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ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ / RESEARCH ARTICLE

# AN UNUSUAL FLOWER AMONG THE TRADITIONAL ANTHEMION IN SMINTHEION: ARUM MACULATUM

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***Abstract***

*Anthemion frieze in Greek and Roman architecture consists of lotus and palmette flowers, whose origins are based on Egyptian and Assyrian art. Compared to the classical and Hellenistic architectural samples, there is much more variety in the architectural decorations of the Roman period, apart from the lotus-palmette. The reason for this diversity in decoration stems from the idea of Rome to emphasize the local and to increase the richness in decoration. During this period, the change in the arrangement of the lotus-palmette shows itself with the different arrangement and style of the lotus and palmettes on the same structure. In this thought, which aims to create richness instead of uniformity, decorations can either increase or decrease in size or be adorned in high relief or shallow, depending on where they are used. Vivid specimens that show the highest quality of workmanship and are pleasing to the eye are preferred in visible areas. Anthemion decoration has been widely used in the Hellenistic triple arrangement since the Augustus period and the Julius-Claudian period. In the Traian and Hadrian Periods, a return to the classical style of the Augustus period was made, and the triple arrangement became fashionable again. One example that adds a new type to this traditional lotus-palmette (anthemion) frieze is the Smintheion frieze block fragment. Here, the arum maculatum is placed instead of the lotus flower between the alternating open and closed palmettes seen in the most common anthemion decoration. Arum maculatum and arum species have been used in the treatment of some diseases since ancient times to find healing and continue to be used today. The fact that this plant is the most powerful and showy plant that survived around Gülpınar-Smintheion must have had a great impact on people. Arum is a plant that impresses people with its external appearance and leaves different implications with its sexual connotation. At the same time, it is different from other plants in that it contains both male and female flowers and its physical structure. Due to this structure, it attracts insects to itself and makes extraordinary fertilization. The*

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*appearance of the plant and its use in the field of health caused it to be named differently. The depiction on the frieze block in Smintheion must be related to the healing properties of Apollo.*

***Keywords:*** *Arum Maculatum, Anthemion, Smintheion, Herbal Treatment, Sexuality*

# SMINTHEION'DA GELENEKSEL ANTHEMION ARASINDA SIRA DIŞI BİR ÇİÇEK: ARUM MACULATUM

***Özet***

*Yunan ve Roma mimarisinde anthemion bezeme kuşağı, kökenleri Mısır ve Asur sanatına dayanan lotus ve palmet çiçeklerinden oluşur. Klasik ve Hellenistik mimarideki örneklerine göre Roma Dönemi mimari bezemelerinde lotus-palmet dışında çok daha fazla çeşitlilik vardır. Bezemede bu çeşitliliğin nedeni, Roma'nın yerel olanı öne çıkarma, bezemede zenginliği artırma düşüncesinden kaynaklıdır. Bu dönemde lotus-palmet dizilimindeki değişiklik, aynı yapı üzerinde lotus ve palmetlerin değişik dizilimi ve stili ile kendini gösterir. Tekdüzelik yerine zenginlik yaratma amacı güden bu anlayışta, bezemelerin kullanıldıkları yere göre ya boyutları büyür veya küçülür ya da yüksek kabartma veya yüzeysel işlenebilir. En kaliteli işçilik gösteren ve göze hoş gelen canlı örnekler, görülebilen alanlarda tercih edilmiştir. Anthemion bezemesi, Augustus Dönemi ve Julius-Claudiuslar Dönemi'nden itibaren yaygın biçimde Hellenistik etkili üçlü dizilim şeklinde uygulanmıştır. Traian ve Hadrian Dönemi'nde ise Augustus döneminin klasik stile dönüş yapılarak üçlü dizilim yeniden moda olur. Bu geleneksel lotus-palmet (anthemion) frizine yeni bir tip ekleyen örneklerden biri, Smintheion friz bloğu parçasıdır. Burada, en yaygın anthemion bezemesinde görülen dönüşümlü şekildeki açık ve kapalı palmetler arasında lotus çiçeği yerine arum maculatum yerleştirilmiştir. Arum maculatum ve arum türleri, Antik Çağ'dan günümüze kadar şifa bulmak amacıyla bazı hastalıkların tedavisinde kullanılmıştır ve günümüzde de kullanılmaya devam etmektedir. Bu bitkinin Gülpınar-Smintheion civarında hayatta kalan en güçlü ve gösterişli bitki olması, insanlar üzerinde büyük etki bırakmış olmalıdır. Arum dışarıdan görünüşü ile insanları etkileyen ve cinsellik çağrışımı ile farklı ima bırakan bir bitkidir. Aynı zamanda hem dişi ve erkek çiçek barındırması, hem de fiziksel yapısı ile diğer bitkilerden farklıdır. Bu yapısı nedeniyle böcekleri kendisine çekerek sıra dışı döllenme yapar. Bitkinin dış görünüşü ve sağlık alanında kullanılması, farklı isimlendirilmelerine neden olmuştur. Smintheion'da friz bloğu üzerinde betimlenmesi, Apollon'un iyileştirici özelliği ile ilgili olmalıdır.*

***Anahtar Kelimeler:*** *Arum Maculatum, Anthemion, Smintheion, Bitkisel Tedavi, Cinsellik*

## INTRODUCTION

Smintheion is the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus. The Hellenistic temple is the most monumental structure of the area dedicated to the god. This cult area, built at the sacred spring, is far from the cities. The water source gives life to the region where it is located and according to the results of archaeological studies, the settlement that started 7 thousand years ago continued continuously and continues to exist today as Gülpınar Town. In this long process, the area contains many cultural remains belonging to both the

