

## **HOW THE MULTI-PROXY APPROACH HELPS TO REVEAL THE MYSTERY OF THE LATER PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT IN THE ŠUMAVA MOUNTAINS (BÖHMERWALD), BOHEMIA.**

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The highest altitude site from the La Tène period in the Czech Republic is located in the Sklarske valley, Šumava Mts. Last year it became the subject of grant research primarily focused on understanding the nature, duration and extent of human activities in the mountains, and their impact on Holocene vegetation. Due to a forestation of the lower mountains, archaeological prospection is extremely difficult, and human activities are recorded almost exclusively through anthropogenic indicators in local pollen profiles. During the excavations of the archaeological site we applied a multi-proxy approach (pollen, plant and animal macrofossils, macro- and micro-charcoal, soil phosphate analysis, organic residue analysis and mineralogical analysis of pottery fragments) to reveal the purpose of the site which could be agricultural settlement, seasonal summer farming, seasonal hunting or fishing, a base near an assumed trade route, a place for occasional ritual or social activities, or something else entirely. We will present our current ambiguous results of all analyses and their correspondence with high resolution pollen analysis from the core situated ca. 60 m from the archaeological site. Here, evidence of (non-intensive) human activity precedes dating of the site by almost one thousand years. The low intensity of human impact during prehistoric periods is especially evident in comparison with the late medieval and modern sections of the pollen profile, when the existence of a large village with glass production resulted in significant changes in vegetation. Local results will be further combined with pollen data from the wider region which will enable us to understand the connections between the settlement in the foothills and activities at higher elevations.

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