

SEED AND PLANT REMNANTS IN MUSEUM OBJECTS

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Plant or animal remains can be found while carrying on investigations of museum artefacts. Among museum artefacts such as bowls and other containers belonging to a 430-460 A.D. villa few plant remains have been found. Artefacts have been detected in a water well nearby Selvicciola, Ischia di Castro (Gazzetti, 1989). Seeds and fruits really have been found in the bottom of containers of various shape and use such as glass bottles, jugs, metal pots and pans. Analysis of the contents shows plant remains producing edible fruits such as Vitaceae (*Vitis vinifera* ssp.), Cornaceae (*Cornus mas* L.), Rosaceae (*Rubus* sp.). They look to represent mostly the ingredients of drinks and meals that were prepared for the guests at the villa. Plant remains consist not only with seeds but also with charcoal and timber pieces. Wood and charcoal belong to Fagaceae (*Quercus* sp. deciduous group and *Quercus* sp. *ilex* type), Oleaceae (*Fraxinus* cf. *excelsior*) and Aceraceae (*Acer* cf. *campestris*). They are mostly represented by branches or twigs collected nearby. There is also evidence of a flock lead to pasture in the neighbourhood. The inhabitants of the villa used to gather berries during their wandering in the woods but they also tilled the kitchen-garden where some pulses, mostly lentil (*Lens culinaris* L.) and broad bean (*Vicia faba* L.) grew.