Prehistoric and Classical periods. The sanctuary, which was patronized by the nearby city of Hamaksitos during the Archaic and Classical Periods, became a sanctuary of the city of Alexandreia Troas from the end of the 4th century BC. The Smintheion, which is documented by written and archaeological records as an ancient Greek sanctuary, begins to change with the Roman Period. In this period, the god Apollo comes to the fore with new myths and the sanctuary with monumental architecture. In other words, the sanctuary was reconstructed in the Roman Period and many buildings were built within this architectural program. The caves from which the water source comes out are completely turned into water reservoirs, and the monumental reservoirs that meet the water needs are built at different and necessary points in the sanctuary. The collected water is used for ritual purification, healing and cleansing, especially in the baths. In addition to the temple and baths where functions such as worship, offering offerings, bathing, cleansing, purification, purification and divination were performed in the sanctuary, a Heroon structure was recently unearthed. The sanctuary, which was inhabited for a long time, was severely damaged first by the Christianization and the prohibition of pagan beliefs, and then by its transformation into an agricultural town and its conversion into gardens. Finally, its use as a material/stone quarry in and around the modern settlement of Gülpınar led to the destruction of buildings down to the foundation levels. For this reason, the identification of buildings is usually based on their foundations, soils, location and some small parts of the superstructure. The Heroon is another building whose function and date were first tried to be determined with very few architectural remains.

The Heroon is located on the left at the entrance to the sanctuary. Surrounded by a temenos wall, the Heroon and its surroundings are today defined as an olive grove. Only the core of the podium and the foundations of the temenos walls remain. There is almost no architecture on the surface. A few marble frieze blocks and frieze fragments belonging to the upper structure and a small number of marble roofing materials were recovered through the soundings made in the vicinity. These friezes depict a tripod, omphalos and laurel branch among repeated antithetic gryphons. However, one of the frieze fragments differs from the friezes with gryphons by having a floral decoration on it. It probably belongs to the entrance section of the Heroon, the sarcophagus inside or the base of the sarcophagus. The most interesting aspect of this frieze is the inclusion of the plant arum maculatum (snake cushion) in the traditional anthemion (lotus-palmette). Similar flowering plant motifs, including flowers or seeds, such as the kenger and its spirals, which are also found among the decorations of the temple of Apollo Smintheus, were also used in Hellenistic Period Anatolian buildings.

However, this plant is also different from the traditional Hellenistic Period motifs. Moreover, the structure and ornamental character are Roman. In Roman buildings, lotus-palmette decorations consist of different types and often of local decorative patterns. The same idea was applied to the Roman Heroon in Smintheion and this flamboyant plant was included. Arum maculatum is a special plant that draws attention among other plants in the region with its splendor and is used by the people of the region as a remedy for certain health-related ailments. Could Arum maculatum, which is associated with health or sometimes sexuality in the region, be the result of a practice whose origins date back to the Roman period? Of course, the way we take as an example in this regard is Pilinius' feelings and criticisms in his Naturalis Historia (Pliny, NH.25.1.)[2]. This article focuses on the name and physical characteristics of the plant Arum maculatum, as well as its connotations of health and sexuality, and emphasizes that it is one of the unusual examples in terms of motif.

## 1. ARUM MACULATUM

### 1.1. Name

Members of the plant family Araceae[3] and modern plant names with the origin arum are derived from the Greek *aron* (ἄρον) (Theophrastus Hist. pl. 1.6.7-8; 7.9.4; 7.12.2; 7.13.2)[4], Latin *aros*, *arum* or *aron*[5]. In the Etruscan vernacular this plant was used as *gigarum* (Turfa, 2013: p. 869). Galen (Gal. *Al. Fac*. 2,65,1) mentions two species, the medicinal one found in Greece and

[2] "It creates in me an infinite sense of admiration to observe and feel the behavior of my ancestors, who saw, heard and thought and acted by seeing, hearing and thinking, to study and investigate the herbs that mother earth offers as medicine and to try to solve their mysteries".

[3] This plant family includes more than a hundred genera and nearly four thousand species.

[4] It is derived from the Greek word "*aron*" ('climbing' or 'poisonous plant').

[5] *Arons* are used for a herb that relieves inflammation in the lungs. Bk. Hippocrates *Morb*. 2.47; 3.15- 16; According to Aristotle, there are wild and edible species called arums, and bears, after waking from hibernation, feed on the roots to open their long-starved and constricted stomachs. Aristotle *Hist. an*. 611b; Dioscorides *Mat. Med*. II.197; Pliny *HN* XIX.96-7; Bedalov and Küpfer 2005; see also Grimaldi et al. Grimaldi et al. 2017, Table 1; Many of the species mentioned in ancient texts were used as poisonous substances capable of destroying intestinal worms. In the Italian peninsula, there are numerous plants preserved and depicted in wall paintings in the cities buried under the ashes of Vesuvius in 79 AD. The irrigation of the Aqua Augusta, which was started during the reign of Octavian and completed in the 1st century AD, also known by the name of the emperor Augustus, also provided water to the towns around Pompeii and many plants such as pomegranates, figs and pears as well as violets, roses and hyacinths were grown in these gardens. However, the names of some of these plants and the medicines derived from them are Latin and Greek.

the arum for food, which was sent to Italy from Cyrene (Libya). He describes *Asia arums* as more bitter (poisonous)[6] and medicinal. Maculatum means 'spotted'[7]. But '*maculatus*' also means to defile, to stink, to shame. Therefore, it seems that the physical characteristics of the plant and its odor were taken into account in the derivation of the name.

