

The Balkan Key to Bridging Gaps in the Aegean Dendrochronological Record

Tomasz Wazny

Dendrochronology provides continuous annual tree-ring sequences anchored in the present. The independent, accurate dating method this supplies has solved numerous historical problems in American Southwest and in Europe. In the Eastern Mediterranean, after 40 years of the Aegean Dendrochronology Project (ADP), the tree-ring series span much of the period between today and 7,000 BC, however, all "BC" dating results are not absolute (calendrical) tree-ring dates. Thus work to fill the gaps which link absolutely dated chronologies of the present day with floating chronologies back to the Bronze Age became priority of ADP.

In Central Europe a continuous oak tree-ring chronology spanning the last 10,490 years has been completed. A preliminary study performed on growing oaks proved that the Balkan chronologies match both - Mediterranean and Central European ones. Therefore I assert that the key to bridging gaps the Aegean dendrochronological record and to verification, completion and validation of historic chronologies is located north of the Aegean - in the Balkans. I would like to present here the main directions of dendrochronological exploration in the region in the last two years and strategy planned for the next years.