

## THE SOFFITS OF RHODIAPOLIS

### *RHODIAPOLIS SOFFİTLERİ*

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**Abstract:** The architrave soffit ornamentation of the buildings of the ancient city of Rhodiapolis located in Eastern Lycia form the subject of this article. Soffits as well as other ornament hold great significance in comprehending the design of the monumental architecture of the city. Amongst architectural structures investigated through excavation to date, there are various soffit ornaments carved on the face of almost 60 architrave blocks-pieces. There are both unique designs and rare examples amongst them. The reason for the few publications concerning this matter is due to the practice of evaluating these soffits together with the related ornamental structures they belong to, and because damage has resulted in fewer of them being recovered, in comparison with other ornamental works. Although the soffits display a parallel process in their form to other ornament employed on the architectural structures they belong to, through the different kinds of ornaments they contain, they make the most diverse and richly ornamented program of a site. For this reason, studying the variety of soffits found at the same site, in neighboring cities or within the same region in their entirety would make a most considerable contribution, in particular concerning the matter of sculptors' workshops. The aim of this article is to date the soffits found in the ancient city of Rhodiapolis and to provide a general assessment concerning these soffits.

**Keywords:** Eastern Lycia • Ancient City of Rhodiapolis • Architectural Decoration • Ornament • Soffit • Roman Period

**Öz:** Bu makalenin konusunu Doğu Likya'da yer alan Rhodiapolis antik kentinin yapılarına ait arşitrav bloklarının soffit bezemeleri oluşturmaktadır. Kentin anıtsal mimari dokusunun anlaşılmasında diğer mimari bezemelerin yanı sıra soffitler oldukça önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bugüne kadar ele geçen mimari parçalardan 60 arşitrav bloğu parçası üzerinde çeşitli soffit bezekleri yer almaktadır. Bezekler arasında şimdiye kadar rastlanılmayan ya da nadir karşılaşılan örneklerde bulunmaktadır. Konu ile ilgili yayın sayısının az olmasında soffitlerin ait oldukları bezekli mimari parçalarla birlikte değerlendirilmeleri ve tahribatlardan dolayı diğer bezekli parçalardan daha az ele geçmeleri büyük rol oynamaktadır. Ancak bezekli mimari parçalar arasında oldukça özgün bir konuma, forma ve bezeme programına sahiptirler. Soffitler her ne kadar stil olarak ait oldukları mimari parçaların diğer bezekleriyle koşut bir süreç gösterebilirler de içerdikleri farklı bezeme türleriyle bir yerleşimin bezeme programı açısından en fazla farklılık ve zenginlik gösteren süsleme ögesini oluştururlar. Bu nedenle aynı yerleşimde, komşu kentlerde veya aynı bölgede ele geçen soffitlerin bütünlük içerisinde incelenmesi özellikle atölye tespitlerinde büyük katkılar sağlayacaktır. Bu makalenin amacı Rhodiapolis antik kentinden ele geçen soffitlerin ait oldukları parçalar üzerinde yer alan diğer bezeklerle karşılaştırılarak tarihlendirilmesi ve Rhodiapolis soffit bezekleri üzerine genel bir değerlendirme yapmaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Doğu Likya • Rhodiapolis Antik kenti • Mimari Dekorasyon • Bezeme • Soffit • Roma Dönemi

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On the undersides of the architrave blocks that are placed on column capitals, each gap between two capitals is decorated with rectangular panels, either with or without ornament. These decorated spaces are called soffits<sup>1</sup>.

The first collective survey of soffits was carried out by M. Wegner in 1957<sup>2</sup>, and subsequently H. Abbasoğlu published a study of the Perge architraves in 1994<sup>3</sup>. That these soffits were evaluated together with the ornamented architectural elements to which they belong, and due to their poorer state of preservation than other elements carrying decoration due to damage, has played a significant part in the availability of only a limited number of collective publications on this matter. However, soffits have a considerable and distinctive position, form, and ornamental program, amongst other ornamented architectural elements. For example, facade decorations of those architectural elements with soffits underneath, such as the architrave, archivolt or coffer generally have fasciae, and an “almost templated” and rarely differentiated ornamental program, being composed of pearl series, egg series, lesbien kymation, and lotus palmette series, found carved on these elements. We find soffits carrying various ornamental programs, not only on different structures, but also on the undersides of the elements belonging to a single structure. Even though they display a parallel process to other ornament on the architectural elements to which they belong in terms of their style, with their diversified ornamental programs, the soffits represent the most varied and rich ornamental pattern of the ornamental program of any settlement. Therefore, examining the soffits found within the same settlement, in adjacent cities or in the same region as a whole would make a major contribution, particularly in determining the workshops. In addition, soffits are more instrumental than frontal decorations in linking blocks with non-fitting fracture surfaces, and in determining their relationship to each other.

