

PLANT PROCESSING AROUND THE GLOBE: ARCHAEOBOTANICAL, EXPERIMENTAL AND ETHNOBOTANICAL APPROACHES

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Stemming from presentations and discussions between the authors during the 2007 IWGP in Kraków, a symposium was organized within the framework of the 5th International Conference of Ethnobotany, held in Bariloche, Patagonia, Argentina in September 2009. The title of the symposium was: 'Recent research in post-harvest traditions in human prehistory: Old and New World palaeoethnobotanical approaches to linking the archaeology and ethnobotany of plant processing'. The main theme of the symposium was plant processing techniques aiming towards the transformation of plants into foodstuffs, their shelf life and their nutritional properties as regards human food and health. The selection of techniques, the formation of dietary traditions, and the relationship of processing techniques with land use, permanence or mobility of habitations are trajectories of inquiry discussed by the participants. Archaeobotanists, ethnobotanists and archaeologists from Japan, Turkey, Greece, France, Canada and Argentina presented recent ethnographic research on plant processing and its potential for contributing towards the interpretation of archaeobotanical remains.

Wollstonecroft outlined the significance of post-harvest plant processing in the evolution of human societies and in expanding the potential of natural resource exploitation. Processing of *Algarrobo* (*Prosopis chilensis*, *Prosopis flexuosa*), carob trees of Latin America has been one of the research interests of Capparelli. Experimental and ethnographic work on the uses of this plant in Argentina, have helped clarify potential uses of the plant at archaeological sites where it has been found in abundance. López, Capparelli and Nielsen presented their ethnographic research as regards processing of quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*) in Bolivia. Lema's contribution combined ethnographic and archaeobotanical work towards the investigation of the garden as an early form of plant husbandry, leading to the formation of landraces, using the cultivation of *Cucurbita maxima* as her case study. Moving from the New World to the Old, Leo Aoi Hosoya discussed wild acorn processing by 4th millennium BC farming communities of China and Japan. From Japan to Turkey, F. Ertuğ investigated recent linseed (*Linum usitatissimum*) processing in Cappadocia for the production of oil in a region where olives do not grow. Valamoti presented her ethnographic work on traditional *trachanas* production in modern Greece and information on bulgur production in conjunction with experimental research, contributed towards the interpretation of archaeobotanical remains of stored, pre-processed cereals from Bronze Age northern Greece. Patricia Anderson discussed cereal processing in the region of Atlas in Tunisia.

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