



SMINTHEION CULTIC CAVE AND SACRED SPRING IN THE LIGHT  
OF ANCIENT SOURCES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS  
*ANTİK KAYNAKLAR VE ARKEOLOJİK BULGULAR IŞIĞINDA  
SMINTHEION'DAKİ KÜLT MAĞARASI VE KUTSAL KAYNAK*



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OANNES

Uluslararası Eskiçağ Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi – International Journal of Ancient History  
5/1, Mart – March 2023 Samsun  
E-ISSN: 2667-7059 (Online)  
<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/oannes>

**Makale Türü-Article Type** : **Araştırma Makalesi - Research Article**  
**Geliş Tarihi-Received Date** : **16.12.2022**  
**Kabul Tarihi-Accepted Date** : **27.02.2023**  
**Yayın Tarihi – Publication Date** : **29.03.2023**  
**Sayfalar-Pages** : **137 – 165**  
**doi** : <https://doi.org/10.33469/oannes.1220048>

This article was checked by Viper  or 

**Atf – Citation:** KAPLAN, D., “Smintheion Cultic Cave and Sacred Spring in the Light of Ancient Sources and Archaeological Findings”, *OANNES – Uluslararası Eskiçağ Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5/1, Mart 2023, ss. 137 – 165.







## SMINTHEION CULTIC CAVE AND SACRED SPRING IN THE LIGHT OF ANCIENT SOURCES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

### ANTİK KAYNAKLAR VE ARKEOLOJİK BULGULAR IŞIĞINDA SMINTHEION'DAKİ KÜLT MAĞARASI VE KUTSAL KAYNAK

Doç. Dr. Davut KAPLAN

#### Abstract

All the sanctuaries of Apollo in Greece and Anatolia were built at or near the springs because he is the god of prophecy. The sanctuaries of Apollo were sometimes built directly on next to or near spring water coming out of the cave, as in Smintheion. Caves, sacred places for people living in rural areas at the beginning for sheltering and communicating with the gods, lost their functions, albeit a little, with the birth of temples. According to ancient sources and coin descriptions, the cave in Smintheion is understood to have been an essential sanctuary since the establishment of the Apollo Smintheus cult. Construction of the Hellenistic temple near the cave where the water source comes out, the cult has lost its function, but the water coming out of the cave has always been used in the service of the gods. Although Apollo Smintheus (Apollo, the lord of mice) was initially known as a god associated with mice, it is known that mice actually aid in divination. However, in the inscriptions at the entrance of the Great

#### Öz

Yunanistan ve Anadolu'daki Apollon kutsal alanlarının hepsinin su kaynağı başına veya yakınına kurulmalarının nedeni, kehanet tanrısı olmasıdır. Apollon kutsal alanları bazen doğrudan bir su kaynağı üzerine veya yanına ya da Smintheion'da olduğu gibi mağaradan çıkan kaynak suyu yakınına kurulmuştur. Başlangıçta kırsal kesimde yaşayan insanların barınma ve tanrularla ilişki kurma amaçlı kutsal mekanları olan mağaralar, tapınakların doğuşu ile bu işlevlerini az da olsa kaybetmişlerdir. Smintheion'daki mağara da antik kaynaklar ve sikke tasvirlerine göre Apollon Smintheus kültürünün kuruluşundan itibaren önemli bir kült alanı olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Su kaynağının çıktığı mağara yakınına Hellenistik tapınağın inşa edilmesi ile bu kült işlevini kaybetmiş ancak mağaradna çıkan su her zaman tanrı hizmetinde kullanılmıştır. Başlangıçta Apollon Smintheus (farelerin efendisi Apollon) genelde farelerle ilişkili bir tanrı olarak bilinmesine rağmen aslında farelerin de kehanette yardımcı bir hayvan oldukları

Bath in Smintheion, it is understood that a priest, who contributed to the agonistic games in the 2nd century A.D., was expressed as a hypophet, carrying out a cult practice related to water. Ancient sources, inscriptions, and coin depictions reflect this deep-rooted tradition of the existence of this cave and spring in Troy, as Apollo is a god of Anatolian origin. Therefore, this cave and spring to the east of the Temple of Apollo Smintheus must have been used for divination. In the first part of this study, geographical features, topography, and geological structure, which were the reason for the water source in the establishment of Smintheion in this area, were discussed. Afterward, the ancient texts about the cult of Apollo Smintheus, the inscriptions, and archaeological findings obtained from the excavations were mentioned, and it was revealed that the cave where the water came out was used as a sacred cave, and the spring was used for divination.

bilinir. Oysa Smintheion'da Büyük Hamam girişindeki yazıtlarda agonistik oyunlarda katkısı olan MS 2.yy'da bir hypophet olarak ifade edilen bir rahibin su ile ilişkili kült uygulaması gerçekleştirdiği anlaşılmaktadır. Antik kaynaklar, yazıtlar ve sikke tasvirleri bu mağara ve su kaynağının Apollon'un Anadolu kökenli bir tanrı olarak Troia'da da varlığı bu köklü geleneği yansıtmaktadır. Bu nedenle Apollon Smintheus Tapınağı'nın doğusundaki bu mağara ve kaynak kehanet amaçlı kullanılmış olmalıdır. Bu çalışmanın ilk bölümlerinde Smintheion'un bu alana kurulmasında su kaynağının nedeni olan coğrafi özellikler, topografya ve jeolojik yapı ele alınmıştır. Devamında Apollon Smintheus kültü ile ilgili antik metinlere ve kazılardan ele geçen yazıtlar ve arkeolojik bulgulara değinilmiş ve suyun çıktığı mağaranın kutsal mağara, su kaynağının ise kehanet amaçlı kullanıldığı ortaya konmuştur.

**Keywords:** Smintheion, Gülpınar, Sacred Spring, Cult Cave, Apollo Smintheus.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Smintheion, Gülpınar, Kutsal Kaynak, Kült Mağarası, Apollon Smintheus.

## The Topography and Geography of Gülpınar

### Introduction

Gülpınar-Smintheion sanctuary is one of the most important centers of the cult of Apollo in Anatolia. In ancient texts, there are many place names where Apollo was worshiped with the epithet Smintheus. However, the Smintheion in Gülpınar is distinguished from the others with its monumental architecture. Gülpınar, which hosts the Smintheion, the largest sanctuary of the Troad, was also the scene of settlement in the Prehistoric Period. From the beginning, different societies left their mark in Gülpınar, which was never abandoned. The reason they live here is because of geopolitical, geological-topographical, and economic reasons. Although there is no evidence for Today, the Hittite traces known from Troy must have been in Gülpınar as well. While this sanctuary of Apollo, whose origin is based in Anatolia, was deployed to the westernmost point of the Çanakkale region, of course, the water source of life around it was taken into consideration. This god of Anatolian origin was called 'smintheus' with a unique name in and around the Troas region and

had a cult with Apollo Smintheus with this title from Anatolia. The god Smintheus, also mentioned by Homer, was worshiped initially in the cave, then in various temples, and finally in the Hellenistic temple until Late Antiquity. The continuity of the Smintheus cult stems from the spring in which the sanctuary was established and the origin of the god. This sacred spring had the most crucial role in equipping the sanctuary with monumental bath structures in the Roman Period.

The Smintheion (Apollo Smintheus Sanctuary) is in the south-west corner of the Troas region and near the ancient cities of Hamaxitos and Chryse (Fig. 1). Today, it is on the outskirts of Gülpınar Village settlement of Ayvacık District of Çanakkale<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 2). The Smintheion is the most magnificent and great sanctuary in the northwest region of Anatolia during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Gülpınar was first inhabited approximately 7000 years ago. This prehistoric settlement is spread over a huge area from the cave with a water source to the sacred road<sup>2</sup>, which is accepted as the entrance to the sanctuary. Within the borders of Smintheion, there are both Prehistoric (Chalcolithic) settlements and structures belonging to the Ancient Greek and Roman cultural periods (Fig. 3).

The prehistoric settlement was established in the area called Gülpınar Boynu, between the Gülpınar Ayağı Valley and the valley floor that continues towards the Tuzla Plain. It is understood that those who lived in the prehistoric period preferred the sun-facing surface and ridges of a small stream that the spring water flows and feeds as a settlement area. The reason for this is the spring water coming out of the caves and the stream bed that flows right next to it in winter, the fertile Tuzla Plain, and the Aegean Sea, which provides abundant seafood and transportation. This prehistoric settlement area with an average height of 60 m from the sea slopes slightly towards the east. Over time, this sloping flat area was also filled with alluvium. In the early Period, there was a small stream or spring water foot in the east of it, passing through Today's modern Gülpınar settlement and flowing towards the Tuzla Plain. The Roman period settlement generally follows the ridge-Gülpınar neck on the western part of this small stream.