Soffits were employed to decorate not only the undersides of architrave blocks but also on those of the archivolt and on coffered plates<sup>4</sup>. During the Archaic period and most of the Classical Era, soffit spaces were decorated in the form of frames with little or no ornament<sup>5</sup>. In general the architraves of these periods were formed through laying together two or three blocks<sup>6</sup>. Architectural elements of the structures of the Early Archaic Period and earlier comprised wooden columns and column capitals built upon rubble foundations. Since architraves interconnected the columns by sitting upon the column capitals and transferred the weight of the upper structure elements towards the columns, they were constructed by laying together two or more bonding timbers. The said technical necessity continued through tradition to be employed for a specific period in wooden architecture and then, during the process of transition from wooden to stone architecture. The soffits, situated on the undersides of the architraves consisting of two or more blocks, were decorated in different ways<sup>7</sup>. Whether architraves were composed of a single line of blocks or of

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<sup>1</sup> Wegner 1986/87, 93.

<sup>2</sup> Wegner 1957.

<sup>3</sup> Abbasoğlu 1994.

<sup>4</sup> Marquant 1909, 108; Alzinger 1974, 107 Fig. 159; Abbasoğlu 1994, 2; Öztürk 2009, 68-69 Fig. 41.

<sup>5</sup> Marquant 1909, 219-221.

<sup>6</sup> Marquant 1909, 107 Fig.124-125; Gruben 1986, Fig. 111, 144, 199, 252, 299, 316.

<sup>7</sup> For example, the soffit frame on the architraves of the Temple of Artemis at Magnesia, consist of two blocks which were decorated only on the centre of the front block. The architrave belonging to the Temple of Zeus at Olympia consists of three separate blocks but soffit ornament is situated in the centre of the middle block rather than at the junction of the blocks. Considering this three block architrave, soffit frames should be placed

more than one parallel line of blocks, the soffits were placed equidistant from the column capitals in such a manner that they would have overlapped the middle axis of the blocks to enrich the gap between the column capitals<sup>8</sup>.

In Attica, in a few examples from the Late Classical period, the soffit spaces were decorated by carved ornament, however in Anatolia, only the frames of the soffit spaces<sup>9</sup> of the same period were decorated with pearl-bead strings, lesbian kymation and egg-dart series<sup>10</sup>. In Anatolia, the soffits placed on the underside of the architrave blocks of the structures from Late Classical and Early Hellenistic periods display a slim, elongated and rectangular form. It resulted from the fact that abaci of Ionic and Doric capitals having a flat sided form<sup>11</sup>. Not being too sophisticated and deep, the soffits dating from this period usually cover one fourth or fifth of the underside of the architrave<sup>12</sup>. From the beginning of the Hellenistic period and into the Roman Imperial period, Anatolian soffits, with a few exceptions, were still rectangular shaped. However, the ends of the soffits began to be made with an arched and pointed form due to the protuberant form of the abacus flowers located on the abaci of Corinthian capitals, a development dependent upon the more extensive use of the Corinthian order in the buildings of this period<sup>13</sup>.

In general during the Roman period in Anatolia, the soffits, which were deepened in a thick, graded/profiled way had an unornamented frame<sup>14</sup>. In contrast with Anatolian practice,

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one by one in the flat area where the two outer blocks join the inner third block. This requires making two different soffit frames in the lower surface of the architrave. However, there is only one soffit panel in the centre of the middle block. See. Fn. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Wegner and Abbasoğlu have argued that the soffits are a technical application due to the concern to prevent the poor image caused by abrasion and fracture in the making and assembling process of the lower surfaces of architraves consisting of more than one block. Wegner 1957, 3-4; 1986, 93; Abbasoğlu 1994, 1. However, fractures from the assembling or fashioning stage would have to continue along the lower surface of the block. Accordingly, soffit frames also have to continue along the lower surface of the architrave. In some of the architraves that consist of more than one block, soffit being used on only one of the blocks forming the architrave indicates that the carved soffits found on these blocks was not due to any technical necessity; See Fn. 6. Moreover, even during the Roman Period, albeit known from only one single example, soffits located in the lower surface of the architraves consisting of more than one block have similar craftsmanship to the early period examples, Mars Ultor Temple: See; Wegner 1957, 2 Pl. 1a.; Stamper 2005, 134.

<sup>9</sup> Wegner 1978/80, 91-107; Rumscheid 1994, 315-316; Köster 2004, 160-161.

<sup>10</sup> Koldewey 1890, Fig. 21; Marquant 1909, 220-221 Fig. 270-272; Bauer 1968, Pl. 59. 2; Wegner 1978/80, 94-96 Fig. 1; Pülz 1989, 54; Rumscheid 1994, 315-316 Fig. 10. 7, 22. 1, 126. 4; Abbasoğlu 1994, 1. In some instances, the inside of the soffit areas are decorated with various painted ornamentation.

<sup>11</sup> With few exceptions in this period, soffits have a rectangular form. See. Wegner 1978/80, 91-4; Rumscheid 1994, 312, 315.

<sup>12</sup> Wegner 1978/80, 91-93.

