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# ARCHAEOBOTANICAL STUDIES IN NORTHEASTERN BULGARIA

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(S u m m a r y)

The palaeoethnobotanical material from Northeastern Bulgaria gives evidence of food production. Cultivated plants are represented by *Triticum aestivum/compactum*, *Triticum Caestivum*, *Hordeum vulgare* var. *nudum*, *Lens culinaris*, *Vicia ervilia*, *Vicia faba*, *Pisum sativum*, *Sorgo bicolor*.

The appearance of bread wheat predominating among the cultivated plants is a characteristic feature of palaeoethnobotanical findings in Roman sites in the territory of Roman empire.

Considering the variety of the enumerated tree species we can divide them into two major groups: typical Mediterranean plants, which can be found only in this region and plants of a wide ecological range. The datepalm, the stone-pine, the olive tree, the *Pistacia terebintus*, the fig tree, the almond tree — almost all of these plants were discovered in many archaeological sites as early as the Neolithic, which according to Lisitsin and Philipovich (1980), confirms the already stated opinion that the climatic borders and the borders of the main vegetation zones were similar to the contemporary ones and became established towards 7000. A large number of plants belong to the second group and at the beginning they were gathered — walnuts, hazelnuts, pears, apples, plums, raspberries and blackberries while they were domesticated. The list of the agrarian species is long. As a result of the studied materials, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The existence of fairly early import connections is proven by the presence of many fruits like dates and stone-pine fruits at a considerably earlier time than as compared to our neighboring territories. The available data confirms the exceptionally early introduction of the fig tree — the finds from Galabovo (southern Bulgaria) from the Bronze Age.

It is important to note the fact that in their larger part, the finds were discovered in graves, which indicates that they were an inseparable attribute of the burial ritual.

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It still remains unclear, whether some of the fruits served the needs of the daily use, or only some select people consumed them.

It seems some fruits were especially preferred. Probably, most of the fruits were only the privilege of the affluent Romans.