*Arum* is also known as *taro* in Egypt and is widely consumed in Eastern Mediterranean cultures (Grimaldi et al., 2017: 2.23)[8]. *Taro* is the

[6] In the ancient world, *arum* was not a species-specific name. In antiquity, plants under this name were usually wild plants with poisonous, astringent roots and leaves used for medicinal purposes. *Arum maculatum* is one of the species in this family. Constituents: saponins, alkaloids, especially conicin. Baytop, 1999: p. 407; It is believed to contain saponins called aronin and aoin, which are found only in *Arum Italicum* with a study conducted in 1965. Saponins are glycosides with a lipophilic core and one or more carbohydrate side chains with a steroid and triterpenoid structure, found naturally in various plants. These glycosides can be used to produce stable foam in beverages, mining, photography, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. Sponins are also reported to be used as fish poisons, inhibit the growth of wood molds and protect plants against insect attack. In the past years, the antinutritional effects of saponins, which are known to be toxic at high doses, have been emphasized. In recent years, it has been reported that saponins have hypocholesterolemic, anticarcinogenic, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial effects as well as positive effects on the immune system; Today, as in other geographies (Baytop, 1999: p. 407; Ağalar, 2016: pp. 9, 12-13, 17, 81, 94), the effect of arums in and around Gülpınar is similar. Leaves and fruits are toxic in terms of content. In Gülpınar and its surroundings, it is stated that people who are disturbed as a result of poisoning by plants of the genus Arum (Arum) and especially when touched due to its attractive aspect, its seeds irritate the hands and the skin falls off. Similar initial effects such as pain, burning and skin breakdown were experienced by me during the removal of the seeds and it took weeks for the skin to heal. In cases of poisoning caused by children in the region eating the seeds mistaking them for dog grapes, the patients were treated by the elderly by vomiting. The first effects and symptoms of poisoning are burning in the mouth, inflammation of the pharynx, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions and even heart problems. They are needle-shaped crystals, resulting in irritation of the skin, mouth, tongue and throat, difficulty breathing, pain in the throat, burning, swelling and can lead to stomach upset. Orange and red berries are very attractive but they have an astringent taste and cause a tingling sensation in the mouth that starts quite quickly, and they are also rarely swallowed in large quantities, but they can cause serious and unusual harm. Tongue and mouth irritations as well as stomach upsets require hospitalization. In short, it creates a case of plant poisoning.

[7] It is generally thought that these spots are the spots of the blood that flowed under the cross where Jesus Christ was crucified and that it is the flower that grows from there. After the spots between the petals, it becomes variegated.

[8] Ancient texts and Middle Eastern sources, as well as contemporary life, show that different species of the *arum* plant have been used for centuries for both dietary and medicinal purposes under different names such as *taro*, *golgas* and *colocasia*. Among the most widely used plant species in cancer research are *arum* species (*A. dioscoridis, A. palaestinum, A. maculatum*). Abu-Darwish-Efferth, 2018: pp. 1-17; In general, in ancient texts and Christian sources, it was taken from earlier ancient sources and the Latin name (*arum*) became

Egyptian plant *N. nucifera* (sacred lotus), which is known in Greek as *kolokasia* (κολοκάσια). Later, in the 16th-17th centuries, scholars following classical sources called *taro* a type of *arum* (Egyptian *arum* or edible *arum*). The same plant is known today by its Arabic name *golgas* and in Cyprus by its Greek name *kolokasi* (κολοκάσα) (Grimaldi et al., 2017: 3.23)[9]. From Theophrastus in the late 4th century BC to Martianus Capella (5th century AD), ancient writers respected Etruscan expertise in herbalism (Harrison and Turfa, 2010: p. 17; Harrison and Bartels, 2006; Leonti et al., 2009: p. 256; Harrison and Turfa, 2010; Scarborough, 2006)[10]. Theophrastus (*Historia Plantarum* 10.15) states that the Etruscans were a skilled people in making medicines. According to Theophrastus and Pliny (*Historia Plantarum* 9.16.6; Pliny *NH* 24.16; Bonacelli, 1936: p. 484), the Tyrhenians (Etruscans) of the town of Heraclea were the producers of a poisonous kind of medicine. Martianus Capella (*De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae* 6.37.) describes the Etrurian region as "remediorum origine celebrata" (famous for the origin of remedies).

### 1.2. Habitat, Development and Physical Characteristics

The habitat of Arum maculatum is Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Asia, including present-day Anatolia (Gibernau et al., 2004). It is common in shady places, cool forests and forest foothills and damp farms. It can grow up to half a meter in length on average[11]. On the other hand, Smintheion-Gülpınar and its environs are in a geography opposite to the

common. This is due to the fact that eastern sources do not mention the plant sufficiently. The change of names is due to cultural preferences, but the association of *arum* with health has always remained valid. This association also caused it to overtake the sacred lotus flower. Especially after the 3rd century AD, *arum* (*taro*) has been described by more than one name with different words in many languages. Grimaldi et al., 2017: Fig. 2.

[9] Today in Anatolia it is known as Gölövez.

[10] Etruscan names were used for many plant species and some were even used as medicines and their roots were eaten. Some of these names can be found in Italy and elsewhere, even in modern pharmacy.

[11] Leaves and inflorescences appear in spring, followed by fruits only on the surface in late summer and fall. The leaves are recognizable by their long-stalked, lance-pointed blades, 15 to 30 cm long, white with green speckles. The panicle, wrapped in a kind of greenish-white cone, consists of a huge axis bearing sessile flowers. On a cylindrical spike, they form pea-sized, round fruits, first green, then yellow, turning orange and red (Picture 3). When ripe, the fruits turn orange to bright red and this is the most showy and conspicuous stage. The fruits are sessile, round, with more or less distortion due to compression between them. They ripen in early July and continue to survive until the fall. In their pulp there is a single round seed, hard, light brown, with a reticulate surface, surrounded by a transparent film.

habitat of this type of plant. Although located in the Troad region and on the foothills of the Ida Mountains, the southern and western part of Ayvacik, the central district of Gülpınar (Smintheion), is dry in summer instead of humid. Specimens in this narrow environment usually live among trees and shrubs and on rock edges (Picture 3). In this region, the plant can reach and even exceed one meter in length. This proves what a powerful plant Arum maculatum is (Ray, 1693: pp. 1629-1705)[12]. *Arum maculatum* is widespread in Gülpınar on the Kumbağlar Road, around Hamaksitos, Külahlı Ayağı, inside Gülpınar Settlement, Smintheion, and also in the surrounding area in Kızılkeçili Village, Tuzla Valley, Yukarı Village and Tabaklar Village (Picture 3).

