

21st Neolithic seminar: Pottery and food: dietary practices in prehistory

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Plant nutrition of the 4th mill. cal. BC pile-dwellers from Ljubljansko barje, Slovenia

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Abstract

Plant economy (cultivated and gathered plants) at three Slovenian pile-dwellings from the second half of the 4th millennium cal BC will be presented.

The accuracy of archaeobotanical reconstructions depends on the quality of botanical data recovered from the excavations. Both, the preservation (e. g. taphonomy) as well as research methodology, affect the final results and interpretations.

Preservation by waterlogging (such as at pile-dwelling sites) allows better insight into the diversity of plant macroremains (fruits, seeds, cereal chaff, wood, charcoal etc.), simply because much more remains are preserved, therefore the influence of the methodology is much bigger.

Appropriately made archaeobotanical investigations at waterlogged sites enable reconstruction of nutrition habits and economy of inhabitants as well as environmental conditions on the site.

An overview of the latest archaeobotanical results (concerning nutrition plants) from Slovenian Eneolithic pile-dwellings (*Strojanova voda*, *Stare gmajne* and *Maharski prekop*) will be presented. The sites were treated differently, therefore the methodological aspects will also be discussed and compared: wet sieving contrary to rough washing; wet storing contrary to drying; stratigraphic – systematic sampling during excavation contrary to profile sampling; the way of subsampling; wet contrary to dry sorting and counting; results presented in absolute numbers contrary to results in concentrations per 1 litre of sediment samples.