As it turns out, the spring water and rainwater coming out of the cave were used for irrigation and other purposes, as well as carrying miles for agriculture, while flowing with a sweet slope from this small stream towards the Tuzla Plain. However, due to the growth of the settlement and increasing need for sanctuary, monumental structures were built in the Roman and Late Antiquity periods on this small stream, filled with alluvium and flattened (Fig. 3).

The surface's most striking structures and materials are the remains of the Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Periods. The most notable aspect of the sanctuary is that it hosts the Temple of Apollo Smintheus, where the subjects mentioned in Homer's Iliad are treated as reliefs (Fig. 2, 3). In addition, besides the subjects from Cypria, Iliupersis, and Ilias Mikra, the temple's architectural features are considered unique for the Hellenistic

<sup>1</sup> Özgünel, 2001, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Kaplan, 2016.

Period. This temple is located in the upper part of the sanctuary, close to the cave with the water spring. The sanctuary also has Ottoman Period Fountains and Laundries<sup>3</sup>.

### **Geology and Water Resources of the Gülpınar**

The geological structure of the region on which it was founded has an outstanding contribution to the existence of Smintheion and its monumental structures. In the south of Tuzla Plain, in the section up to Akliman, the boundary between the Upper Miocene (marine sediment) layers and the volcanic basement is observed<sup>4</sup>. Especially the valley-like depression (Çelen Bağları) between Tuzla Plain and Gülpınar was formed between these two units. To the east of it is a wholly volcanic basement, and to the west are Upper Miocene sedimentary layers<sup>5</sup>. There is no stream in this depression extending in the northeast-southwest direction. This depression, which has the feature of a "main valley" for the waters flowing from the environment, is not shaped by rain and spring waters; on the contrary, it is a structural formation<sup>6</sup>. Here Smintheion is at the highest point of this valley, namely the Gülpınar Trough<sup>7</sup>. The modern settlement of Gülpınar is on the eastern slope of this valley. The base of Today's Gülpınar settlement consists of blasted volcanic masses<sup>8</sup>. For this reason, Gülpınar and its surroundings are named a volcanic plateau<sup>9</sup>.

The west of this volcanic structure, on which the modern Gülpınar settlement sits, is determined by the border where the water sources come to the surface. Spring waters give life to the environment by the accumulation of rainwater accumulating on the volcanic base and rising to the surface at the point where the volcanic base ends. The line where these spring waters come out continues along the eastern border of the Gülpınar Trough, where they leak from the volcanic base. On the line where these waters emerge, Hellenistic and Roman period water structures, Ottoman Period Gülpınar fountains, and laundries were placed<sup>10</sup>. As a result of rapid urbanization and use of technology, and the drying up of the resources of the wells drilled for excessive irrigation, these water structures have been completely abandoned. Some have been cut off, dried up, or turned into ruins, unlike a water reservoir used only for irrigation. The only water source that survives among these is the water source coming out of the cave and feeding the Koca Pınar, which is still used Today. Therefore, the springs, the source of life that started their journey with the rain, come back to the earth with the waters leaking from the cave.

Gülpınar and its environment, where Smintheion is located, is the driest and least rainy region of the Troas (Çanakkale) territory (Fig. 1) today.

<sup>3</sup> Kaplan, vd., 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Kayan, 1994: 37, Şekil 11a, 64.

<sup>5</sup> Kayan, 1994: 64.

<sup>6</sup> Kayan, 1994: 41.

<sup>7</sup> Özgünel, 2001: 2- 3.

<sup>8</sup> Kaplan, 2013b: 117-118.

<sup>9</sup> Özgünel, 2001: 1.

<sup>10</sup> Kaplan, vd., 2016.

Describing the southern coast of Troas, which is inserted into the Aegean Sea with a promontory, J. M. Cook describes the west of Assos, i.e., Today's Babakale-Gülpınar-Tuzla region 300-400 m above the sea, with a total population of 2866 inhabitants (you can hear the jackals at Night), a few small defines it as a low plateau with a village settlement<sup>11</sup>. The notes of the first researchers, who thought that life was difficult without fields and gardens in an unproductive and barren region, draw attention to the region. When the villagers were asked about the impact of water scarcity on their agricultural work or their lives, they answered, 'they have it all (*nihil deest: we are not poor, we are not rich either*)<sup>12</sup>.

The region's water needs were supplied from ancient times until the 1970s from underground waters and life-supporting wells, of which there are hundreds of examples in the surrounding area. However, since Smintheion is not an urban settlement, it was established by the region's abundant water source instead of a river or a stream like other cities<sup>13</sup>. Even Today, rainwater is insufficient, such as wells and fountains that do not flow continuously. Well water is often needed for drinking and animal watering. However, unlike the streams and small springs that dry up in the surrounding area during the summer months, the spring water coming out of the cave in Smintheion is at the forefront with its life-giving feature. Here, the prehistoric settlement and the sanctuary of Apollo Smintheus supply their needs with the spring water coming out of this cave (Fig. 2, 3). This spring has a primitive and unique natural structure within the water buildings. However, although the sanctuary is the reason for its existence, it has undergone many physical changes over thousands of years.

### **Location, Alteration of the Cave and Spring Water**

There are three separate caves in Smintheion, the first of which has a spring and belongs to the Hellenistic Period, the second is the rock shields overlooking the Gülpınar Stream, and the third is on the slope overlooking the Karaağaçlık locality (the cave entrance is closed)<sup>14</sup>. At the top of the cult settlements, there is a cave with the spring water of the Temple regions (Fig. 2, 3). The point of this cave close to the Hellenistic Temple is to the east of the temple. The relationship between the cave and the Apollo temples is known<sup>15</sup>. In this respect, one of the first conditions to be found in worship and other ritual practices is the sacred spring or water required for purification. In a way, the fact that Smintheion has elements such as caves and sacred springs

<sup>11</sup> Cook, 1973: 237-238; Cook also gives information about Gülpınar (Külahlı), stating that there are 552 people living in the village 100-150 m above the sea, according to the 1940 census and that it had 300 households in 1959.

<sup>12</sup> Today, the area starting from Gülpınar to the sea is covered with modern olive groves. In addition, the irrigation dam built under the Kızılkeçili Village and the agriculture in the Tuzla Plain are in a situation that exports agricultural products, especially olive oil, beans, peppers, tomatoes, and eggplants, contrary to the rural production of the previous Period.

<sup>13</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 231-239.

<sup>14</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 233; Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>15</sup> Cleland, 1933; Elderkin, 1941; Croon, 1967: 242; Özgünel, 2008a: 40; Ustinova, 2009a; Ustinova, 2009b: 109-121.

demonstrates that it provides the necessary condition for establishing the sanctuary here. For this reason, Smintheion is one of the best examples of sanctuaries in the countryside<sup>16</sup>, found independently at the water source and away from the cities.

The only source of life in Smintheion, which does not have many water sources, is this water that emanates from the tuff rocks and comes out of the caves. Since all the structures built around the spring served religious purposes, the earliest example of these structures and, at the same time, their natural structure must have been this cave. Therefore, both the caves and the spring water gushing out from these caves led to the establishment of a sanctuary here and subsequently gave birth to an architectural structure largely dependent on water. Like some structures in the sanctuary during the Hellenistic and later Roman periods, the cave was covered by alluvium and turned into a reservoir, as can be understood from the additions of different periods and water channels.

Over thousands of years, both the function of the cave and the systems related to its use, since it contains plenty of water, have also changed, and the road leading to the olive groves and gardens on the skirts of Today's modern Gülpınar settlement have remained under it. Although the ways and purposes of transporting and using water were different, the inhabitants of the Prehistoric Gülpınar settlement and those who actively used the Smintheion survived with this water coming out of the cave. With its life-giving feature, it was also used by the villagers of the modern settlement for drinking and other basic needs from late antiquity until the end of the 1980s.

R. N. Spratt states that he saw two beautiful springs around the temple, one of which came out of a small cave<sup>17</sup>. The cave, which could be seen (partially) about a half-century ago, and the source that comes out of it have changed considerably Today (Fig. 2). Today, it is under the road from the modern Gülpınar settlement to Hamaxitos. Especially in the last century, it has been completely forgotten with the construction of a few olive oil workshops-factories around it. The cleaning of Roman water channels coming out of the cave was carried out in 2010. After the water of the cave was drained, it was photographed and brought to the agenda again.

Both the baths and ancient sources and the importance of water in the functioning of the oracle at Smintheion were other reasons to study and investigate the cave. The aim was to examine the state of the water coming out of the cave to the east of the temple and the shape of the cave. Access to the cave was provided by several vertical funnels found during the excavations of the Roman villa (doctor's houses) located east of the temple (Fig. 3). Afterwards, the accumulated water in the cave was discharged from these vertical funnels with water pumps. Using more than one water pump to drain the water ultimately allowed us to identify the cracked bottom surface of the cave. The reason for this was the possibility of working for a short time due to the rise in the water level in the cave, which is entirely under the alluvium. A quick observation was made, and sketch and section drawings of the cave

<sup>16</sup> Pedley, 2005: 50-52; Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>17</sup> Spratt, 1856: 237.



were prepared. The cave consisted of many interconnected galleries<sup>18</sup> (Fig. 4, 5).