The fact that Arum maculatum is a plant of Gülpınar and its surroundings, an arid region, contributes to its being counted among the species whose stems are completely underground. Unlike its species in humid regions, in and around Gülpınar it is not an ordinary plant, but one of the largest and most spectacular.

## 2. ANCIENT AND MODERN USE OF ARUM MACULATUM

### 2.1.Health

The Etruscans, as in other regions, probably used valued plants such as water lilies and poppies in religious and funerary symbolism. Among the plants with preserved "Etruscan" names, many are still used colloquially. One of them is *arum* (Etr. *gigarum*), the subject of this study, which has antibacterial and antifungal properties. The Etruscan and Roman knowledge of the healing properties of *arum* (*gigarum*) on the lungs can be found in the Etruscan fortune-telling. The Etruscan interpretation of divination from sheep's liver (Harrison and Turfa, 2010: Picture 1.) was adopted by the Romans and it was taken into account that the liver could be diseased. For this reason, the *gigarum* (*arum*) plant must have been considered important by the Etruscans and Romans. Although it is poisonous, it seems to have been used or at least known for medicinal purposes in antiquity[13]. In Anatolia,

[12] The plant is not eaten by animals because it is poisonous, and when ripe, the stalked fruit cob, which becomes heavy, is broken by grazing animals and strong winds. Another expression explaining this powerful feature is found in the description of ancient Iraqi cities destroyed by the Mongol emperor in the 14th century. In particular, the destruction of Ninive near Mosul is described as "so ruined that only bush beans and *colocasia* can grow". The plant referred to here is the Egyptian *taro* or *colocasia, arum.*

[13] Similar beneficial applications are practiced in different geographies today. John Parkinson gives two recipes for *Arum maculatum* in Theatrum Botanicum in 1629. In one of them, the root is cut into small pieces and mixed with lettuce and chicory. In the other, the dried root is powdered and sprinkled on meat (to hurt intruders). In Dorset, young girls in the 1930s

where the geography of Italy and Etruscan culture originated in many ways, *Arum maculatum* today has a rich variety of names and synonyms[14]. Most of the nomenclature is based on the leaves and flowers. Even the fresh leaves or dried tubers and fruits of the species called *Arum Italicum* are used to treat rheumatism and hemorrhoids[15].

The use of health-related plants in Smintheion is unknown, but the god Apollo's sacred tree, the laurel, is frequently depicted. In the Greek mythos, Zeus, the god of the sky, controlled the belligerent Olympians with his thunderbolts, while other gods ruled the plant and animal world. Apollo,

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believed that if they touched *Arum maculatum* they became pregnant. It is a plant with a colorful history related to the female and male genitalia. Some liken it to the genitals of a priest. Others say it is a Lady because it evokes a cloak that protects the Blessed Virgin Mary. In this and similar ways, naming objects based on the shapes of plants was also common in antiquity. Even the snake or similar figures that give the plant its name are associated with magic. For this reason, plants belonging to the genera *allium* and *arum* can be manipulated or changed in purpose by human intervention. *Arum* is used medicinally as an expectorant and anti-rheumatic, as well as an anti-bacterial and anti-fungal agent. As mentioned above, the plant was also known in antiquity and in modern Tuscany the name gigarum is used. This use confirms the information given about the *arum* in Etruria; its taro-like root was used for food, but it was also extinguished to remove its poisons.

[14] In Anatolian local languages it is known as ‘yılan ekmeği, yılandili, yılanyastığı, livik/nivik otu, yumuşak kulak, ayıkulağı, kabargan. A dish called 'tirşik' is made from its leaves; Baytop, 1999: pp. 407-408; Baytop, 2007: p. 287; In foreign sources cuckoopint (*Arum italicum*), snakeshead, arum, lords and ladies, wild arum, tender ear, Adam and Eve, naked boys, naked girls; German 'gefleckter', gewäsche plant.

[15] Today, *Arum maculatum* is used in phytotherapy in and around Gülpınar. As with many plants, it needs to be collected at a special time (at night, before sunrise or in the evening) and dried in the shade. Dried and boiled roots are harmless. The water prepared by boiling and resting the roots and fruits is preferred in the treatment of hemorrhoids and liver disorders and in balancing excess acid in the stomach by drinking small amounts for a few weeks. Leaves and roots are used to prevent inflammation in wounds. After the fruits are dried, they are both swallowed in small amounts as grains and powdered and applied to the anus. It is used both for expectorant and hemorrhoid treatment. For similar purposes, i.e. hemorrhoids and digestive problems, 'tirşik' soup is made in Adana after boiling the leaves and discarding the water, and it is thought to be beneficial for digestion. Baytop, 1999: 407; Colorful and bright-attractive fruits harm people, especially children. As mentioned, the leaves and starch-storing roots are also poisonous when eaten uncooked. In general, they are either dried or boiled to remove the poisonous effect and then consumed for nutrition and healing purposes. The methods applied are either by ingestion or by external application to the skin. However, external contact causes burning and peeling (irritation). In the vicinity of Sakarya, the fresh roots of the plant, referred to as 'mayasıl kökü', are used in the treatment of fungal infections. Uzun et al., 2004: pp. 287-296; Similar treatments are also seen in Bulgaria. Ivancheva and Stantcheva, 2000: pp. 165-172; Kachmarov et al., 2015: pp. 394-402; In Syria, around Aleppo, leaves, flowers and roots are boiled and used to treat oral cancer and constipation. Alachkar et al., 2011: Table 1.

