

### **Drakaina Cave, Poros, Kephallonia: The Charcoal Analysis**

Recent excavations in the prehistoric deposits at Drakaina Cave, Poros Kephallonia, have brought to light successive layers of Late Neolithic I (or Late Neolithic: 5400-4900 cal BC) and Late Neolithic II (or Chalcolithic: 4900-3700 cal BC) date (Stratouli 2007, Stratouli and Metaxas 2008). Well-organized and systematic sampling of the excavated prehistoric deposits for environmental data has yielded great amounts of plant macrofossils amongst which wood-charcoals are the most abundant.

The wood-charcoal material on which the present report focuses represents the majority of the excavated squares, a large number of contexts and the totality of the stratigraphic sequence where three major chrono-cultural phases have been identified, i.e. Late Neolithic, Late Neolithic/Chalcolithic and Chalcolithic (G. Stratouli, pers. comm.).

In the majority of excavated units (each unit has a unique 4-digit number) the wood-charcoal samples were separated from the sediment by using both dry-sieving on site and the water flotation method of a large number of soil samples from different contexts. Therefore, the wood-charcoal material subjected to analysis includes both the remains recovered directly from the sediment and those separated from the coarse flot and the residue fraction of the water flotation samples. By these means, we believe that we have achieved the best possible representation of wood-charcoal material per excavated unit.

The qualitative and quantitative wood-charcoal results (Table 1) are presented in a preliminary form as assemblages corresponding to each one of the three major chrono-cultural periods, i.e. the Late Neolithic, the Late Neolithic/Chalcolithic and the Chalcolithic. A finer resolution and correlation of the wood-charcoal assemblages with each one of the four lime plastered floors that have been identified at the cave's sequence (Karkanas and Stratouli 2008) must await a more detailed stratigraphic and contextual analysis.

## Charcoal analysis

Written by Tasos

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TAXA	Late Neolithic		Late Neolithic - Chalcolithic		Chalcolithic	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
<i>cf. Abies cephalonica</i> (K. ephalonia fir)	3	0.30			1	0.12
<i>Acer</i> sp. (maple)	5	0.50				
Angiosperm	24	2.40	27	2.81	42	5.20
<i>Arbutus unedo</i> (strawberry tree)	64	6.39	128	13.32	62	7.68
<i>Carpinus/Ostrya</i> (hornbeam/hop-hornbeam)	2	0.20	1	0.10		
<i>Cistus</i> sp. (rockrose)	3	0.30	2	0.21		
Cistaceae	3	0.30	1	0.10	1	0.12
<i>cf. Clematis</i> sp. (clematis)	2	0.20				
Conifer	4	0.40	1	0.10	6	0.74
<i>Erica</i> sp. (heath)					3	0.37
<i>cf. Erica</i> sp.	1	0.10				
<i>Ficus carica</i> (fig tree)	1	0.10			2	0.25
<i>Fraxinus</i> sp. (ash)	1	0.10				
<i>Juniperus</i> sp. (juniper)	35	3.50	10	1.04	14	1.73
<i>cf. Juniperus</i> sp.	1	0.10				
Labiatae (the mint family)	3	0.30	4	0.42	1	0.12
<i>Laurus nobilis</i> (bay)			2	0.21		
Leguminosae (the pea family)	1	0.10			3	0.37
Maloideae (the pear family)	9	0.90	19	1.98	3	0.37
Monocotyledon	1	0.10				
<i>Olea europaea</i> (olive)	8	0.80	1	0.10		
<i>Phillyrea/Rhamnus alaternus</i> (mock privet/Mediterranean buckthorn)	257	25.67	285	29.66	179	22.18
<i>Pinus halepensis</i> (Aleppo pine)	1	0.10	11	1.14	5	0.62
<i>cf. P. halepensis</i>	3	0.30	1	0.10	2	0.25
<i>Pinus</i> type <i>P. halepensis</i> / <i>P. pinea</i>					1	0.12
<i>Pinus nigra</i> (black pine)			1	0.10		
<i>Pinus</i> sp.			7	0.73		
<i>cf. Pinus</i>	1	0.10				
<i>Pistacia terebinthus</i> (turpentine tree)	25	2.50	43	4.47	46	5.70
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i> (lentisc)			2	0.21		
<i>Pistacia</i> sp.	7	0.70	5	0.52	2	0.25
<i>Populus</i> sp. (poplar)	2	0.20	1	0.10		
<i>Prunus amygdalus</i> (almond)	24	2.40	33	3.43	46	5.70
<i>Prunus</i> t. <i>P. amygdalus</i> / <i>P. spinosa</i>	5	0.50	5	0.52	11	1.36
<i>Prunus</i> t. <i>amygdalus</i> / <i>webbii</i>	2	0.20	2	0.21	3	0.37
<i>Prunus</i> type <i>P. spinosa</i> (blackthorn)			2	0.21	2	0.25
<i>Prunus webbii</i> (wild almond)	4	0.40	1	0.10	6	0.74
<i>Prunus</i> sp.	4	0.40	4	0.42	17	2.11
<i>Quercus</i> sp. deciduous type (deciduous oak)	144	14.39	124	12.90	80	9.91
<i>Quercus</i> sp. evergreen type (prickly/Holm oak)	240	23.98	150	15.61	118	14.62
<i>Quercus</i> sp.	103	10.29	86	8.95	149	18.46
<i>Ulmus/Celtis</i> (elm/nettle tree)	1	0.10				
Non-identified			1	0.10		