It was documented that the water came to the surface boiling from a layer of natural rock from the ground and springing out from the tuff layers at some points in the cave, which consists of natural rock on all sides (Fig. 6-7). Smintheion cave consists of different interconnected galleries. However, the entrance to the cave, under the alluvium, is provided by three separate funnels at the road level on the hill. The cave was converted into a water reservoir during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and it was covered with alluvium about a hundred years ago, inconspicuously. The cave, which remained under dense alluvial soil for half a century, is approximately 5-8 m below the surface Today (Fig. 5).

In different periods, the entrances of the caves in the direction of the flow of this water were built with unnatural wall sets (Fig. 6) and transferred to the sanctuary and other buildings. It is also challenging to excavate around it due to its modern houses and roads. For this reason, we do not have the early period cave shape, finds, and cult practices. The walls added later were built to support the entrances of the caves. The most important reason for collecting water in caves is the construction of a monumental temple moving away from the source and the necessity of meeting the water needs of other social buildings such as baths<sup>19</sup>. However, in the Late Hellenistic-Early Roman Period, a higher water level was obtained by artificially raising the top of the rock embankment<sup>20</sup> (Fig. 4, 5). This application did not cause natural deterioration on the rock surface where the water source comes out. In the late Period, especially in the Roman Period, it was taken from the water source and moved to larger reservoirs<sup>21</sup> (Fig. 3, 4).

As we mentioned above, it is understood from the water reservoirs accumulated in the galleries in front of the spring that the shape or appearance of the cave was not like that at the beginning. Because as you approach the water source, it is clearly understood that the cave-shaped rock structure and the natural structure in the source are preserved<sup>22</sup>.

Unlike the information transmitted by Spratt and later orally by the public, there are two more caves where the water comes out. However, the properties and distances of the two sources expressed by Spratt have yet to be discovered.

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<sup>18</sup> Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>19</sup> Kaplan, 2013a: 101.

<sup>20</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 233; The purpose of obtaining this high water level is to collect the scattered water resources at one point and put them into use in order to meet the water needs of the sanctuary and the surrounding structures, especially in the Roman Period. This practice has continued until recent years by using modern methods to meet the drinking water needs of Gülpınar.

<sup>21</sup> Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>22</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 233; Kaplan 2013b: 101-102; In the studies carried out to see the water source spring out inside the cave and leaking from the walls, only a 1.70 m water level was lowered and photography was possible in the caves.

The source, which can be identified and located at the top level, consists of two separate caves with different galleries (Fig. 4, 5). The location of the other source could not be determined. The third cave possibly referred to as a bone well is the cave where the Hellenistic canal, which should also have a water source, connects<sup>23</sup> (Fig. 4). It is certain that this second cave, which can be identified in the southern part of the modern road, also contains a water source. The water of this spring, which was used together with the upper water source in the Hellenistic Period, was blocked in the Roman Period and directed to two separate caves (reservoirs) located above to obtain plenty of water or to increase the amount of water (Fig. 4, 5).

Two caves in the upper code with different galleries are connected from below (in a way that can be passed by diving into the water) (Fig. 4-5). Therefore, the cave seen by Spratt, which fed the Roman Period water channels, must be the cave at this upper level. Because the cave in the west, which supplies water to the Hellenistic water canal, is under deeper alluvium, and the water collected by blocking the front in the Roman Period was diverted to the cave at the other higher elevation and turned into a kind of reservoir. In the soundings dug to determine the structure of the water channels, it is understood that the water of the Roman canal was cut off by the intervention in the water in the Hellenistic canal, where the Hellenistic Period canal at the bottom was directed to this cave. The excavation of the early period channel belonging to the Hellenistic Period under this section was stopped under the modern road. It is understood that the water collected in the caves on the upper level was directed to two separate channels from different scales-levels in the Roman Period and distributed to the sanctuary (Fig. 4).

### Is the Cave in Gülpınar for Cultic?

**Early Period Cult Caves:** The caves were first used for shelter and the earliest living areas, after death as a burial ground, and finally, they served as the houses of the gods<sup>24</sup>. In the beginning, natural sanctuaries, which had no distinction, served as cult places (worship). Even if architectural structures with sacred functions were built, some religious rites still took place in caves<sup>25</sup>. At the same time, while people continued to live in huts and houses, they continued to worship their gods in caves<sup>26</sup>. Caves, examples of this natural structure, have lost their way of being the first private places of human settlement. However, they continued to act as sanctuaries and be the houses of the gods. Small temples were born after the owners of these caves. For this reason, places that are somewhat ostentatious and contain many idols or these religious structures are considered small temples. In this region, such cults were practiced in natural sanctuaries, small temple structures, and

<sup>23</sup> This third cave, called the 'bone well' by the villagers Today, is located on the side of the road leading directly to the agricultural lands so that no work could be done.

<sup>24</sup> Burkert, 1977: 24; Barnett, 2007: 252-269.

<sup>25</sup> In Crete, cult worship was consecrated in caves as well as in the sanctuary (Kamarea, Psychro, Ida, Arkalochori, etc.). In addition to the gods, the sanctity of the cave is also seen in Cybele's depictions and was depicted inside the cave in Paros, one of the Cyclades' islands. Naumann, 1983: 196 et al. Lev. 28, 29; Roles 1999.

<sup>26</sup> Nilsson, 1971: 53- 76.

dwellings<sup>27</sup>. The Greek world, prophecy, and the cave relationship are related to the myths<sup>28</sup>. During the historical Period, these first uses of the caves also changed. The caves were accepted as a place isolated from the mundane with the relationship of religion or god. In their function, caves are dedicated to or believed to be protected by a god<sup>29</sup>. In this context, they serve religious purposes under non-human influence and power.

Although the relationship of caves with religion is widespread and well-known in Greek culture, their location varies. For example, in the regions of Boeotia, Euboea, and Thessaly, caves are located in mountainous areas, while they are not well known in Macedonia and Thrace. The Ionian Sea and the islands are both in the mountains and close to the coast. According to written sources, caves are associated with gods and religious and heroic figures<sup>30</sup>. Because of the mystical environment of the caves, the effect on people in terms of sound and light was used in divination, especially in the Classical periods<sup>31</sup>. Caves generally are modest, poor, and frequented by visitors living in the region. These visitors live in the countryside. With a few exceptions, precious materials such as metal and marble votives were not found in the excavated caves<sup>32</sup>. Marble offerings are standard in caves in Attica. The presence of valuable materials in caves in this region can be related to its proximity to an essential Panhellenic sanctuary such as Delphi. The inscriptions recovered from the caves need to be revised and belong to people from the substratum. In some central settlements, such as Athens, natural caves have been turned into small cult places. Caves in other regions are located outside the residential areas. While these caves are visited for special reasons, official visits are infrequent. For this reason, caves do not mean much in terms of city (Police) religion. Nevertheless, they are significant for the study of people living in the countryside. In this context, the Smintheion cave can also be evaluated in terms of the recognition of the surrounding peoples, apart from its religious function.

**Ancient sources:** It can be verified that Smintheion is an early cult place. The first is information from ancient texts<sup>33</sup>. The first and earliest sources, apart from Homer's (?), are the quotations of the Roman poet Ovidius<sup>34</sup>, who was the source of the Bronze Age cult. These narratives point to the belief that the early cult practice dates back to the Roman Period. This

<sup>27</sup> In the archaic Period, until the emergence of the archaic Greek temenos, religious activities were performed in open spaces, sacred caves, or around a simple altar or sacred grove surrounded by peribolos. See. Burkert, 1977; Rutrowski, 1986; Polignac, 1995.

<sup>28</sup> According to the orphic theogony, Zeus was born in a cave and learned about the future at Night in a dim cave. Kern, 1922: 97, 104, 105. Thus, the cave was determined as the place where the prophecy was first given or made; Cleland, 1933; Elderkin, 1941; Croon, 1967: 242; Ustinova, 2009a; Ustinova, 2009b: 109-121.

<sup>29</sup> Wickens, 1986: 79-80.

<sup>30</sup> Sporn, 2006: 60-61.

<sup>31</sup> Friese, 2010; Friese, 2010b: 29-40.

<sup>32</sup> Sporn, 2002: 350.

<sup>33</sup> For comprehensive information on ancient texts about Smintheion, see. Cook, 1973: 225-235; Özgünel, 2001: 1-7.

<sup>34</sup> Ovidius, Fasti, 6.417.

practice reveals that the god's power manifests itself in the caves and that the worship is carried out in these sacred caves.

