

SARA Symposium

Seed Science and Archaeobotanical Research in Anatolia

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■ 23 – 27 September 2019
Izmir, Turkey



Topics

Seed science
Archaeobotany
DNA
Plant genetic resources
Ethnobotany
Archaeology



■ Ege University,
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Recent multidisciplinary studies considering archaeological and genomic studies have revealed that seed and plant genetic resources and related agricultural activities have shaped the history of human culture and its evolution. Therefore, it can be argued that a good portion of cultural history is formed around seed production and agriculture. Today, seed production and its economy are improving exponentially, acquiring a central role in food safety issues. Scientific data produced in the areas of seed technology, plant genetic resources, agricultural economy, archaeobotany, DNA, aDNA, ethnobotany and archaeology have solved many problems while revealing new problems, which necessitates a multidisciplinary approach.

DNA and aDNA research conducted since the 1990's discovered that the volcanic mass Karacadağ in the Southeastern Anatolia was one of the “core areas”, where the wheat was first domesticated. Genomic studies in plant resources have revealed that the wild ancestors of “Neolithic founder crops” representing the beginning of crop cultivation had a widespread distribution in Anatolia. Similarly, ethnobotanical studies demonstrate that the cultivation of various plant species and their extensive use in the production of madder and aromatic or traditional medicine have deep- roots in Anatolian traditions reaching back to the prehistoric periods.

Archaeobotanical studies have shed light on the role played by Anatolian societies in the origin and dispersal of agricultural economy. Archaeological research, on the other hand, indicated that a strong relationship existed between changes in the uses of plants and the key transformations in societies. Changes in plant use practices directly affected socio-economical structures such as the control of surplus value and the appearance of centralized economies, which are in many cases accompanied by technological changes such as the transition from sickles to ards or transition from in-house storage units to communal silos.

Development in scientific and technological areas blurred the borders between different disciplines, which in turn has compelled the establishment of new platforms based on cooperation of multidisciplinary studies. The aim of this symposium is, thus, to bring scholars from various disciplines together to discuss key topics related to the Anatolian history of agricultural production and current themes of seed science in Turkey. In this vein, SARA aims to respond to this need by enabling researchers to share scientific ideas and information around the six main disciplines mentioned below:



Topics

1) **Seed science:** Production, economy, improvement and quality control of seed such legumes and cereals will be discussed.

2) **Archaeobotany:** History of agriculture in Anatolia will be discussed based on archaeobotanical materials from archaeological excavations.

3) **DNA:** Origin, evolution and diffusion of plant population will be discussed based on DNA and ancient DNA studies.

4) **Plant genetic resources:** Researchers and scientists who are conducting studies in plant genetic resources in Anatolia will be invited to talk about their data.

5) **Ethnobotany:** Ethnobotanical research on traditional agricultural activities and traditional uses of plants in Anatolia will be discussed. This section will also include works related to local tastes and flavours in Anatolia.

6) **Archaeology:** This section is devoted to knowledge gained from archaeological excavations in Turkey to outline the agricultural production and consumption from the Prehistoric Period into the Middle Ages. Archaeological studies may include ceramic studies, analysis of storage strategies and related archaeometric analyses that provide clues about past culinary practices.

Symposium Scientific Committee

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