



Proceedings of the 18th Conference of the International Work Group for Palaeoethnobotany, Lecce 2019

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About the conference

While we are struggling against the COVID-19 pandemic, it is with greater pleasure and nostalgia that we remember the intense and “free to hug” days of the 18th Conference of the International Work Group for Palaeoethnobotany held in Lecce, Italy, between the 3rd and 8th of June, 2019.

Thanks to the hosting team of the *Laboratorio di Archeobotanica e Paleoecologia* and the great efforts of the researchers, students and administrative staff of the Department of Cultural Heritage at the University of Salento, the conference was a great success and pleased all participants.

It was the first time that an IWGP meeting had taken place in Italy, where the young Maria Follieri (1932–2012) took the first steps in studying plant remains and who was among the small group of colleagues who met in Prague in 1968 to found the Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Paläoethnobotanik (IAP), the predecessor of the IWGP. While we were planning the 18th IWGP, we lost another great personality: it was on 1st July of 2018 when Gordon Hillman (1943–2018) passed away. Their disappearance left an unbridgeable void and their memories were celebrated through the words of Donatella Magri and Dorian Fuller at the opening session of the meeting in 2019.

The conference was supported by Regione Puglia, Comune di Lecce, SBI (Società Botanica Italiana), MIBAC (Ministero per i Beni e le attività Culturali), MARTA

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As already observed at recent IWGP conferences of the last decades, our scientific community has witnessed a steadily increasing number of participants, resulting in 261 researchers, post-docs and doctoral students from 48 different countries around the world, the largest number at any IWGP conference up to now. The extensive programme of sharing and exchanging all the latest results of researches and studies succeeded in creating a very stimulating atmosphere.

The contributions, presented as 117 lectures and 132 posters, were grouped according to four proposed themes, trying to avoid parallel sessions.

Three workshops, where the “state of the art” of current topics was presented and discussed, completed the programme. The first workshop, *European Research Council projects* (co-organised by Amy Bogaard, Dorian Fuller, Sultana Maria Valamoti, Leonor Peña-Chocarro and Carla Lancelotti), had the objective to sum up the last few years of accrued experience of archaeobotanists as principal investigators at different levels or as panel members in ERC grants. The second, *National and international archaeobotanical networks* (co-organised by Anna Maria Mercuri, Felix Bittmann, Angela Kreuz, Alexandra Livarda, Lisa Lodwick, Adéla Pokorná and Wiebke Kirleis) wished to explore the experiences of several European databases, and proposed a closer interaction between the different existing networks. The last workshop, *Public archaeobotany* (organised by Cornelie Moolhuizen, David Sone, Eva Degli Innocenti and Dragana Filipović) explored the possibilities of putting archaeobotany in the public spotlight, for which the



Participants of the 18th conference of the International Workgroup for Palaeoethnobotany (IWGP), without social distancing, at Lecce, June 2019 (Photo courtesy of Emiliano Caricato)

participants actively engaged in designing new ideas for future presentations, exhibitions, museum quests and every other brainchild.

Traditionally, space was provided for free laboratory sessions during the conference, focused on the comparison of plant remains. Thanks to the instrumental support of Nikon Instruments spa (special thanks to Mario Lippolis and Fabrizio Lucci) five thematic sessions were organized.

They were introduced in a lecture by Karl Hammer on the variability of tetraploid wheat grains, leading on to two sessions on *Naked wheat* (organised by Angela Kreuz, Ferran Antolín and Marlu Kühn) and *New glume wheat* (organised by Dragana Filipović, Liz Stroud, Amy Bogaard, Françoise Toulemonde, Sultana Valamoti and Burhan Ulaş). The *Legume* session, organised by Valentina Caracuta and Yoel Melamed, was meant to spread knowledge about identification of legumes, with theoretical and practical approaches for the study of their anatomical features. The *Millet* session, organised by Dorian Fuller and Marco Madella, had the aim of refining the criteria used for the identification of millets that are found in archaeological sites and of providing general guidelines for archaeobotanists working in tropical areas with small-seeded species of this group showing similar morphological characteristics. The last session, on *Image analysis*, organised by Laurent Bouby and Clémence Pagnoux, provided an overview of the main techniques used

to analyse seed shapes by fitting a polynomial curve to plant remains and applying the most common programs for shape analyses.

About the volume

For the present issue 22 papers have been submitted of which 12 were finally accepted, representing the four sessions and a workshop: *1 Origin and diffusion of cultivated plants* with two papers (Toulemonde et al. about crop history in northeastern France and Stevens et al. about *Panicum* domestication in China); *2 Agricultural practices and palaeoeconomy* also with two contributions (Tserendorj et al. presenting agricultural developments from the Bronze Age to the Medieval in southwest Germany and Neveu et al. dealing with weed ecology from the Bronze to Iron Age in northwest France); *3 Integrated and interdisciplinary approaches* represented by five papers, four original articles dealing mainly with morphometric analyses (Bouby et al. on Bronze Age to modern grape pips of Georgia, Tarongi Chavarri et al. on Iron Age pulses in Spain, Ciampagna et al. on starch grains of underground storage organs in Argentine Patagonia, Tolar et al. on multiproxy analyses of Late Neolithic canine excrements from Slovenia) and a review article (Fuks and Dunseth on multiproxy analyses of archaeological

dung pellets); *4 Plants and society* with one original and one review article (Jiang et al. on plant remains from a graveyard of the Han dynasty, China, and Außerlechner about Bronze to Iron Age burnt offering sites in the eastern Alps). The volume is completed by a short communication article (Kirleis et al.) from *Workshop 4* about ArchbotLit, a search engine and database for archaeobotanical literature, collected by J. Schultze-Motel since 1981 and continued by H. Kroll (1992–2001) and now converted to a wiki platform.

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*Multiple reviews