The Roman poet Ovidius in *Fasti* mentions Apollo as a prophetic god in the geography of Troas and the narrative about the founding of Ilion by King Ilus<sup>35</sup>. Ovidius also mentioned the existence of a particular oracle center when he stated that the Apollo Smintheus cult was established after the god Apollo made a prophecy that the statue of Palladium had fallen from heaven and Apollo was consulted on this issue and that "the city cannot be touched as long as this statue is in this city." This myth must be related to the Homeric age. Because of these statements, the cave where the water source in Smintheion comes out must be the sacred space expressed in this myth.

Much more reliable evidence for the existence of prophecy at the Smintheion is provided by Menander Rhetor, who lived in the 3rd century A.D. M. Rhetor refers to the relationship of Apollo Smintheus with the city of Alexandria Troas and says that Smintheion was the first oracle center that the god Apollo founded after he was born in Lycia. In particular, he states that he first carried the tripod there and that all the oracles in the Greek world spread from here<sup>36</sup>. It was believed that the power of Apollo was hidden in these caves<sup>37</sup>, as in Claros<sup>38</sup>, which is famous for its prophecy, especially the oracle centers such as Patara and Delphi<sup>39</sup>, and has a similar cave where the priest entered to drink water from the fons arcanus. In these Apollo sanctuaries in Greece and Anatolia, the water source was either from the cave or underground chambers and was used for divination purposes. These examples help us to understand how the sacred spring and cave in Smintheion were used for divination. For example, there is a direct relationship between the source and the prophecy in the sanctuary of Apollo at Claros<sup>40</sup>. It has also long been believed that the water source or

<sup>35</sup> Ovidius, *Fasti*, 6.417, 425 "...Smintheus was consulted, and in the dim light of his shady grove, he gave this answer with no lying lips: "Preserve the heavenly goddess, so shall we preserve the city. She will transfer with herself the seat of empire." Ilus preserved the image of the goddess and kept it shut up on the top of the citadel;..." Parke, 1985: 177.

<sup>36</sup> Russell-Wilson, 1981: 207-225 (Sminthiakos); Parke, 1985: 177; The symbols of Apollo are plainly depicted on various altars, votive monuments, and statue bases uncovered during the Smintheion excavations between 2005 and 2019. On one of the statue bases at the entrance of the Great Bath, the symbols are together. In the examples that do not include the depiction of the god himself, only his attributes are used. These include omphalos, ravens, laurel branches, snakes, and tripods. Laurel branch and omphalos are indispensable elements of the cult of Apollo. Apart from all these symbols, the fact that almost no other symbols or depictions are included is evidence that the Smintheion was a center of prophecy. Kaplan, 2016: 63-64.

<sup>37</sup> Plinius, *NH* 2. 232; White, 1954: 112- 127; Kaplan, 2007b: 233; Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>38</sup> Pausanias 7. 3. 1; Strabo 14. 1. 27; Elderkin, 1941: 126; Taşlıkloğlu, 1963: 24-26.

<sup>39</sup> While Rosenberger identifies about 40 examples of oracle centers, he counts Delphi, Lebadeia, Ptoion, Oropus, Aegira, Bura, Olympia, Lykosoura, Delos, Hierapolis, and Klaros as important centers for divination in artificial and natural caves. See. Rosenberger, 2001: 214-215; Pedley, 2005: 88-93, 135-151.

<sup>40</sup> Dillon, 2017: 340.

underground chamber rising from a natural cave in Claros was linked to the Apollonian prophecy<sup>41</sup>. While accompanying Germanicus, the Roman historian and senator Tacitus gain important information during his visit to Claros. According to Tacitus<sup>42</sup>, a priest, usually chosen from the prominent families of Miletus, went down to the cave to make a prophecy and drank water from the sacred spring. Then, inspired by sacred water, he answered the questions he had conceived in his mind<sup>43</sup>. Similarly, Plinius, the Elder<sup>44</sup> refers to the role of the sacred spring coming out of the cave in Claros: "There is a pool in Colophon, in the cave of Apollo of Claros, which gives the power to say wonderful prophecies," he says.

In the Temple of Apollo in Didyma, near Miletus, there was a prophecy related to the sacred spring, as in Delphi. Another example where the sacred spring such as Claros, Delphi, and Didyma was used for divination is in Corinth<sup>45</sup>. Here, too, the priests drank the holy water and prophesied as other priests did. Water drew its inspiring oracular power from wine. The water from the sacred spring was mixed with wine and stored in a vase. This mixture flowed through an artificial channel into an open-air liquor container. The priest continued the prophecy by drinking this mixture<sup>46</sup>.

There are two main reasons for divination in caves<sup>47</sup>. The first is that it is a point that provides isolation from society, and the second is that it serves as a closed room. Because in this room, as in the cult of Apollo in Hieracome<sup>48</sup>, mineral and poisonous gases contributed to the change of one's consciousness and were considered the entrance to the other world. The change of mind expected in divination is a life of isolation, dreaming, and trance, the best example of which is Delphi, where purification is accomplished<sup>49</sup>. Similarly, the situation of the temple, which is located on an active fault line in Hierapolis, is the same, and there is a hole where poisonous gases come out.

Epigraphic and archaeological evidence obtained from Greece and western Anatolia indicates that the sacred spring coming out of the caves in the sanctuaries of Apollo is an essential part of the prophecy. However, not all of these structures using spring water are sacred, and they have nothing to do with Apollo's prophecy. The cave and the sacred spring are associated with the prophecy of Apollo. However, especially in Anatolia, the water source, the cave, and the sacred grove in the sanctuaries of Apollo are also related to the god Apollo's feature of being the god of prophecy<sup>50</sup>. While Claros and Didyma carry these three features of Apollo's sanctuaries, it is necessary to add Smintheion.

<sup>41</sup> Picard - Makridi Bey, 1915: 39.

<sup>42</sup> Annales II.54.

<sup>43</sup> Picard, 1922: 10, 66-68; Elderkin, 1941: 126; Taşlıkloğlu, 1963, 24-26.

<sup>44</sup> Plinius, NH, 2.232.

<sup>45</sup> Strabon IX.3; Elderkin, 1941: 126; Dillon, 2017: 337-340, 342-343.

<sup>46</sup> Elderkin, 1941: 130.

<sup>47</sup> Ustinova, 2009a.

<sup>48</sup> Ustinova, 2009b: 154.

<sup>49</sup> Fontenrose, 1978; Pedley, 2005: 92; Ustinova, 2009a; Ustinova, 2009b: 109-121.

<sup>50</sup> Birge, 1987; Dietrich, 1986.

Natural water resources are generally the constant element of the sanctuaries and cannot be transferred to another place. However, in terms of our subject, the spring<sup>51</sup> (Fig. 7) located in the caves in Smintheion has particular importance in the sanctuary and was stored and transported to other structures during the Hellenistic-Roman periods. Because the water was vital for Apollo's prophecies. Research and excavations in Smintheion revealed the first epigraphic findings regarding the existence of the tradition of divination. The information obtained during the excavations indicates that the soothsayers used the sacred spring from the caves to perform their duties. The statue bases uncovered at the entrance of the Smintheion Great Bath (Fig. 2, 3) are agonistic inscriptions describing athletic achievements called Smintheia Pauleia. However, these inscriptions also present the first documents on prophecy obtained from excavations. In Greek inscriptions on statue bases dating to the Roman Period and in Latin inscriptions in the early 2nd century A.D., there is the expression *hypophet*<sup>52</sup>, who interprets the divination by looking at the water, apart from the oracle (*prophet*)<sup>53</sup>. Although there is no explanatory information about the duties of these people in the sanctuary, it is understood that there are priests with different duties and titles, and one of them is the hypophet, which can be seen in connection with the sacred springs and caves. Therefore, the cave and spring water to the east of the Hellenistic Temple served for divination<sup>54</sup>. However, there is yet to be an exact date as to when this oracle function began or ended. According to Anatolian sanctuaries, prophecies were widespread during the 2nd-3rd century A.D. In Smintheion, divination centered on the cave, sacred grove, and water source, which is unknown when it started, was active in this Period.

**Coins:** Another piece of evidence showing that the caves with water springs to the east of the Hellenistic temple located may be a cult place are the coins that are thought to be depictions of these caves (Fig. 8). Also, as stated before, there are two more caves in the south<sup>55</sup>. According to the coin descriptions, these caves, which have a water spring, prove that they are cult caves dedicated to Apollo, the local god of Anatolia<sup>56</sup>. The sanctuaries are a source of praise and an area of competition for the cities they are connected. Similarly, the coins depicting the Smintheion caves with a water spring and the statues of Apollo Smintheus were turned into Roman-period propaganda tools. The most beautiful examples that reveal the relationship between Smintheion caves and worship are the Roman Period coins of the city of Alexandria Troas<sup>57</sup>. In addition, according to the coin description given with

<sup>51</sup> Many fountains, laundry, and water tubs from the Ottoman Period can be seen in the modern settlement known as Gülpınar town Today. The most beautiful of these fountains is the fountain that is still in use and is fed from the holy spring that meets the water needs of the town. This spring water coming out of the cave feeds the sanctuary area and its surroundings, which is called Bahçeleriçi in Gülpınar Today, after Koca Pınar (Ottoman fountain).