<sup>13</sup> Wegner 1978/80, 93-94; Pülz 1989, 54; Rumscheid 1994, 315; Vandeput 1997a, 178; Köster 2004, 47, 160. Another example in which ends made pointed are tied to its head: Kadioğlu 2006, 112; Rossignani – Sacchi 2007, 369 Fig. 11-12.

<sup>14</sup> Gagniers *et al.* 1968, Fig. 21-23, 25; Wegner 1978/80, 94 Fig. 3-6, 15, 17; Vandeput 1997b, 401 Fig. 18-19; Köster 2004, Pl. 21. 4-5; 36. 3, 5; 38. 1, 2; 39. 2, 4, 7, 9; 40. 4-8; 41. 2, 4-6; 42. 2, 6; 43. 3; 47. 4. However, there are exceptions, See: Laodikeia, the Caracalla Nymphaeum: Gagniers *et al.* 1968, Fig. 27; Ephesos, the Hadrianus Temple: Wegner 1978/80, 97 Fig. 7; Smyrna, the Agora: Wegner 1978/80, 96 Fig. 10; Miletos, the Stadium Gate: Wegner 1978/80, Fig. 12; Miletos, the Propylon: Wegner 1978/80, Fig. 14a-b; Hierapolis, the Theatre: D'andria – Ritti 1985, XXV, Pl. 6.3-4; Sagalassos, the Basilica E1: Vandeput 1993, Fig. 85; Xanthos, the Theatre: Cavalier 2005, Pl. 8 Fig. 26-99.

undecorated framed soffits were not used in Rome or Italy<sup>15</sup>.

Some of the soffit ornament on Anatolian architraves produced during the Roman Imperial Period does not occupy large spaces on the underside of the blocks and they were formed as narrow panels<sup>16</sup>. In the period following the Roman Imperial Period, soffits gradually became more exaggeratedly decorated, as is the case for other decorative patterns employed in Roman art, and the soffit panels situated on the underside of architrave blocks became broader and after a while the undersides of the architrave began to be fully decorated in ornament<sup>17</sup>. Even though soffit spaces covered the whole underside of architraves in some cities of Anatolia, as at Perge and Sagalassos, the Anatolian tradition continued in the majority of cities and the narrow soffit type in general was preferred.

Even though a wide variety of decoration was employed on soffits, not all the architectural ornament employed on the vertical surfaces of a facade could be used in the soffits due to the narrowness of the soffit space. Differently from architectural elements such as architrave, frieze, and geison, the ornament employed on the soffit always has a uniform and non-inverted appearance whether observed from the inside or the outside. Soffit ornament is perceived invariably from all viewpoints since it is oriented to be viewed only from below, there is in terms of soffit composition no vertical ornament.

The ancient city of Rhodiapolis, situated in the eastern part of Lycia Region (Fig. 1), was first noticed in scientific terms by travelers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The city was first mapped by the British travelers, Th. Daniel, T. A. B Spratt and E. Forbes in their work, “*Travels in Lykia, Milyas and Cibyratis*, (1847)”, and later in 1889, in “*Reisen in Lykien Milyas und Kibyrtis Reisen im Südwestlichen Kleinasien II* (1889)” by the Austrian scientists, E. Petersen and F. von Luschan who for the first time inclusively published the city. However, the main focus of the work was upon the longest Greek inscription in Lycia on the blocks of the Mausoleum of Opramoas. The studies in



Fig. 1. Lycia

<sup>15</sup> Wegner 1978/80, 94.

<sup>16</sup> Sard mentions that the soffits in the temple of Artemis could be as wide as the abacus or a little wider. See; Butler 1925, 49.

<sup>17</sup> For this development see: Plommer 1959, 85-86; Koçel-Erdem 1996, 124-125.

subsequent years also focused on the Mausoleum of Opramoas. Yet, E. Kirckl<sup>18</sup> provided information concerning the city of Rhodiapolis with the help of the map he made and the photos he took in 1892.

The famous benefactor Opramoas and the Physician Heracleitus, born in this city in the II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., embellished the city with monumental structures. Therefore, the architectural ornament found here is of great importance in determining the quality, the program of ornament and the date of these structures.

