ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Early agricultural practices south of Lake Urmia (Iran) highlight the importance of cereals to understand east-west connectivities

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Abstract

Agricultural practices are believed to arrive to Lake Urmia region from the Zagros/North Mesopotamian area, around 6000 BCE. This region connects the Caucasus with the southern Caspian coast and the Anatolian Peninsula and it could have witnessed the origin of Common Wheat, which according to genetic research should have originated after a hybridisation between a tetraploid wheat (emmer/hard wheat) and *Aegilops tauschii*, a wild grass that grows nowadays in the South Caspian region. The area south of Lake Urmia offers marshy lands, which were often chosen by early farming communities to settle in, as well as more moderate winters in comparison with higher nearby mountains.
Two sites were excavated by the DAI with local collaboration partners: Tappe Leilan and Dalma Tappe. The former could be among the earliest Neolithic sites in the area (with dates starting ca. 6500 BCE), while the latter dates to the 5th millennium BCE. Sediment samples were taken and floated. The results of the study of both sites will be presented, highlighting the importance of naked wheat (including the hexaploid type) at the earliest site and its quick disappearance in younger phases. We will discuss the importance of these results for the understanding of east-west connectivities.

Keywords

archaeobotany, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Naked wheat, Domestication

Session

5. Neolithic paths

Type of paper

Oral presentation