<sup>52</sup> Özhan, 2015: 107; Kaplan, 2015: 83-84; Kaplan, 2018: 6-9.

<sup>53</sup> Kaplan, 2018: 6.

<sup>54</sup> Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>55</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 231-239.

<sup>56</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 231-239; Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>57</sup> Hill, 1916: 134; Bellinger, 1961; Dyer, 1969.

the number 19 (Fig. 8)<sup>58</sup> in Bellinger's classification, these springs and caves have a cult dedicated to Apollo, the local god of Anatolia<sup>59</sup>.

The depiction of the reverse of this coin must be a natural cave. The shepherd Ordes is standing with a pedum in one hand and raising his other hand in a position of respect. On the left, a statue standing in the cave and another standing in front of the cave are depicted. A bull is running in front of the shepherd. This scene must be related to the myth associated with the discovery of the god statue. It shows that the cave with cult statues seen on these coins has a long history in the region. The cave depiction here can be related to the legend of Polemon<sup>60</sup>, which is attributed to the early Period. Because natural and rock-cut caves are dedicated to nymphs and gods<sup>61</sup>. Some see the sculpture depictions in connection with the xoanon, which is claimed to be the statue of Apollo Smintheus by Scopas<sup>62</sup>. However, considering the changing topography, the relationship between monumental temples and cult statues, and other sculptures and stylistic features of Scopas, it is clear that the sculpture in the cave is not a sculpture belonging to Scopas.

Briefly, the cave, which is not mentioned in ancient sources, but contains archaeological finds such as coins and spring water, indicates the existence of the earliest sanctuary in Gülpınar. While the sculpture depictions on the coin refer to the sanctity of the cave as evidence originating from local myths, it is also the earliest depiction of the sanctuary in connection with the cave. In this context, the caves in Smintheion, from which spring water comes out, can be said to be the earliest structures where spiritual purification and worship were carried out. However, both numismatic and ancient sources prove the existence of the cult of Apollo Smintheus in the Hamaxitos, whose coins belong to the 4th-3rd century B.C. Also, the Hamaxitos is not far from the cave in Smintheion and is 1-2 km to the west. This proves that, together with Hamaxitos and Chryse, the Gülpınar Valley has particular importance for the followers of the cult of Apollo Smintheus.

**Spring:** Water is the most crucial element of vital importance for life, and this value of water does not need interpretation. The spring water was used for divination in the cult of Apollo Smintheus. For this reason, the Hellenistic temple belonging to the middle of the 2nd century B.C., the most significant building of the sanctuary, was placed close to this water supply. As stated, the placement of the sanctuary close to the water supply is a general feature of the Apollo sanctuaries<sup>63</sup>. No archaeological finds date back to the Homeric age near the sacred spring in Smintheion. However, ceramic pieces belonging to the Chalcolithic Period were found under the doctor's houses in front of the

<sup>58</sup> Bellinger, 1958: 35-36, no 19.

<sup>59</sup> Kaplan, 2007b: 231-239; Çizmeli-Öğün, 2009: 113-122, Res.2; Çizmeli-Öğün, 2013: 137, Res.3; Çizmeli - Öğün, 2015.

<sup>60</sup> Bellinger, 1958: 25-52; Taşlıkılıçoğlu, 1963: 186 = Polemon Ap. Scholia A Iliad I, 39. For detailed information on this, see Çizmeli-Öğün 2009, pp.113-122, Res.2.

<sup>61</sup> Dillon, 2017: 346.

<sup>62</sup> SNG 5, 1959, Fig. 45-46; Also, for detailed information on the statue of ApollonSmintheus and Skopas, see. Grace, 1932: 228-232; Özgünel, 2001: 22-26.

<sup>63</sup> Elderkin, 1941: 125.

cave. During the excavations around the Hellenistic temple, pieces of architectural terracotta marble belonging to the classical Period were also found. If these belong to the buildings where early cult practices were done, the Archaic and Classical Period temples must have stayed under the nearby modern olive oil factories, according to the findings obtained from the excavations. However, no definite findings may belong to the early cult building. Despite this, water's cultic, healing and purifying role has continued for centuries because this water takes its source from the cave, which is expressed as sacred. Since the Late Archaic-Early Classical Period, the sanctuary has been equipped with large and cult-related buildings concentrated at the beginning of the sacred spring (Fig. 2, 3).

In addition to these facts, water is also used as a political symbol, like said, Herodotus<sup>64</sup> mentioned, and a different meaning is attributed to water. Smintheion, on the other hand, is not a political symbol but a source of life and a cult element because it is located in the sanctuary. This is why water was one of the essential elements of the Ancient Greek religion. Regardless of which god it is related to, caves are generally adapted to the sanctuary's myth or myths, cult, and topography. As the Roman baths show, water is used for cleansing, cultic functions, and even washing the altar and temple surroundings. Sometimes it is vital to quench the thirst of people who come to worship.

The water in Smintheion, which comes out of the cave at the point where the tuff layer ends and the limestone (marl layer begins, can easily be described as a 'sacred spring' (Fig. 7). Because, apart from the sanctuaries dedicated to Apollo, many sanctuaries dedicated to different gods were established in water springs<sup>65</sup>. Most of these springs are usually located outside the sacred buildings, but sometimes, due to religious ceremonies, the sacred buildings were built directly on the spring, or the holy water was carried inside the structures<sup>66</sup>. The sanctuaries of Apollo were generally established in rural areas. Similarly, the reason these sanctuaries are built in rural areas, apart from cults that are effective on nature and agriculture, is the existence of water and water resources<sup>67</sup>. In addition, water was

<sup>64</sup> He mentions Darius' demand for land and water as tribute from the Scythian king Idanthyrsos. Herodotus IV.126-127, 132.

<sup>65</sup> Elderkin, 1941; Cole, 1986: 162- 165.

<sup>66</sup> Glaser, 1986; Cole, 1986: 162- 165.

<sup>67</sup> For example, Delphi, Didyma (here the sacred spring was surrounded by a wall: οἶκος in the 8th century B.C.), and the sanctuary of Claros (the temple was built directly on the sacred spring). Parke, 1985; The primary reason some sanctuaries are located on high hills, on the beach, at the crossroads of roads, or in the countryside, such as hidden out of sight, is to serve the people living in the area where they are located. Cartledge, 1985: 99-100; They were first used for nature's generosity, brutality, and tameness. Many emerged independently of the urban worship centers as places that do not indeed sanctify nature. Because these rural sanctuaries responded to the needs of farmers, forest dwellers, coal miners, woodcutters, hunters, poachers, and their families and differed from urban sanctuaries. Of course, the gods worshipped in these rural areas were also worshipped in the city, but they were separated because of their festivals, offerings, and different appearances. In particular, many sanctuaries, altars, the heart of holiness, and



considered sacred in Ancient Greece, as in many ancient civilizations, and was used as the main element in sanctuaries. The waters in the sanctuaries were protected because they were related to spiritual cleanliness. In particular, the Didyma sanctuary was initially built around a sacred spring. Again, the presence of Apollo and his prophecy lies in the choice of water as the center of the sanctuaries in Boeotia<sup>68</sup>. In some sanctuaries, water was used for cleansing, while in others, for example, it was related to divination in the sanctuaries of Apollo, hot springs and health in the sanctuaries of Asclepius<sup>69</sup>, and mysteries in the sanctuaries of Demeter. There are many sanctuaries established by natural springs in Anatolia<sup>70</sup>. Prophecies played a vital role in Anatolian geography in the 2nd-3rd century A.D., especially concerning public and private life<sup>71</sup>.

Strabo, while talking about the region between Asia and Lesbos Island, refers to this as a place where temples are specially dedicated to Apollo<sup>72</sup>. On the other hand, Parke says that there is no written or literary record about these centers in the historical process and that the current epic information is related to the Trojan war. They claim that stories like the epic of Troia are significantly weakened and do not refer to a particular temple<sup>73</sup> even if they do not function as prophecy centers. The sanctuary in Chryse, where the temple dedicated to Apollo Smintheus is located, is the largest sanctuary in the region. He adds that the priest Chryses, whom Agamemnon rejected in Homer's<sup>74</sup> epic was not a seer. However, Pausanias' statement<sup>75</sup> that the tomb of Sibylle Herophile is in a grove next to a source dedicated to Nymphs and Hermes statues in the Smintheion sanctuary indicates a different sanctuary apart from the sacred spring. The sacred spring, the cave, and the tree are the main elements of worship<sup>76</sup>.