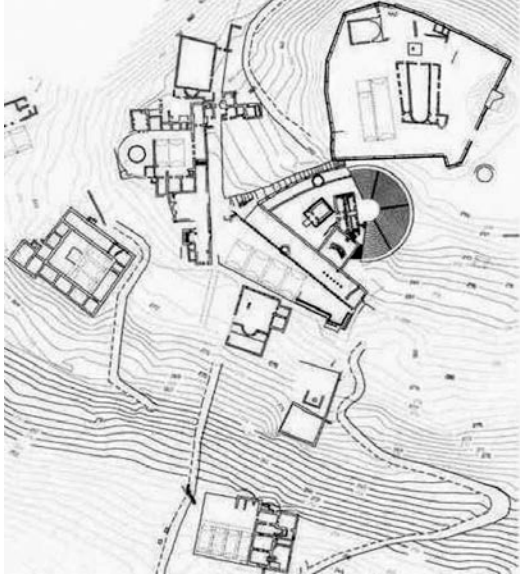


Fig. 2. Rhodiapolis City Plan

In consequence of the archeological excavations conducted at the ancient city of Rhodiapolis from 2006<sup>19</sup>, structures including the bathhouse, theatre, agora, avenue, two-storied stoa, Sebasteion, Asclepieion, the Stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum, Temple of Asclepius - Hygeia, Temple of Athena, Stoa of Opramoas, Mausoleum of Opramoas, Gymnasium and a church were unearthed (Fig. 2). In addition to other architectural ornament, the soffits discovered have a vital place in understanding the monumental architectural pattern of the city. Of the architectural elements found to date, 60 pieces of architrave block, all carved from limestone, carry a variety of soffit ornamentation, including some that are unique and other rarely found examples.

Only a few parts of the marble blocks employed in the architectural decoration of the structures have survived and during excavations the remains of a lime kiln dating from the East Roman period, constructed in the middle of the agora, was found. It was observed that many architectural elements such as capitals, architrave and geison blocks were beside the said lime kiln and had been broken into pieces to be converted into lime, and that architectural blocks of structures far away from the lime kiln had been brought to beside the lime kiln<sup>20</sup>. The architecture of the city and its architectural embellishment (columns, capitals, architraves, friezes, geisa, etc.) had suffered devastating damage in the Post-Antique period from lime burning and from the fire of 2000, walls broken off and architectural elements cracked into pieces as the stone employed for these structures was not heat-resistant<sup>21</sup>.

Architrave blocks found in the excavations, were divided into three fascias and the fascias were separated from each other by pearl beads and lesbain kymation<sup>22</sup> ornamentation. The cornices of the architrave blocks were decorated with egg-dart series and open-closed palmette friezes. The decorated area on these architrave blocks terminate with plain fillets 0.03 – 0.05 meter wide.

<sup>18</sup> Kirckl 2005.

<sup>19</sup> Çevik *et al.* 2008, 1-18; Çevik 2008, 18-36.

<sup>20</sup> Çevik *et al.* 2008, 9; İplikçioğlu 2008, 137.

<sup>21</sup> Çevik 2008, 17 Fig. 5-6; Çevik *et al.* 2009, 301.

<sup>22</sup> Although the recovered architraves were usually separated by pearl-beads, lesbain kymation ornamentation rather than pearl-beads were used to divide the second and third fascia on some architrave blocks.

The soffits decorating the undersides of architraves were carved in areas 0.10, 0.11 and 0.21 m. wide. Covering one third to one fifth of the 0.50-0.60 m. wide undersides of the architrave blocks, these so-called narrow soffits<sup>23</sup> as mentioned above, are typical of the soffits of architrave blocks found in many Anatolian cities in antiquity<sup>24</sup>. Ionic capitals, which were found at the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum of Rhodiapolis show that architrave blocks were placed onto Ionic capitals. The forms of these soffits are rectangular with concave and pointed ends conforming with the Anatolian tradition. This form is not really suitable given the form of Ionic capitals, being more appropriate to the form of a Corinth capital<sup>25</sup>.

The soffits of the architrave blocks of the same structure were decorated with different ornamentation in order to avoid the appearance of uniformity. The great majority of the surviving soffits were found in the the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum, the temple dedicated to Asclepius and Hygeia and the Round structure, which is beside the Asclepieion building complex and Temple of Athena. Although the soffits on the architraves found in the city to date are composed of repeated floral motifs, geometric motifs were also employed.

The type, termed plain garland (laurel leaves), was formed by placing laurel leaves in order, forming a line of two leaves, then another line with one in the middle, and a half leaf on each side, alternating (Fig. 3). Leaf motifs can be decorated both uni-directionally and bi-directionally. Laurel leaves were oriented to the centre from both sides. In general a rosette motif was placed at the centre, however one of the examples contains an acanthus leaf and a lotus or a tulip with a long stem at the centre (Fig. 4). Some other examples<sup>26</sup> contain two complete laurel leaves at the centre and two half leaves on either side, symmetrically oriented to both ends in a back-to-back manner from the midpoint of the soffit (Fig. 5). Laurel leaves had been employed as a favored decorative pattern in Anatolia for centuries, easily made, having a simple form<sup>27</sup>.

Another type, formed of olive leaves side by side or like on an ear of wheat, springing from each other<sup>28</sup>, has the form of two olive leaves repeatedly placed as springing from the inside of the previous set of two leaves or, as with an ear of wheat, springing from the same leaves (Fig. 6). Ornament is either uni-directional, on the soffits narrow side and is completed on the soffits other narrow side, or, interrelatedly/bi-directionally from both sides and can extend towards the soffit's

<sup>23</sup> Dinstl 1986/87, 168 Fig. 15-17; Abbasoğlu 1994, 7; Can 2005, 101; Kadioğlu 2006, 113, Fn. 590.