the god of light and truth, who killed as much as he healed, first taught people the art of healing through his son Asklepios, the god of medicine. In the temple of Apollo at Delphi, next to the oracle, there was a priest who interpreted Apollo's crazy words, perhaps caused by chewing laurel leaves, Apollo's sacred plant. In memory of his beloved, who was transformed into a laurel tree by Ovidius in the myth of Daphne, he made a crown of its leaves to commemorate her victories. Although there was a great diversity of beliefs in Greek and Roman religion during the 1,500 years from Homer's time to the fall of Rome, most Greek myths and Roman rituals were performed to ensure prosperity and well-being. Plants and trees, as a living form, have since the earliest times been not only a factual but also a symbolic force in both religion and health. This is why the Hippocratic oath begins with the name of the god Apollo. In addition, the drug crushing tray found in the Great Roman Baths of Smintheion is evidence that those who came to the sanctuary asked for healing from the god, and to obtain it, they resorted to herbs along with ritual purification. Based on this generalization, it is easily understood that the first function of plants such as arum is health. The second function can be said to be related to sexuality.

### 2.2. Sexuality

It is even more interesting that the plant appears as an ornamental element in a building in the sanctuary of the god Apollo (Picture 2), and different meanings are attributed to the appearance of the plant. *Arum maculatum* is used here instead of lotus, the symbol of purity, cleanliness and rebirth. Because of this use, it is considered as valuable and important as the lotus. The point that can be seen in relation to Apollo is also due to the physical structure of the plant. The most revealing examples are found in tragedy texts. In these texts, although the themes implying sexuality are not always funny, the comedic themes are scenes that do not contain reality. In this type of humor, especially in Aristophanes, high and low themes juxtapose incongruously. And in a culture where Apollo could laugh at sexually aroused donkeys (Pyth. 10.36.), this is more explainable[16]. The god Apollo, according to the poet Pindar, laughs at the sight of donkeys walking around with erect genitals. Perhaps this expression expresses contempt in connection with the god's mythos with donkeys. Nevertheless, the sacrifice of donkeys to Priapos,

[16] Apollo enlarges Midas' ears like a donkey's because the first prize in the musical contest is awarded to Pan, and the god remains in second place (Ovid, *Met.* 11.146). This analogy to the donkey is, in the lowest form, a reference to the fact that donkeys, as Aelian (*NA*, 10.28) states, have poor hearing and are inharmonious in sound. The donkey is therefore incapable of music. Similarly, as if in reference to this event, Herodotus (IV.129) also refers to the strange sound of donkeys as the sound that kept the Scythians away from the Persian camp.

which emphasizes sexual power, may be linked to another mythos[17]. It is also known that donkeys were known to bray very loudly at the time of mating. Because some researchers associate the Mikenai donkey fresco with Pindar's statement and emphasize that it was a religious dance (perhaps a phallik) in honor of Apollo (Cook, 1894: pp. 81-169). This is because there are two different Apollo's, Apollo Killaios, worshipped in Mysia, and Apollo Priapaios of the Propontis (Lampsakos), who is similar to the god Priapos (Krappe, 1947: pp. 224-225). Although Apollo was originally thought of as a god in the form of a donkey like Priapos (Correa, 2002: pp. 121-126), his name and epithet distinguish both gods. For this reason, the loud voice of the donkeys, like their genitals, signifies union.

Some examples from the plant world, such as *Arum maculatum*, are also very similar to human genitals (Picture 4). Even in antiquity, the shape and content of certain objects, such as this plant that resembles human genitals, were thought to influence sexuality and therefore performances. The situation associated with Apollo, who laughed at the state of donkeys above, and the erect penis in particular come to the fore with the analogy of people. Because plants resembling penises were used as sexual desire enhancers (Doğan, 2022: pp. 54-55). Moreover, animal-inspired sexual associations create the same kind of perception and have the same effect on men and women. The sexual relations of some animal species can also stimulate sexual activity in humans. This idea also affected the posture of the genitals, especially when taken alone or in combination with other substrates, such as wine. This list of stimulants includes the testicles and penises of many animal species such as roosters, bulls, rams and stags. The stimulating effect of drugs administered or ingested for sexual stimulation, and of the amulets derived from them, also depended on their use in combination with the same animal organs. In Smintheion, a similar amulet was used for love magic and was symbolized by abraxas (Kaplan, 2016: pp. 95-123). This symbolism in antiquity was used even today to predict the fertility of females and in some regions of Anatolia, the size of crops could be predicted by farmers by measuring the size of the *arum maculatum*. The remarkable *spadix* of the wild *arum*, *Arum maculatum*, is very hot, even hot enough to burn your hand, which may be related to sexuality (ardor).

[17] During a feast, when the Nymphs and Satyrs celebrated Bacchus, Silenus arrived on a donkey. Just as the god Priapos was about to rape it, the nymphe Lotis was awakened by its braying. Euripides (*Cycl*. 5); Priapus avenged himself by killing the donkey, so the donkey became his victim. Ovid (*Fasti* 1.391, 6.331); Apollo's donkey sacrifice is mentioned in the myth of the Hyperboreans.

