

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910795723103321
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Titolo	Millet and What Else? : The Wider Context of the Adoption of Millet Cultivation in Europe
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Leiden : , : Sidestone Press, , 2022 ©2022
ISBN	94-6427-017-9
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (332 pages)
Collana	Scales of Transformation ; ; v.14
Altri autori (Persone)	Dal CorsoMarta FilipoviDragana
Disciplina	630.936
Soggetti	Agriculture, Prehistoric
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Intro -- Preface by the series editors -- Millet and what else? The wider context of the adoption of millet cultivation in Europe -- Wiebke Kirleis, Dragana Filipovi, Marta Dal Corso -- SECTION 1: INNOVATIONS IN THE BRONZE AGE SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES FROM UKRAINE TO FRANCE -- The (pre)history of common millet (<i>Panicum miliaceum</i>) in Ukraine and its place in the traditional cuisine -- Galyna Pashkevych -- Bronze Age plant spectra in Hungary before and after the introduction of millet cultivation -- Sofia Filatova -- Bronze Age novelties in animal exploitation in the Carpathian Basin in a European context -- Łászló Bartosiewicz -- Unearthing millet in Bronze and Iron Age Croatia -- Kelly Reed, Jacqueline Balen, Ivan Drni, Sara Essert, Hrvoje Kalafati, Marija Mihaljevi, Emily Zavodny -- The earliest finds of millet and possible associated changes in material culture in Slovenia -- Tjaša Tolar and Primož Pavlin -- On the 'ancient' evidence for <i>Panicum miliaceum</i> and <i>Vicia faba</i> in central Germany (primarily Saxony-Anhalt) -- Monika Hellmund -- Millets in Bronze Age agriculture and food consumption in northeastern France -- Françoise Toulemonde, Julian Wiethold, Emmanuelle Bonnaire, Geneviève Daoulas, Marie Derreumaux, Frédérique Durand, Bénédicte Pradat, Oriane Rousselet, Caroline Schaal, Véronique Zech-Matterne -- On-site to off-site: A multidisciplinary and multiscale consideration of the 13th to 11thcenturyBCE transformation in northern Germany -- Ingo

Feeser, Stefanie Schaefer-Di Maida, Stefan Dreibrodt, Jutta Kneisel, Dragana Filipovi -- SECTION 2: APPROACHING MILLET CULTIVATION AND CONSUMPTION THROUGH HIGH-END MICROSCOPY, CHEMISTRY AND ETHNOGRAPHY -- Putting millet into a culinary context: Organic residue analysis and the identification of *Panicum miliaceum* in pottery vessels.

Edward A. Standall, Oliver E. Craig, Carl Heron -- Tracing millet through biomarker analysis in archaeological sites in alluvial plains: The first miliacin data from the northern Italian Bronze Age -- Marta Dal Corso, Marco Zanon, Carl Heron, Mauro Rottoli, Michele Cupitò, Elisa Dalla Longa, Wiebke Kirleis -- Exploring seed impressions within the fabric of pottery: Using a silicone cast method for reliable identification -- Eiko Endo -- Traditional millet cultivation in the Iberian Peninsula: Ethnoarchaeological reflections through the lens of social relations and economic concerns -- Andrés Teira-Brión -- Versatile usage of millet: Brooms and animal fodder from *Sorghum technicum* -- Wiebke Kirleis and Marta Dal Corso -- Early cultivation of millet in Europe: What else and where next? Concluding the workshop proceedings -- Dragana Filipovi, Marta Dal Corso, Wiebke Kirleis -- List of authors (in the order of appearance): -- Blank Page -- Blank Page.

Sommario/riassunto

Broomcorn/common/proso millet (*Panicum miliaceum*) is a cereal crop that originated in East Asia and was transferred westward to Europe, where it was introduced in the mid-2nd millennium BCE, at the height of the Bronze Age. Archaeobotanists from the Collaborative Research Centre 1266, supported by many colleagues, conducted a large-scale programme of radiocarbon dating of millet grains from prehistoric Europe. They discovered that the spread of this crop on the continent happened quickly, extending far and wide. What do we know about the (pre)history of this crop in Europe? The workshop organised by the CRC 1266 at Kiel University in 2019 encouraged the discussion on the circumstances and consequences of early broomcorn millet cultivation in Europe. This book brings together many of the workshop papers and reflects the diverse topics and research areas covered. The contributions inform us on the range of cultivated and collected plants from the time before and after the start of millet cultivation in Europe; present the cultural setting in which millet arrived; discuss possible reasons driving the acceptance of this innovation; and reconstruct possible uses of millet and the methods of its cultivation, processing and storage. Not just the plant economy, but also the animal economy is represented, since millet was and is grown for both humans and animals. Techniques used to trace millet archaeologically are continually being developed or improved, and this book describes the application of a few of them. This broad-based compilation of papers adds another layer to the dynamic picture of the Bronze Age and the interconnected continent. It also illustrates the complexity of the research on the diffusion of agricultural innovations.