<sup>24</sup> Wegner 1957, 31-41; 1978/80, 92. 104; 1989, 162; Can 2005, 101 Fig. 20-23; Öztaner 2006, 137; Kadioğlu 2006, 112-14. Pl. 47.1-7.

<sup>25</sup> Since the beginning of the first century the soffit's narrow sides was made in this way. This form constitutes a recess for the abacus flowers on Corinthian capitals. It also became a compulsory standard for the Ionic order. See: Köster 2004, 160; Pülz 1989, 53-54 Fn. 320.

<sup>26</sup> For similar examples see; Köster 2004, Pl. 124. 3; Korkut-Grosche 2007, Cat. No. 105; Rohn 2010, Pl. 84; This motif was not only employed in the soffit's space, but is also found on the consols under the cornice block. See Gliwitzky 2010, Fig. 306.

<sup>27</sup> Vandeput 1997a, 44, 93, 104, 110, 115 Pl. 11. 2, 40. 4; For similar examples see: Naumann 1979, 22-23 Fig. 11, 4; Yegül 1986, 56-58, 64 Fig. 147; Pülz 1989, Pl. 31. 1; Abbasoğlu 1994, Pl. 2-6; Vandeput 1997a, 150-54 Pl. 55. 2. 3, 61. 2; Kadioğlu 2006, 114; Öztaner 2006, 137.

<sup>28</sup> For similar examples see: Abbasoğlu 1994, Pl. 7. 1-5; Köster 2004, 71 Pl. 40. 8; Kadioğlu 2006, 112 Pl. 47. 6; Rohn 2008, 162 Pl. 72, 77a.



Fig. 3. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum



Fig. 4. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of the Asclepieion-Hadrianeum



Fig. 5. Soffit detail from the Asclepius-Hygeia Temple



central motif. During the bath excavation, a single architectural fragment<sup>29</sup> was found (presumably part of a soffit) which includes this motif.

The soffit space of a single piece from the vicinity of the Temple of Asclepius – Hygeia was decorated by an ornament in the form of reed leaf (Fig. 7). Another decorative pattern was formed from convoluted branches extending from one end to the other of the soffit space. When the elements of this type are examined, it is observed that some examples contain convoluted branches sprouting from inside the acanthus formed mantle leaves<sup>30</sup> (Fig. 8). Whether the convoluted branches coming from the inside of acanthus leaves - which were elegantly adorned - are uni-directional or bi-directional could not be determined as the whole was not preserved. During the excavation of the round Structure, we also found small architrave pieces indicating the soffit spaces were decorated by plain convoluted branch/spirals. Those examples containing plain convoluted branches as the pattern of decoration in the soffit space are known to have been made in the Hellenistic Period<sup>31</sup>. In addition, this motif was also employed in structures dating from the second half of second century and we find this motif frequently at the beginning of third century A.D.<sup>32</sup>.

Another type of decoration in the soffit spaces comprises an ivy branch and leaves sprouting from this branch<sup>33</sup> (Fig. 9). An ivy branch has been carved extending from one end to the other of the soffit space. On the other hand, in a similar type of decoration, the ivy branch being applied from one end to the other in the soffit space was not decorated only by leaves<sup>34</sup> (Fig. 10). In addition

<sup>29</sup> Because the discovered piece is very small, we could not definitively determine that it was a part of a soffit, but this motif was usually employed on soffit areas.

<sup>30</sup> Convoluted branches can come out through different sepals. See; Abbasoğlu 1994, 11 Pl. 10-17; Kadioğlu 2006, 113 Pl. 47. 2.

<sup>31</sup> As the pieces acquired from the city of Rhodiapolis are fragmentary, it is not yet entirely clear if there were plain curves pulling through a leaf. For examples see; Pülz 1989, Pl. 31. 2; Wegner 1989, 162 Pl. 69; Rumscheid 1994, Pl. 186. 6; Abbasoğlu 1994, 11 Pl. 11.

<sup>32</sup> Pülz 1989, 125 Pl. 31. 2; Abbasoğlu 1994, 11 Pl. 10. 2; Kadioğlu 2006, 291-92 Pl. 32. 1; 47. 2; Lafli – Christoph 2011, 260-61 Abb. 28; Şimşek 2013, Fig. 19.

<sup>33</sup> For similar examples see; Doruk 1990a, 66; 1990b, 98; Abbasoğlu 1994, 11-2, 51-53 Pl. 12. 1-6, 13. 1-2; Vandeput 1997a, Pl. 45. 3. Dated to the end of the II<sup>nd</sup> century and the beginning of the III<sup>rd</sup> century; Wegner 1978/80, 106; Öztaner 2006, 137; Kadioğlu 2006, 112 Pl. 47. 5; Gliwitzky 2010, Fig. 171.

<sup>34</sup> See for similar examples: Abbasoğlu 1994, 11-12 Pl. 13. 3-6, 17. 5-6; Vandeput 1997a, Pl. 76. 3.