Research and excavations in Smintheion revealed the first findings about the tradition of divination. Sometimes the water in the Apollo sanctuaries may also be linked to a surrounding grove where the god Apollo was worshipped as the god of plants<sup>77</sup>. Natural water springs are generally the constant element of the sanctuaries and cannot be transferred to another place. However, all these structures of sacred origin and water-related are not related to the prophecy of Apollo. However, in terms of our subject, the spring located in the caves in Smintheion has particular importance in terms of the sanctuary. They were stored and transported to other structures during the Hellenistic-Roman periods (Fig. 2, 3). In other words, the spring water coming out of the cave

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sacrifices and offerings, were modest in terms of structures, such as a low wall (temenos) and the area they occupied. Pedley, 2005: 51.

<sup>68</sup> Cole, 1986: 162- 165; Dillon, 2017: 346.

<sup>69</sup> Croon, 1967: 225-246; Pedley, 2005: 30.

<sup>70</sup> Stenton-Coulton, 1986: 15.

<sup>71</sup> Mitchell, 1995: 66-67.

<sup>72</sup> Strabo III, 2.5; Özgünel, 2001: 14-18.

<sup>73</sup> Parke, 1985: 176.

<sup>74</sup> Homer, Iliad, I.5-55.

<sup>75</sup> Pausanias, X, 12.6.

<sup>76</sup> White, 1954: 112-127.

<sup>77</sup> Birge, 1987; Dietrich, 1986.

near the Temple of Apollo Smintheus was also used for purposes other than divination in the sanctuary<sup>78</sup>. During the Early Roman Empire, the architectural landscape of the sanctuary began to change significantly. The sanctuary exhibits Roman architectural features from the end of the 1st century B.C. to the end of the 3rd century A.D. It shows that a construction program was started in Smintheion, especially during the Julius-Claudian Period. With the construction of new structures such as baths, reservoirs, streets, and roads, a monumentalization process took place in the sanctuary.

The landscape of the sanctuary in this process, which emerged with its new architectural design during the Roman Period, apparently respected the original function of the sanctuary. This means that in this Period, when the sanctuary was Romanized, new architectural structures were introduced with their features, while the core of the sanctuary, such as the cave-sacred spring and Hellenistic temple, was preserved (Fig. 2, 3). It is not surprising to come across at least two baths in Greek sanctuaries during the Roman Imperial Period, as water-related structures, especially bath structures, were a common feature of Roman sanctuaries throughout the sanctuary. However, with the latest research in Smintheion, the third bath (Western Bath) was also discovered. The Great Bath is close to the temple, even with the reservoirs that surround it from three directions, the Small Bath on the left at the entrance to the sanctuary, the Western Bath at the beginning of the area extending towards the necropolis, the sanctuary resembles a spa area (Fig. 3). In this case, as stated before, the water not only brings up the prophecy but also the healing and purifying role in the baths.

The existence of the two baths, which have been excavated and published, and the third bath in the west show that they were not used only to serve the basic washing-cleaning needs of the spectators who came to the sanctuary to watch agonistic games. Available epigraphic evidence shows that it was also used by athletes participating in the games held in honor of Apollo Smintheus. Inscriptions unearthed during excavations indicate that he held agonistic games in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. under alternative names such as *Smintheia*, *Smintheia Pauleia*, and *Pythia*<sup>79</sup>. It is understood that the games were held in the stadium in the city of Alexandria Troas, but inscribed statue bases on which the statues of the athletes who succeeded in different games were erected, starting from the Sacred Way<sup>80</sup> to the entrance of the Great Bath was unearthed in Smintheion. The presence of agonistic games changed the Smintheion architecturally in the Roman Period. Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia, and Nemea, the Panhellenic sanctuaries whose origins go back much earlier, were introduced as equivalent to Smintheion and made the most outstanding contribution to this. In fact, this change is also a reflection of the pax Romana that started in the Augustus period. Of course, the revival of the agonistic contests in Smintheion must be attributed to Hadrian's efforts<sup>81</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Kaplan, 2018: 5-16.

<sup>79</sup> Riel, 1997: 82-84; Özhan, 2015; Özhan 2016.

<sup>80</sup> Kaplan, 2016.

<sup>81</sup> Petzl – Schwertheim, 2006.

Apart from the categories of competition and athletes, information indicating that the soothsayers benefited from the sacred source coming out of the caves to perform their duties was also obtained with the agonistic inscriptions. As stated before, the Latin inscriptions found on the statue bases of the Roman Period located at the entrance of the Smintheion Great Bath Late Phase and found in the frigidarium include a soothsayer and a hypothetical interpretation of the prophecy with the water. Although there is no explanatory information about these people about what was done in the sanctuary, it is understood that there are lists that have different duties and titles and that one of them is a *hypophet*<sup>82</sup>, which can be seen in connection with sacred springs and caves.

**Murex brandaris Shells:** Since the Smintheion spring cave was under alluvium, no significant excavation could be carried out. During the cleaning of the water channels, the funnels were excavated, and many sea shells were uncovered (Fig. 9). It is known that seashells, which were previously valued as ornaments in Aegean cultures, were used in caves of the classical Period as well as in caves of the prehistoric Period and the more famous sanctuaries. On the Greek mainland, mussels, edible shellfish, are usually found on the sandy or muddy bottoms of shallow waters. We can assume that the sanctuary shells in the cult cave of Smintheion were brought from the shallow waters of the Aegean Sea coastline and especially from areas such as the Tuzla Plain.

*Murex brandaris*, which has an oval rim, a nearly round body, long spine-shaped outlets, and a long thin channel form, is cream-colored, and the shell is thick (Fig. 9) It is the place where the cavities of the trunks of their large families were broken in these *murex brandaris* shell models, which were also found willingly during the Prehistoric period excavations in Gülpınar<sup>83</sup>. The reason for these fractures is the possibility of using both chemicals and dyes<sup>84</sup>. In fact, due to a large number of examples, interpretations have been made continuously using the traditional attitude of this crustacean<sup>85</sup>. The purple color obtained from these shells was fashionable in the Roman Empire for dresses worn in religious ceremonies and victory ceremonies. As Plinius also stated, it was thought that it had a powerful effect on winning the love of the gods<sup>86</sup> while bringing him into the presence of the gods<sup>87</sup>. It is not natural for Vestal priestesses to wear a purple shroud (*suffibulum*) despite their white robes, but purple shrouds of the oracles are preferred in religious ceremonies held in the sanctuary dedicated to Apollo Smintheus. Virgil, on the other

<sup>82</sup> Kaplan 2015, pp.83-84; Kaplan 2018, pp.5-16.

<sup>83</sup> Although it is considered the color of nobles, kings, and gods, there is no evidence that paint was made from *murex brandaris* shells in the Prehistoric and classical periods in Smintheion. However, according to Plinius, the most suitable season for *murex* in shallow waters is spring, and they are found in groups during this season. In addition, Vitruvius also mentions the dye produced from the shells. Vitruvius, VII.13.1-3.

<sup>84</sup> Plinius, NH, IX.60.62.

<sup>85</sup> Yavşan, 2010: 61.

<sup>86</sup> Plinius, NH, IX.60.

<sup>87</sup> Plinius, NH, IX.60.62.

hand, in the foundation myth, instructs Helenus, the oracle of Apollo, to Aeneas "wrap his hair with a purple cloth while offering"<sup>88</sup>.

As it can be understood from these expressions, throwing a purple veil on the head is vital during ceremonies and is a sign of respect for the gods. However, the examples found in front of the Smintheion cult cave are intact and directly related to the cult. Shells are located where soil and water meet (such as lakes, swamps, shores, and harbors). Perhaps the sailors and fishermen were giving their thanks to the god-goddess about the abundant crustaceans in hopes of the god goddess's help. This proves that the sailors also showed particular respect to the god. Of course, the main reasons are rituals such as cleaning and healing<sup>89</sup> in caves with water. This may include the protection of seafarers. In general, such shells are also associated with Artemis. The fact that the bronze Artemis figure was found at the foundation level of Roman subjects in the area called doctor's houses during the excavations between the cave and the temple in Smintheion 2010 can be interpreted in this sense and related to the subject.

Considering that the ancient people did not use the caves for a single purpose and even had fun, they can be regarded as versatile sanctuaries containing dance and drink. In this context, apart from the food and beverages obtained from local sources, there is a significant participation in the feasts accompanied by burning oil lamps. Although there are no coroplastic examples yet, the bronze Artemis figure and sea shells (*murex brandaris*) prove that the participants in the Smintheion rituals may be local gods worshipped in the cave and its surroundings, as well as the worship of Artemis, the sister of Apollo, in which case the caves are the outer faces of the sanctuary.

The cave in Smintheion, which has a water spring, not an artificial one, is, in this case, a cult cave, and the water source is a sacred spring (Fig. 6, 7). It is understood that this source flows continuously, enthusiastically, and abundantly; not only those who come for cult purposes but also ordinary people, shepherds, farmers, or travelers benefit from this sacred spring. Whether on happy days or under challenging times, the Smintheion cave provided god's protection and guaranteed fresh water to those in need, so people had no problems with the water supply. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, they built the necessary reservoirs for the collection and storage of water for the needs of the increasing population. This situation did not leave the need for carrying water with buildings such as aqueducts from the outside, and the spring water was self-sufficient in a way that befits the meaning of the sanctuary. Because the same spring water did not make sense for the Christian Romans, they needed more water wells fed from the bottom, as seen in the excavations in the sanctuary.