It is conceivable that the people who came to the presence of the god Apollo with unlimited desire also desired to reproduce or reproduce, which has found its place among today's folk beliefs. The fact that oil lamps containing sexual scenes used by people of this mindset were also found in Smintheion stems from the same logic. Because *Arum maculatum*, as fascinating as it looks from the outside, has a burning and perfect fertilization system from the inside (Picture 4). In fact, unlike some insect-eating plants, the purpose of this *arum* fertilization trap is to perpetuate its own generation. As mentioned, a purple-colored spike resembling the stamen, called the *spadix*, is surrounded by a *spata* (cone-shaped leaf) (Lack and Diaz, 1991: pp. 333-342). The flowering part is inside the leaf cover at the base of the *spadix*. This part, closed to the outside world, has four parts and this is where flowering takes place[18].

The plant, which has a special reproductive system in itself, is perceived differently by the human eye from the outside and is associated with sexuality (Picture 4). As a result, *arum maculatum*, which is dangerous with its poison content but used in the field of health, derives its sexuality-enhancing aspect from its shape and perception. In this case, the presence of *arum maculatum* in Smintheion can either be associated with Apollo and its health-healing aspect, or it was preferred as a plant that increases sexual power and stimulates. It has also been stated that the Etruscans were no strangers to *gigarum* (*arum*) and used it for fortune-telling and healing purposes. The Roman construction in Smintheion was programmed and carried out by the city of Alexandreia Troas, where veterans from Rome predominated. No written evidence has yet been found as to who the Heroon at Smintheion belonged to. However, it is very likely that it belonged to one of the Romans who adopted the Etruscan tradition and lived in the aforementioned city. So much so that the *arum maculatum* species seen in

[18] At the bottom are the female flowers, the barren ring with thorns, the male flowers and the thorns at the top. After pollination, the plant's metabolism accelerates and breaks down the acid it produces. With this breakdown, the outer end of the spike heats up and releases pungent ammonia gas. But contrary to the odor, it does not release the heat and uses it itself. After a year of waiting, the plant reacts in a day and a daylight hour. The heat and odors emitted attract membrane-winged insects (as they resemble the natural odor of their own oviposition sites). The spike with its oily surface is slippery and allows incoming insects to fall to the bottom. The hairs in the spiny ring on the top of the male flowers close. Here the insects feed on the sugary liquid secreted by the female flowers. The male flowers open at night and their pollen is released to the insects. In the morning the spike spines help the insects to crawl out, gaining a foothold and carrying the pollen to other flowers. When reproduction or fertilization is complete, the green pea-sized fruits begin to form and then change color and ripen. Finally, the attractive and shiny fruits on the long stalk with a corncob-shaped head turn orange and red.

and around Gülpınar-Smintheion immediately attracts attention in terms of splendor and showiness. As the strongest and only plant that can survive until autumn, it must have both reminded and inspired the Romans of their own culture, so that the lotus took its place and was transferred to the architecture in the sanctuary because of its symbolic contribution to human health and reproduction.

## 3. SMINTHEION FRIEZE BLOCK FRAGMENT

The architectural block recovered during the excavation of the Podium Building (Heroon) at Smintheion (Picture 1) is not clear whether it belongs to the building or to which building (Picture 2). Technically, the gryphoned friezes have similar or common aspects, including the use of drills and the light-shadow effect. The main motifs of the frieze block fragment are palmettes. At first glance, it looks like an ordinary and traditional plant ornament. Architectural ornamentation with lotus and palmette figures (anthemion), which has its origins in Egyptian and Assyrian art, is also frequently used in Hellenic art and its successor Roman architecture. Compared to Classical and Hellenistic architectural ornamentation, Roman architectural ornamentation is much more varied, as in the lotus-palmette figures. This richness of decoration stems from the Roman idea of emphasizing the local and giving place to the local.

Plant decorations are generally used on the exterior of architectural structures. Lotus-palmette (anthemion) decorations were similarly preferred in many parts of the building, from column bases to door jambs and ante capitals, to the figural frieze on the architrave, and even to the sima and geisons, depending on the parts of the building rising from the ground. On the arcithrave, since it replaces the narrative frieze, it is usually depicted either alone or in the same or different block with the egg-and-dart (ovolo) sequence, depending on the size of the architectural block.

There are different types of lotus-palmet decorations in Roman buildings (Başaran, 1995: pp. 53-72). The richness of these different types is manifested by the different arrangement of lotus and palmettes on the same building (Schede, 1909: p. 94 et al., Başaran, 1995: p. 53). In this different understanding, which aims to create richness instead of uniformity, the size of the ornaments increases or decreases depending on where they are used, and they can be rendered in high relief or superficially. Vivid examples showing the highest quality workmanship and pleasing to the eye were preferred in visible areas. The Hellenistic influenced tripartite arrangement was widely applied from the Augustan and Julius-Claudian periods onwards. During the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, the tripartite arrangement becomes

the subject again, returning to the classical understanding of Augustus. One of the examples that adds a new type to this traditional lotus-palmette (anthemion) band is the Smintheion frieze fragment. The most common type of lotus-palmet decoration, the lotus flower between alternating open and closed palmettes, is not seen in this example. Instead of lotus, *arum maculatum* is placed alternately between open and closed palmettes. The traditional anthemion belt has a straight frieze profile instead of a kyma rekta profile. However, the infula specimens in the other griffon friezes of the Podium Building (Heroon?) were carved around the infula specimens, making them more emphasized with the effect of light and shadow. The same technique is also seen in the vegetal frieze (closed palmette-*arum maculatum*-open palmette). These decorations are examples of free decoration repeating each other.