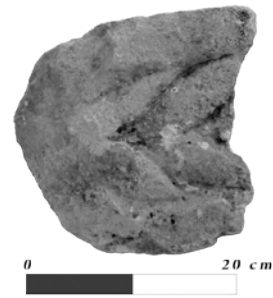


Fig. 6. Soffit detail from the Bath

Fig. 7. Soffit detail from the Asclepius –  
Hygeia TempleFig. 8. Soffit detail from the Asclepius –  
Hygeia Temple

to the leaves, bunches of grapes, smaller convoluted branches and korymbos<sup>35</sup> sprouting from the ivy branches were deployed to fill the gaps resulting from the convolution of the branches. Little sprouts and fruits that come from the ivy branches indicate a desire to replicate natural forms. We often found this motif which was very popular as a soffit ornament in Asia Minor. The ivy branch was not only used in the soffit's space but also used in front of the architrave and on door frames<sup>36</sup>. In another type, two plain convoluted branches sprout from the same direction and curl in differently<sup>37</sup> (Fig. 11-12). Small motifs such as the ivy leaf, the opium poppy and the rosette were placed in the gaps between the convoluted branches intersecting at different points.

Another example decorating the soffit space was found in the remains of the demolished city walls<sup>38</sup> (Fig. 13). Having been shaped using a drill and thereby generating some chiaroscuro, acanthus leaves were used on the element in decorative patterns<sup>39</sup>. The arrangement, comprising two complete leaves, one in the middle and a half leaf on either side, was directed from the short edge towards the central rosette motif. Drill marks remain clearly visible. Having been completely isolated from the ground, the leaves are completely independent from each other and only touch each other at their endpoints, while the leaves display a very lively and dynamic structure.

Another decorative motif, similar examples of which have been found to date only to the Hellenistic Period<sup>40</sup>, was formed by applying Rhombus-shaped motifs towards the central rosette in circle, continually extending from both ends (Fig. 14). No similar type of soffit ornamentation dating from the Roman Imperial Period has been found in any other city to date. Future excavation and research will indicate if similar examples had been employed.

<sup>35</sup> Rumscheid 1994, Beilage B "Efeu-Koymbos". It appears on different objects as a decorative motif in antiquity.

<sup>36</sup> Dinstl 1986/87, Fig. 26, 43; Vandeput 1997a, Pl. 18. 2; Cavalier 2005, Pl. 78 Fig. 221; Türkmen Peker 2013, Fig. 4. 1.

<sup>37</sup> For similar examples see; Mansel 1978, Fig. 346; Dinstl 1986/87, Fig. 22-23; Cavalier 2005, Pl. 17 Fig. 61. For similar examples, even though they are formed on wider soffits, See; Abbasoğlu 1994, 20 Pl. 26. 3-4, 27. 1-5.

<sup>38</sup> As a result of analysis of the dimensions and of the ornamentation of the piece, it is understood that it belonged to the Temple of Athena.

<sup>39</sup> See for similar examples: Mitchell 1995, 128 Pl. 75; Vandeput 1997a, Pl. 45.2; Can 2005, 102 Fig. 23.

<sup>40</sup> Schrammen 1906, Pl. 33; Mendel 1966, 622 No. 1411; Rumscheid 1994, 121 Pl. 126. 4, 127. 2; See for another example; Tölle-Kastenbein 1974, Fig. 70.



Some of the Rhodiapolis soffit decoration comprised mixed leaves and fruits. Two longitudinally fractured pieces of an architrave block, which were found in front of the Opramoas Sebasteion<sup>41</sup> could be restored thanks to this soffit decoration (Fig. 15). Whether the branches forming the decoration sprout from a vase or from the short edge of the soffit cannot be determined as the block is broken<sup>42</sup>. Even though the branches in the soffit space extend to both sides, and korymbos, ivy leaf and flower motifs appear on its top side, it can be determined that the decoration extends to the upper part of the flower motif.

The soffit space of another architrave block element found at the same site was decorated by ivy leaves, small convoluted branches, korymbos, rosette motif and a larger leaf on the top (Fig. 16). Even though there is no exactly similar example of this decorative pattern, comprising a combination of leaves and fruits, some herbal ornaments applied differently appear in other cities in Anatolia<sup>43</sup>. Another small decorative piece from the the stoa in front of the Asclepieion-Hadrianeum carries a leaf motif extending towards the end of the soffit ornament, a korymbos ornament immediately below this, and leaf patterns on both sides (Fig. 17). Another small piece found during excavations contains various ornaments differently oriented on a single branch (Fig. 18). A pointed leaf on the tip of a branch, a crescent-shaped leaf under it and an uppermost ornament consisting of

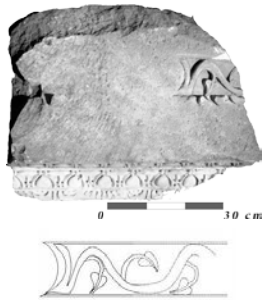


Fig. 9. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum

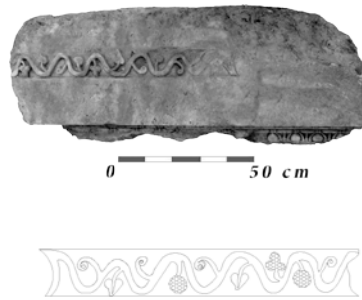


Fig. 10. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum



Fig. 11. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum



Fig. 12. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum



Fig. 13. Soffit detail from the Athena Temple



Fig. 14. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum

<sup>41</sup> It belonged to the stoa in front of Asclepieion and Hadrianeum. The stoa, started from in front of the Asclepieion, passing by the Hadrianeum and ended at the Opramoas family heroon.

