

Title (capital letters): ANCIENT PLANT FOODS, ETHNOGRAPHY AND MODERN CONSUMERS: CASE STUDIES FROM THE AEGEAN TO CENTRAL EUROPE

Full Name: Soultana Maria Valamoti¹, Hans-Peter Stika², Andreas Heiss³, Marian Berihuete Azorin², Ioanna Mimi¹

Institution, city, country:

1. Department of Archaeology, School of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 54124 Thessaloniki, Greece
2. Austrian Archaeological Institute (ÖAI), Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW), Franz Klein-Gasse 1, 1190 Vienna, Austria
3. Institute of Botany, University of Hohenheim, D-70593 Stuttgart, Germany

Abstract (max. 300 words):

The ERC-funded PLANTCULT Project (GA682529) focuses on plant foods of prehistoric Europe as these foods have been closely associated to cultural expression, social and economic organisation of past human societies. The project seeks a) to explore ancient culinary transformation of plant ingredients into specific foods and recipes and through this investigate how plant foods shaped social and cultural identities in a large part of Europe spreading from the Aegean to Central Europe, from the Neolithic through to the Iron Age (7th-1st millennia B.C.). In order to better understand past culinary practice in relation to plant foods, the project is not only examining ancient plant foods; it also focuses on the collection of ethnographic information on traditional food preparations potentially prepared in prehistoric times. These include bulgur, trachanas, breads/porridges, split pulses (a *fava* type mash), Grünkern (green-harvested and roasted/smoked spelt), wine and fruit syrups. This aspect of our project does not only inform our archaeological inquiries and methodologies, but also opens up the way towards connecting our research with contemporary society, consumers as well as small and medium enterprises. Our paper presents an overview of prehistoric plant foods focusing on a selection of food ingredients and products encountered in both archaeobotanical and ethnographic contexts in Greece and Central Europe and assesses the context of their survival in modern European society as household preparations and marketed goods.

Biographical note (max 5 lines):

S.M.Valamoti is associate professor at the Department of Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She teaches Prehistoric Archaeology and her research focuses on Archaeobotany, Ancient Foodways, Plant and People in Prehistory and Public Archaeology. She is currently leading a large team of researchers in the context of ERC funded project PLANTCULT: Investigating the Food Cultures of Ancient Europe. H-P Stika and Andreas Heiss are PLANTCULT project partners. Marian Berihuete Azorin is PLANTCULT postdoctoral researcher, Ioanna Mimi is an Archaeology Graduate of the Department of Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.