A fragment of a frieze block with floral decoration with the same profile as the griffon frieze blocks was recovered from Smintheion. On this damaged block, there is an open palmette in the center and two identical *arum maculatum* (yılan yastığı) on the sides. The lotus-palmet sequence and style are similar to the "Polygonal Yapı" superstructure unearthed during the 2008-2009 excavations in Alexandria Troas (Schwertheim and Tanrıöver, 2011: pp. 303-304) (Picture 2). A similar tripartite arrangement (closed palmette-*arum maculatum*-open palmette-arum maculatum-closed palmette) similar to the tripartite figure (right griffon-tripod-left griffon) in the friezes with repeating griffons is also seen in the vegetal frieze.

The arum maculatum, which is not found among the classical anthemion decorations in Roman architecture, is also alien to the curly branch/ranche decorations preferred on the friezes[19]. However, the *arum maculatum* motif is not found on the anthemion decorations of Roman Imperial Period buildings. The reason for this difference is the wide range of building typologies constructed in the geographies dominated by the Roman Empire in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD and the preference for local decorative elements. Anthemion motifs were generally produced in the provinces with important workshop centers such as Italy, Greece and Anatolia

[19] The Aqua Augusta, which was started during the reign of Octavian and completed in the 1st century AD, also known by the name of the emperor Augustus, provided water to the towns around Pompeii and many plants such as pomegranates, figs and pears as well as violets, roses and hyacinths were grown in these gardens. However, the plant depicted in the Smintheion Heroon is *arum maculatum*, locally known as the 'Yılancık'. This name was given because of the shape of the leaves during the growth phase and because it was thought that the snake would not bite or come to the relevant place when the juice was applied to the body or when the plant was crumbled and placed in an area.

as a continuation of the Hellenistic typology (Rumscheid, 1994) and in similar types. The other provinces and centers consist of repetitions of the decorations produced in these provinces with local materials and examples with local decorative elements. The vegetal frieze of the Smintheion Podium Building (Heroon) constitutes a new local type with the mentioned arrangement. Although close analogues of palmettes are seen in Trajan and Hadrian period buildings and even in Alexandreia Troas, the *arum maculatum* decoration is not found. For this reason, one of the regional versions (Turnheim, 1998: pp. 19-36), which has been proposed in many regions, was used here as an *arum maculatum* among the palmettes.

There are closed palmettes as the preserved left and right decoration of the frieze. The left palmette preserves the right leaf axis and the rightmost palmette preserves the drilled outer contour of the left leaf axis. The tips of the three leaves of the closed palmette on the left are ring-spiraled (pointing inwards in a small volute) and are in contact with the upper leaf, connected by a thin thread. The leaves of *Arum maculatum* are similar to some Hellenistic (Erder, 1967, Plate XI.b. (Mousoleum of Belevi, above epistyle) and Roman (Başaran, 1995, Plate 6a (Trajan Period); Plate 9a-Sard, Temple of Artemis, Hadrian Period) lotus flowers from Anatolia. The closest similarity in terms of the leaves supporting the *arum maculatum* was used as a decoration accompanying the lotus flower on the altar of a sacerdos (priest) tomb dated to the Flavian period (Klöckner, 2017: pp. 348, 366-367, Fig.11). In a way, the arum leaves are very similar to the lotus leaves. The sepal is destroyed, but it rises above the inverted sepals on a high hub. The symmetrical metallic sepals, which rise upwards and turn to the right and left, similar to the central petals, terminate at the upper border of the frieze. The flower stalk, rising from the center of the sepals, disappears behind the foliage and ends again more vividly with the stalked fruit of *arum maculatum*. The open palmette is again composed of four leaves arranged on either side of an equal-edged axis leaf on a high central core. All leaves emerge from the triangular core. The leaves are vertical and thin at the point of emergence, then widen in an arc to the sides and turn upwards, becoming thinner at the tip. The outer contours of the flowers and leaves, which are in low relief, are carved with a deep groove, giving a high view from the frieze surface.

Therefore, the rich decorative conception of the Traian-Hadrian Period brought regional innovations as in the frieze with *arum maculatum*. The griffon frieze and the palmette-*arum maculatum* frieze indicate the presence of a regional production in the structure, which is largely similar to Anatolian examples with its anthemion and Ionian cymation decorations. The fact that the closest anthemion examples are found in the polygonal building

of Alexandria Troas indicates that it was built by the workshops of this city. The previously mentioned sexually symbolic and health uses also show its connection with this city. The architectural features and figural decorations indicate that the building belongs to the Roman Imperial (Hadrian) Period. The strong influence of 2nd-3rd century AD Anatolia is felt in the decorative features and local innovations are also evident in the architecture and decoration.

## CONCLUSION

*Arum maculatum*, known by various names including *arum* in Roman literature, *taro*, *golgas* and *colocasia* in the Middle East, and 'yılan yastığı' and around Gülpınar, an arid region, and its different properties caused it to be considered among the healing plants. In fact, its use in the anthemion instead of the lotus, the symbol of cleanliness, purity and rebirth, shows the meaning and importance attached to the arum, whose origins date back to the Etruscans.

From antiquity to the present day, *arum maculatum*, with its shape emphasizing sexuality as well as its positive and negative effects on human life, especially in the field of health, finds its place for the first time in Roman architecture among decorative weaves. Perhaps, apart from these sexual and healing properties, it was intended to emphasize a plant that has a cultic or divinely symbolic value associated with Apollo. The strong belief is that it was used in the cult of Apollo Smintheus with its presence in the sanctuary due to its dominant aspect related to health from antiquity to the present day and in a special treatment with the title of Apollo the healer (paean).