<sup>42</sup> Soffit ornaments sprout from a vase which was located in the middle or narrow side of the soffit space in the second and third century A.D. See; Naumann – Kantar 1950, Pl. 24c; Yegül 1986, Fig. 149; Abbasoğlu 1994, 13 Pl. 27. 1-4; Vandeput 1997a, 104; Köster 2004, 160-161.

<sup>43</sup> Vadeput 1997b, 401.

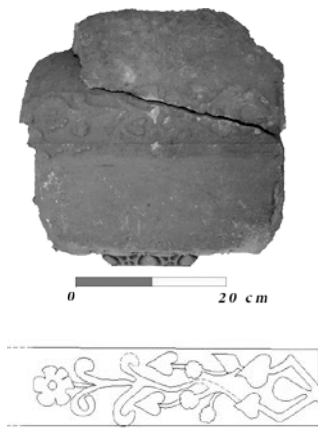


Fig. 15. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum



Fig. 16. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum

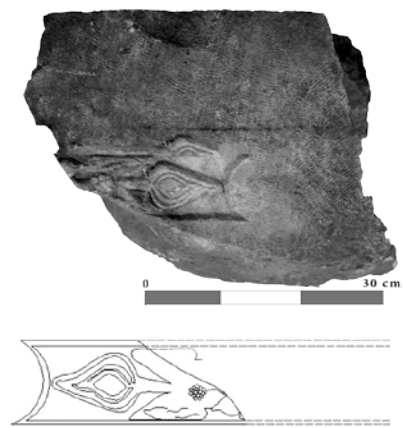


Fig. 17. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum

a stylized leaf motif with the outline twice offset towards its center, similar examples of which have not been found to date.

Another part of the architrave block was found in the 2012 excavation season the underside of which includes a new soffit motif. This motif is different from other soffit's ornament which was found from Rhodiapolis as the soffit's chosen ornament was a meander/swastika motif<sup>44</sup> (Fig. 19). Only a small part of the decoration has been preserved under the architrave blocks and in consequence only the beginning section is known. The soffit's narrow sides, different from other examples, wasn't carved in pointed and semicrescent form, but is carved in the straight form. The soffit edge carved in this way was probably a consequence of the motifs' form<sup>45</sup>. The meander motif is employed as a main soffit ornament, as well as motifs that are employed as a side dimension motif on the wider soffit areas<sup>46</sup>. This ornament was employed during the Archaic and Classical Period<sup>47</sup>. From the Hellenistic period<sup>48</sup> it was employed fairly frequently as a decorative motif, although it is found frequently on structures dated to the second half of the second century A.D in Asia Minor<sup>49</sup>. The meander, a pattern consisting of crossing and recrossing bands, while we do not know if it included any motifs such as rosettes or even animals<sup>50</sup>.

The inclusion of Lycia like Pamphylia and Cilicia, into the Roman Empire in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. caused artists to remain under the influence of the Ionian schools of art<sup>51</sup>. Some of the soffits from the Roman Period found in Rhodiapolis also appear in many other cities in Anatolia and that the

<sup>44</sup> Abbasoğlu 1994, Pl. 28 Fig. 1-4, Pl. 29 Fig. 3-4; Vandeput 1997a, Pl. 25. 5; Cavalier 2005, Pl. 8 Fig. 29; Gliwitzky 2010, Fig. 331.

<sup>45</sup> This motif was employed on the soffit area which has straight carved narrow sides. See; Fn. 44.

<sup>46</sup> Abbasoğlu 1994, Pl. 24. 1-2, 4-5; Cavalier 2005, Pl. 8 Fig. 29; Gliwitzky 2010, Fig. 331.

<sup>47</sup> Rumscheid 1994, 284.

<sup>48</sup> Rumscheid 1994, 284-285 Pl. 3. 7, 11. 5, 21. 4, 36. 4, 77. 6, 83. 1, 110. 1, 182. 1-2.

<sup>49</sup> Vandeput 1997a, 74 Pl. 25. 5; Cavalier 2005, 103 Pl. 15 Fig. 56b.

<sup>50</sup> Wegner 1957, Pl. 22b; 1978/80, Fig. 9a; 1989, Pl. 69, 1; Cavalier 2005, Pl. 81. Fig. 232.

<sup>51</sup> Can 2005, 104.