<sup>88</sup> Virgil, *Aeneas*, III.404-405; Also, for its use in funeral rites, cf. Virgil, *Aeneas*, XI.71,75-76; Suetonius, *De vita Caesarum*, 84; Eutropius VII.14.

<sup>89</sup> Dillon, 2017: 292.

### Apalinuas, Wilusa, Smintheion

The use of water similar to Smintheion can be seen in the region's most famous city, Troia (Fig. 1). Apaliunas, who was seen as the origin of the Hellenic god Apollo in Troy, was known to be a Wilusa (Ilion) god. A 160 m long spring cave at the end of the lower city was unearthed in Troy in 1997-2001. The tunnel system, some parts of which are dated to the 3rd millennium B.C., is interpreted as a "passage/road to the land of the earth, (tunnel)" (KASKAL.KUR) in the 2nd millennium B.C. (Troia VI-VIIa)<sup>90</sup>. Its connection with water is the god of KASKAL.KUR is referred to as the 'god of the oath' of the Wilusa side in the agreement made between the Hittite great king Muwatalli II and the king Alaksandu in 1280 BC (Ilios, Ilion, Troia)<sup>91</sup>. Thus, another city god of Wilusa appears beside Apalinuas (Apollo)<sup>92</sup>. Here, the tunnel system running through the rock, the wells, and the cave, as well as the water system, have been used for thousands of years.

In this context, the relationship of KASKAL.KUR, like Apalinuas, between the cave and the sacred spring, should be seen as related to Anatolia because the tradition of sacred springs in Anatolia is seen in the early Period as a 'sanctuary, source and cult' in the Hittite king Tuthaliya IV Period. For this reason, there are sacred water springs in Hattusha, the capital of the Hittites. Here, the holy rooms with a water source were built within the set of pools. It is more easily understood that it was a place arranged for a sacred ceremony due to the combination of king reliefs and architectural arrangement with an artificial water spring<sup>93</sup>. In Hittites, water and its source are sacred, as can be understood from the relationship between the identified rock monuments and the gods (Mountain and Underground gods and Storm god). Almost all rock monuments or open-air temples are located near or near the water spring. Thus, the gods give the water to man, and the water will return to the underground gods<sup>94</sup>. Although there is no written evidence yet, it is necessary to consider that the water source and the cave in the Smintheion sanctuary at the westernmost point of Anatolia may be related to the Hittite cult in terms of origin.

Considering the Hittite and Troia relationship, the water spring leaking from the Smintheion cave is the most significant water source that gives life to its surroundings, where the amount of precipitation is the least. For this reason, it should be considered a place with a sacred spring cult-like Troia because water is vital in this region and comes from underground. Apart from being the primary source of life, this underground water is also representative of a deep-rooted tradition that has been going on for thousands of years, including purification, fertility, health, and divination. Because the Smintheion water spring, which has been seen as sacred since its inception, has been thought of as a political object since the end of the Classical Period and was equipped with monumental buildings in the Roman Period, apart

<sup>90</sup> Gordon, 1967; Frank, vd., 2002.

<sup>91</sup> Korfmann, 1999: 360.

<sup>92</sup> Korfmann, 2004: 79, Plan 2; Kaplan, 2007a, s.471-480.

<sup>93</sup> Kaplan, 2007b.

<sup>94</sup> Schwemer, 2013: 432-449.

from its connection to Alexandria Troas. Smintheion, which exhibits all these characteristics of change and development, is an ideal example that proves the power of these sacred water sources, even though it is located in the countryside.

The cult of Apollo was a crucial element of the religious beliefs of the Trojans, as Homer stated. The best example of this fact is the story of the beautiful maiden, Chryseis. His father was a priest of Apollo at Chryse, near the city of Troy. Achilles took his daughter prisoner but later given to Agamemnon, who claimed his right as king. Agamemnon was so impressed with Chryseis that he did not allow his father to take him back for ransom with gifts of gold and silver. Desperate, Chryses begged Apollo to avenge the Achaeans, and the god did not refuse his request and sent the plague to the Achaean army. Thus, Chryseis was returned to his father. Agamemnon made up for this loss by taking another prisoner, Briseis, from Achilles. This situation became a source of conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles, the ultimate theme of the Iliad. Related to this event, the most mysterious word in Chryses' prayer to Apollo is "Smintheus." The ancient Hellenes found this word incomprehensible and attributed its origin to one of the Anatolian languages. Unfortunately, Homer's epic needs to give a clue as to the meaning of this word, often explained on the basis of the context in which it is used in the Iliad. Since Apollo sent the plague to the Achaeans, it became associated with rodents as the primary disease carriers. For this reason, Apollo was given the title of "Lord of Mice" (Smintheus) as the god who could send an epidemic. Here, about 80 km south of Troy, there is a temple and sanctuary dedicated to Apollo Smintheus and identified with his name (Fig. 1). This place, called Smintheion in the village of Gülpınar is associated with the ancient Chryse, where Chryses was the priest of the cult of Apollo, and the famous Temple of Apollo Smintheus is next to this cave (Fig. 2, 3).

### Conclusion

Archaeological and epigraphic evidence from Greece and Anatolia shows that the sacred spring inside the cave is a prominent part of the oracle in the sanctuaries of Apollo. A similar cult practice was carried out in Smintheion, and a hypophet was recorded in the 2nd century A.D. For this reason, it is possible to say with certainty that this cave and spring (Fig. 2-7) to the east of the Temple of Apollo Smintheus was used for divination. However, in Smintheion, water was not only used for divination. It was the fundamental element in the architectural change of the sanctuary. During the Roman Imperial Period, especially in the 2nd century A.D., an extensive construction program was implemented in Smintheion. This change is strong evidence of Romanization in the field. This construction is also related to water, and reservoirs and baths are the best examples. Roman baths, which can be seen in almost all Hellenic sanctuaries, are represented here as sanctuary baths, with three models so far. The baths served not only those who came to watch the Smintheia, Smintheia Pauleia, and Pythia plays held in the 2nd-3rd century A.D. in honor of Apollo Smintheus but also those who directly participated in the games. The statue bases of the athletes, who won awards in the agonistic games, at the entrance of the Great Bath and the great hall at the entrance were designed and built for this purpose. These games, whose

origins date back to the Hellenistic Period, were also supported by Hadrian concerning Alexandria Troas (Fig. 1) and brought Smintheion to the fore. It should be added to this richness that the priests and seers in Smintheion are also mentioned in the games and the bath. As the coins, written documents, and archaeological finds show, the caves, which were the active early-period sanctuary of Smintheion, were turned into cisterns in the late Period and lost their functions with the construction of the temple. As long as the excavations are carried out and unless vice versa is defined, according to our finds, this water source and the original use of the caves where this spring came from will continue to be a mystery. When the thick soil layer covering the sanctuary, varying between 5 and 8 m, is removed, the caves will regain their original appearance.

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**Figures**

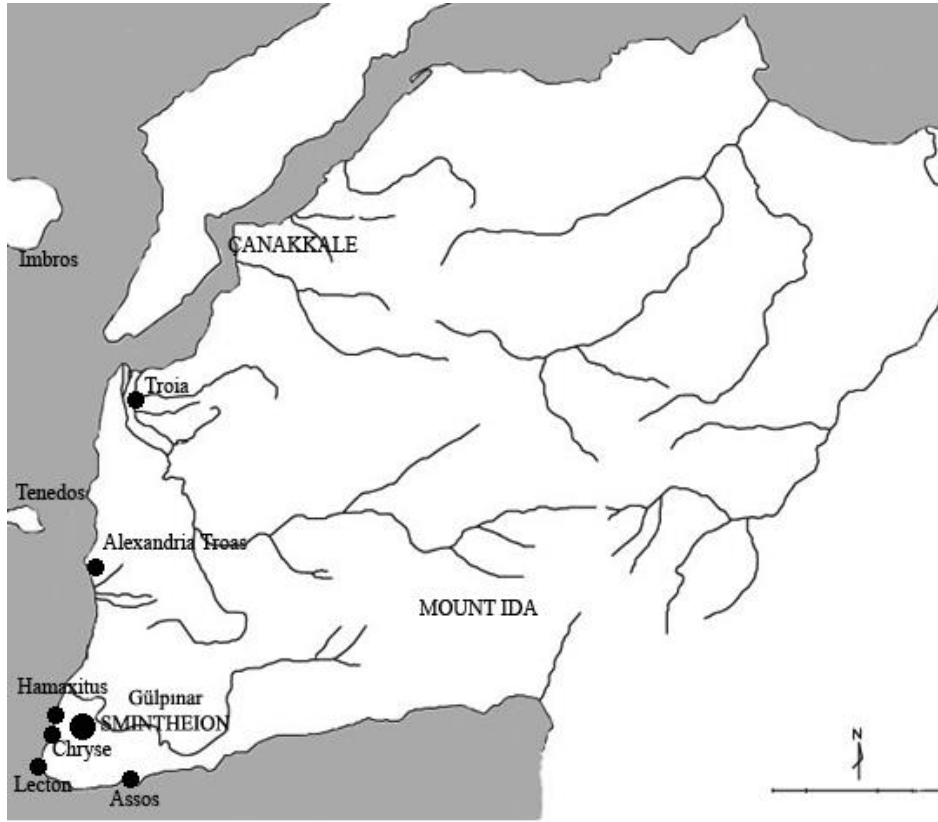


Fig. 1. Troad Map and the location of Smintheion to surrounding cities.