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## APPENDIX

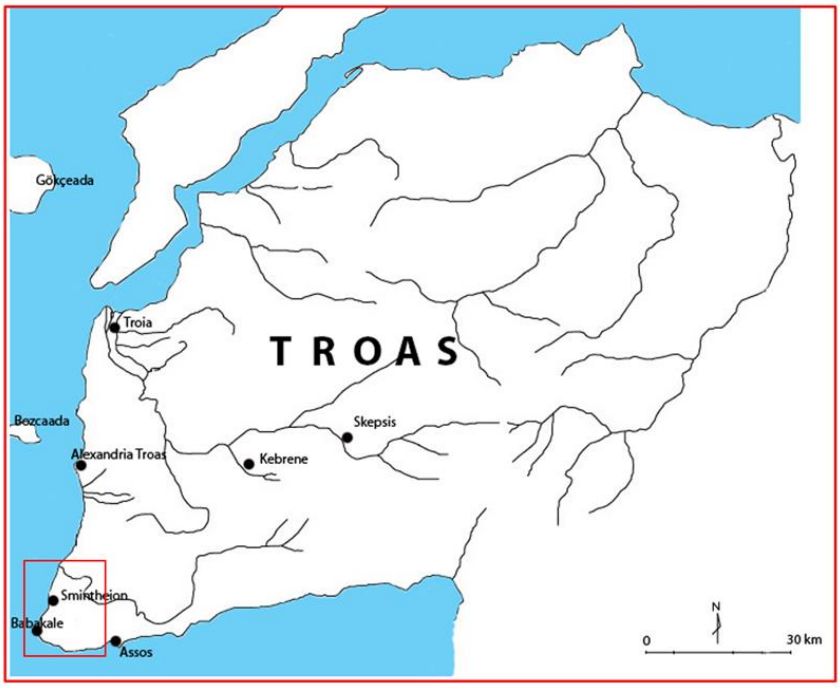


**Figure 1.** Map of the Troad Region.

**Figure 2**. Fragment of frieze block depicting *Arum Maculatum* from Gülpınar-Smintheion.

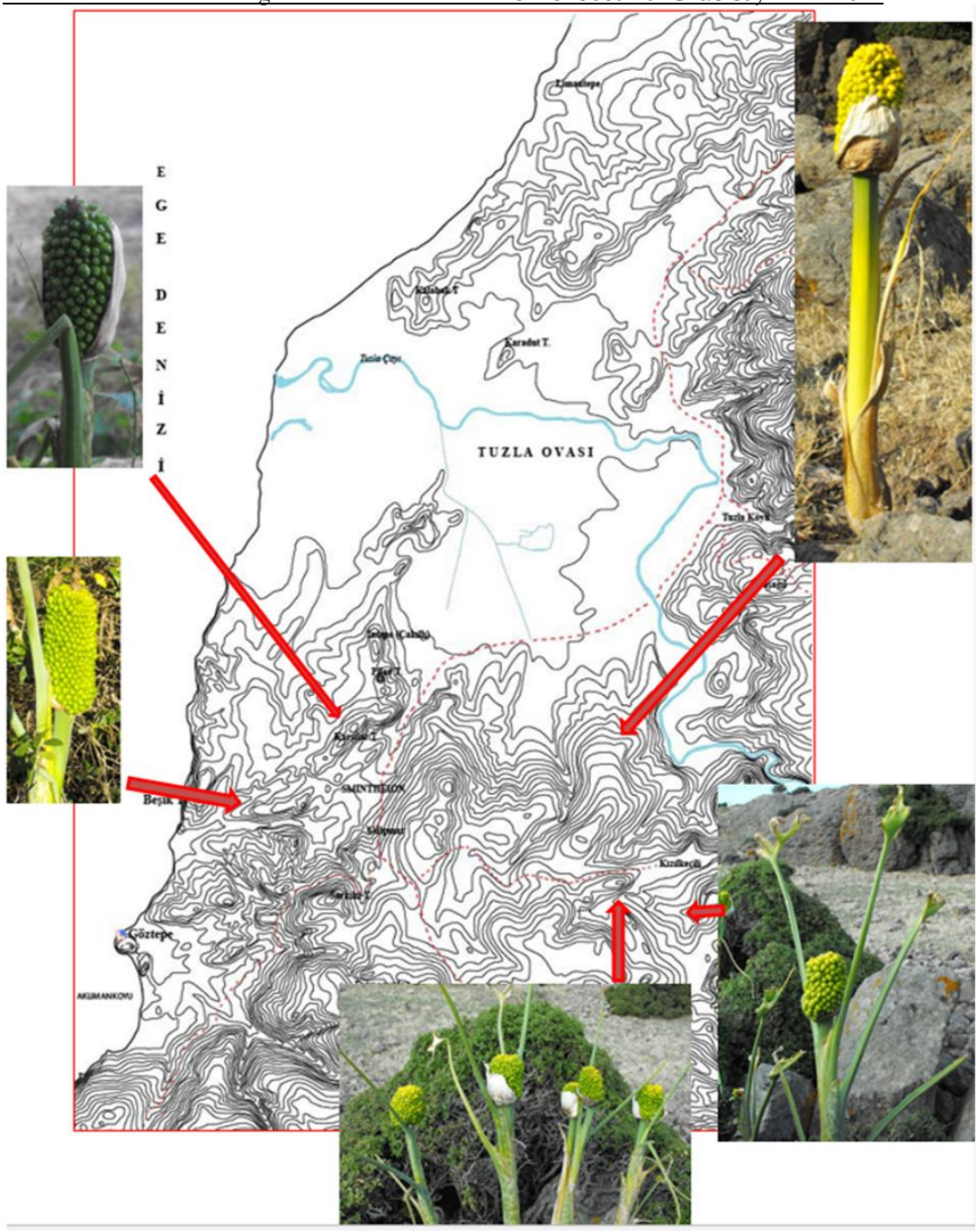


**Figure 3.** *Arum Maculatum* specimens in Gülpınar-Smintheion and its surroundings.