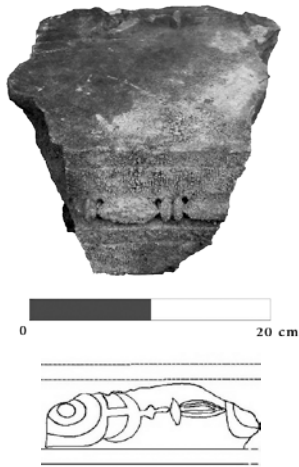


Fig. 18. Soffit detail from the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum

contain some ornamentation specific to the city can be explained through craftsmen working freelance, in addition to a regional or a local workshop. In Anatolia, particularly from the period of Emperor Hadrianus onwards, construction activity began to increase and in consequence the ornamentation employed improved both in its quality and quantity. During this period, the intensive use of the drill, the isolation of motifs from the background, chiaroscuro and vivid decorative structure characterize the baroque style, which continued under the Antonines and also during the Severan Period.

The dating of soffit decoration without other supporting data is very difficult. For this reason, while dating the ornamentation of these soffits, we have to take into account other ornamentation on the front of the architrave blocks. When the pieces from the city were examined, the ornamentation from the Temple of Athena are of a higher quality than the ornamentation on other structures' architrave blocks. This ornament has a succulent and well-rounded structure. When we analyze the ornament on piece fronts, we find the axis of the pattern's ornament adjusts to each other's. When the front faces of the architrave blocks pieces from the Temple of the God Asclepius and the Goddess Hygeia, are examined, we can clearly see the axis between ornament was spoiled. The architrave block pieces from the Round Structure have ornamental patterns on its front side which are largely broken. Only the ornament between the fascias on the front face of the architrave blocks are preserved. For this reason it is hard to say if there is any axial adjustment between the ornamental patterns on the front face. The protected surviving ornamental patterns included intensive drill holes. It was observed that the workmanship of the architrave blocks of the the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum are of a lower-quality than those of the other structures. In fact, the soffit motifs which consisted of the repetition of successive measurements/forms was changing. It is observed that the compatible ornament and workmanship of the period of the Emperor Hadrianus was abandoned and the former axial harmony and symmetry was already ruined in the architrave block ornament employed on the stoa in front of the Asclepieion-Hadrianeum. The reasons for the low quality of the workmanship of these ornamental patterns were, in part, the consequence of the location of the city, as well as its economic circumstances. The ornamentation on the architrave blocks of the Temple of Athena and the Temple of Asclepius-Hygeias' were fashioned in a more elaborate manner and more meticulously than was the case with the ornamentation on the architrave blocks of the the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum and the Round Structure.

Examination of finds in archaeological sites, like other ornamentation, soffit forms, decorations, and other materials

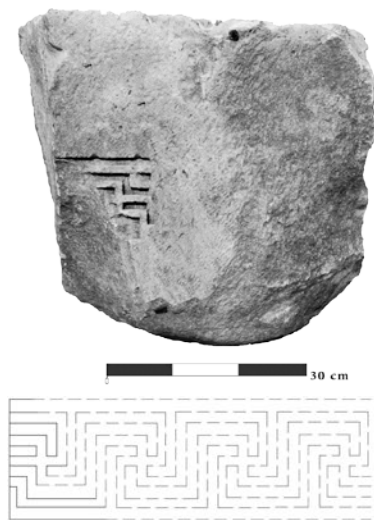


Fig. 19. Soffit detail from the Athena Temple

show<sup>52</sup> there is a harmony between the ornamentation of the Temple of Athena and the Temple of Asclepius – Hygeia and the ornamentation of the architrave blocks` front side from these temples reflect the characteristics of the second half of the II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.<sup>53</sup>. On the other hand, the harmony of ornamentation and the quality of workmanship is not present on the elements found in the the stoa in front of Asclepieion-Hadrianeum and the Round structure. The elements found at these sites can be dated to the end of the II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. and the early III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. Both the assessment of the ornament on the front face and the soffit spaces without frame and ornament is important in the dating of finds. In the second and third centuries A.D., the frame of the soffits were not decorated, and also the edges of the soffits were left straight or profiled, supporting these datings for the soffit ornamentation<sup>54</sup>. In addition, some of the ornamental patterns employed in the soffit space are compatible in time with the time when these same motifs were employed in Anatolia's other cities<sup>55</sup>.

#### Figure Sources:

Fig. 1. [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ancient\\_Cities\\_of\\_Lycia.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ancient_Cities_of_Lycia.png)

Fig. 2. Excavation Archive of Rhodiapolis.

Fig. 3-19. Hülya KÖKMEN SEYİRCİ.

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<sup>52</sup> Soffits of the Trajan period end as the narrow soffit type, frameless and shaped in a half-moon at the two tips. See; Wegner 1978/80, 93-94; 1989, 162.

<sup>53</sup> The epigraph located on the pedestal in the temple dedicated to the God Asclepius and the Goddess Hygeia See; TAM II. 3, 906-910; İplikçioğlu 2010, 157.

<sup>54</sup> Köster 2004, 160-161; Kadioğlu 2006, 114.

<sup>55</sup> See; Fn. 29.

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