Fig. 2. Aerial view of Smintheion. The location of the sacred spring and cave.

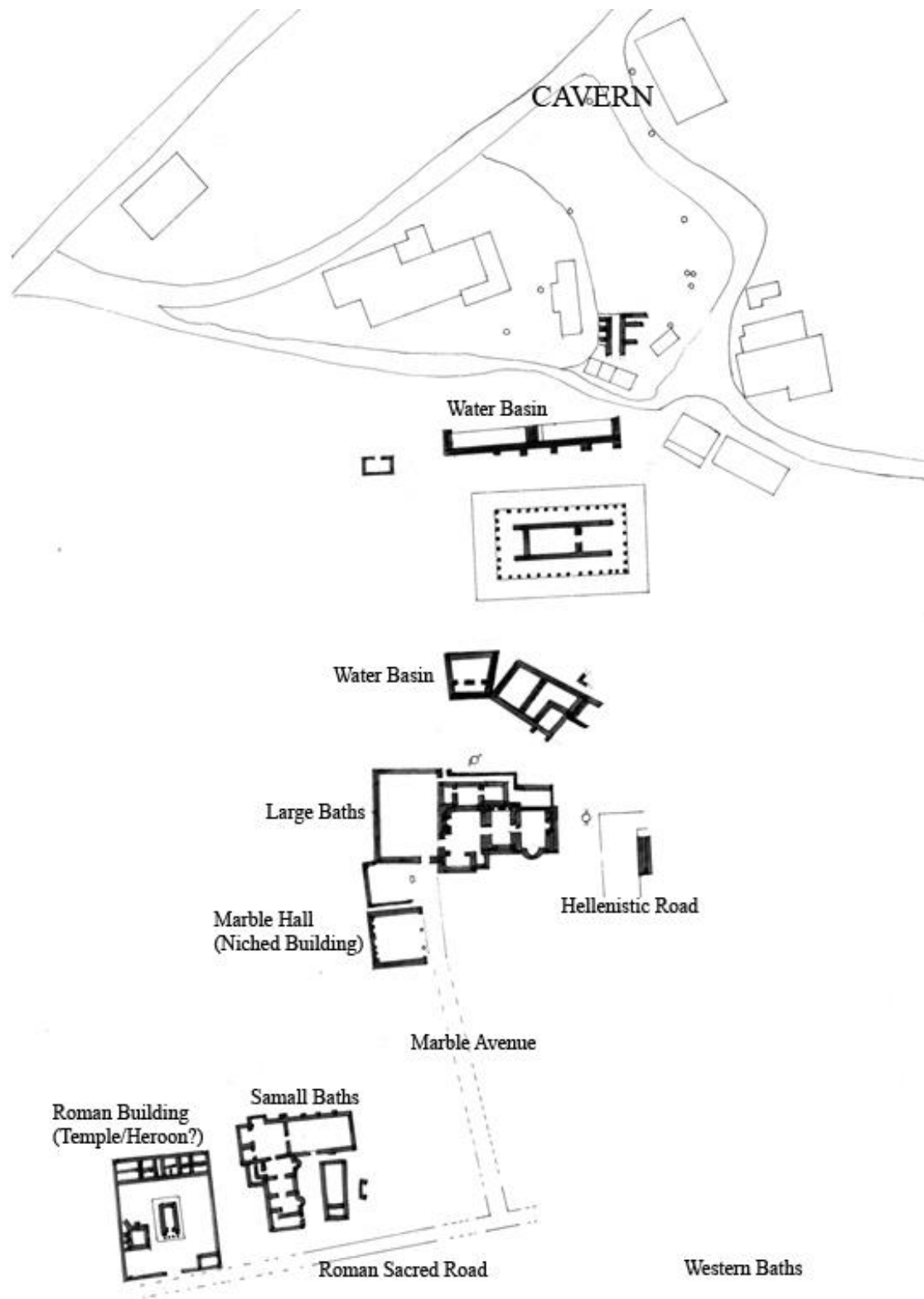


Fig. 3. Smintheion Plan.

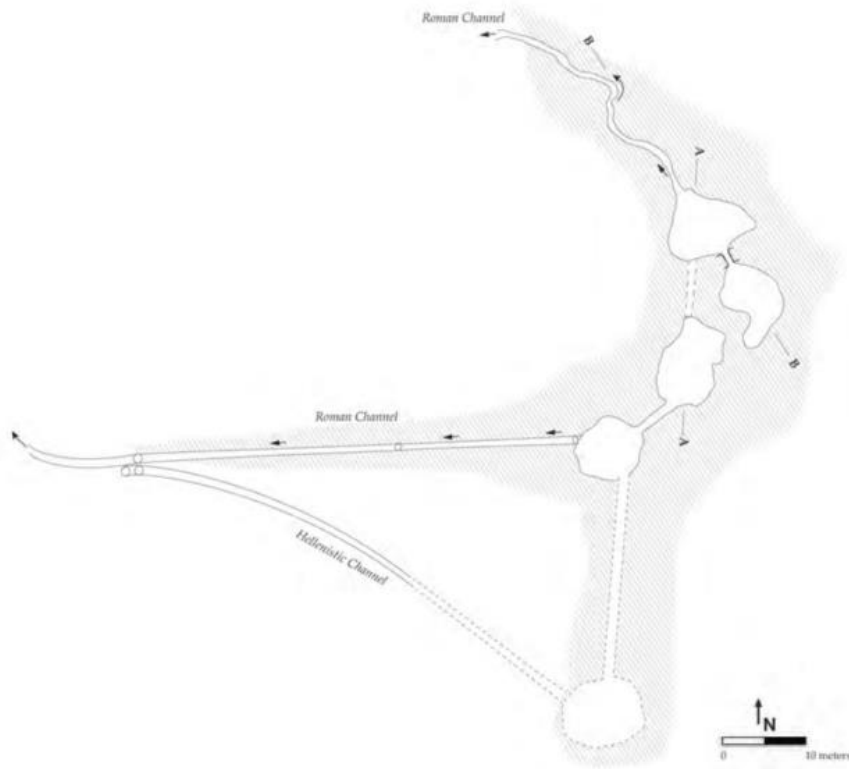


Fig. 4. Plan of the cave with different galleries. With Hellenistic and Roman channels.

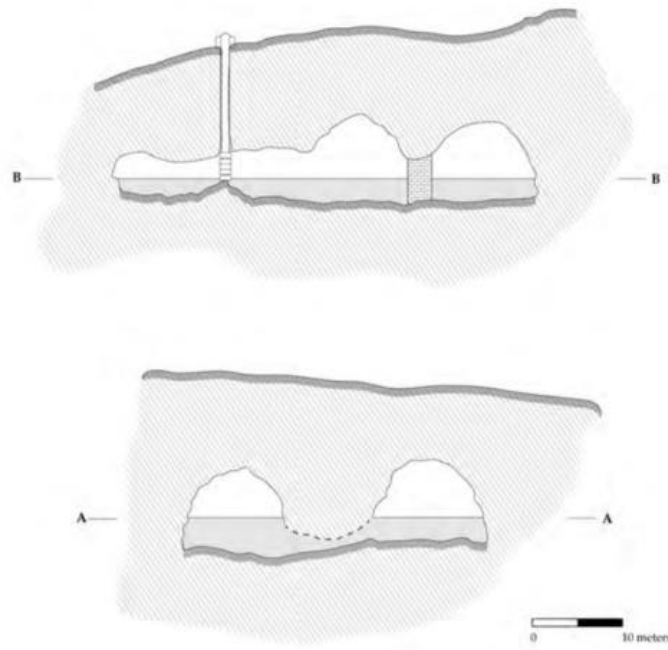


Fig. 5. Section showing the cave galleries.



Fig. 6. Inside view of one of the galleries in the cave. The wall and the passage were added later.



Fig. 7. Spring water coming out of one of the galleries in the cave.



Fig. 8. Alexandria Troas coin with shepherd Ordes and bull depiction. The Statue of Apollo Smintheus is standing on the ground above the cave on the left.



Fig. 9. Murex brandaris type sea shells found in the excavation near the cave funnels.