> , <i>Gymnasion. Étude sur les monuments consacrés à l' éducation en Grèce (des origines à l' Empire romain)</i> , Paris 1960, BEFAR 196
	<b>Lanckoroński N.P.</b> , <i>Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens</i> , Wien 1892
	<b>Heberdey R.</b> , <i>Termessischen Studien</i> , Wien – Leipzig 1929




	<b>Iplikcioglu B., Celgin G., Vedat Celgin A.,</b> <i>Epigraphische Forschungen in Termessos und seinem Territorium, 1 Mit einem Beitrag zu den epichorischen Namen</i> , Wien 1991
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	<b>Iplikcioglu B.,</b> "Epigraphische Forschungen im antiken Termessos und seinem Territorium", Dobesch, G. – Rehrenbock, G. (eds.), <i>Die epigraphische und altertumskundliche Erforschung Kleinasiens. 100 Jahre kleinasiatische Kommission der ÖAW. Akten des Symposiums Wien 23.- 25. Oktober 1990</i> , Wien 1993, 255- 263

## Glossary :

	<b>agonothetes, the</b>
Official assigned with the task of organising and hosting the contest in the framework of a contest.	
	<b>barrel-vault</b>
vaulted, semi-cylindrical construction used often as roof.	
	<b>caldarium</b>
Derivative of the Latin verb caleo (= warm up). It is the strongly heated room of Roman baths. Its hot plunge pool was used to take not only a hot bath but also a steam bath due to high levels of humidity. It was also called the "inner room".	
	<b>cornice</b>
1. (Antiq. and Byz.) Member of the entablature or the architrave that projects in the elevation of a secular or religious building. As a horizontal member it may run along a wall. The cornice may also be the projecting part of the roof, protecting the building from rain. 2. (Byz. archit.) Decorative architectural element used to articulate the walls of a church, both on the inside and on the outside, by marking the division between the vertical wall and the spring of the vaults. It usually bears painted or sculptural decoration of vegetal or geometric motifs.	
	<b>ephebarchus</b>
The public archon who undertook the supervision of adolescents. The institution of adolescence received legal substance in the Athenian state with the "On the adolescents" law in 334/333 BC. Although the office of ephebarchus existed in earlier years, it proved popular in the cities of Greece and Asia Minor during the Hellenistic period.	
	<b>frigidarium</b>
A large cold pool to drop into after enjoying a hot Roman bath (from frigeo). Normally frigidarium has used after a visit to warm rooms (caldarium) or after a training in palaistra. As the largest room in the thermae and often functioned as a hall for social events or communication	
	<b>gymnasiarch, the</b>
The man responsible for the supervision of the youngsters and the adolescents who were trained at the gymnasia and at the palaestrae. This rank, widely diffused in all cities of the ancient Greek world, constituted a public office which was usually bestowed on the most eminent and rich citizens, since it required great expenses.	
	<b>gymnasium</b>
The gymnasium was one of the most important centres of public life in Greek cities. The institution of the gymnasium, directly connected with the development of the Greek city, aimed to create virtuous citizens and gallant warriors. As educational institutions of public character, the gymnasia were intended for the physical and theoretical education of the young and consisted of separate spaces for special purposes.	
	<b>hermaic stele, the</b>
Column crowned with the bust of Hermes.	
	<b>hypocaust, the</b>
the main system for the heating of ancient baths. The word means literally a "furnace that burns underneath". With this system the room's floor was supported by small poles and the space underneath the floor was heated by the circulation of hot air, while the heat was transferred through the walls by conductors.	
	<b>mortar, the</b>



Liquidised paste consisting of soil, water, sand or marble. It is used as binding material between rocks or plinths. Thus, it assures stability and protection of masonry.

 [niche](#)

Semi-circular recess on the surface of the wall.

 [odeum, the](#)


Public building similar to the theatre, but roofed and with smaller dimensions, which was used for musical contests.

 [opus quadratum](#)

Technique of wall construction, in which chiselled squared blocks of stone of the same dimensions were placed in parallel lines.

 [palaestra](#)

A colonnaded enclosure for athletic exercise. The palaestra functioned both independently and as a part of the Greek gymnasium. It was formed as an open court surrounded by colonnades with adjoining rooms.

 [pillar](#)


Pier of square or rectangular cross-section.

 [pseudo-isodomic masonry](#)

Masonry built of blocks of the same height within each course , but each course varying in height.

 [rubble masonry](#)

A building technique that employs rough, unhewn stones of various size, set in mortar in irregular courses.

 [thermae](#)

Building complexes dated in the Roman Period housing the public baths. Within the building there were three rooms, the frigidarium, the tepidarium and the caldarium and several other facilities rooms. The Roman bath-houses were also used as meeting places and they often included a palaestra and a gymnasium.