

VANDA 2022 – Vienna Anthropology Days

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Panel: **The Seasonal and the Material: Anthropology of Seasonal Practices**

Organizers:

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Abstract:

Humans are not only social animals but seasonal as well. The worldwide ethnographic record provides many perspectives on seasonal human behavior, such as seasonal dwellings, seasonal use of space, and seasonal changes in the socio-political organization among non-state groups. Nevertheless, it remains challenging to identify seasonality from prehistoric assemblages. In exceptional cases, ethnographically documented practices observed among present communities may be used to infer seasonal practices from the archaeological evidence, based on direct historical analogy. In most prehistoric settings, however, a historical analogy may not be suitable due to the time-lag of millennia and the difficulty of providing the continuity between the past and present communities. In latter cases, building hypotheses based on cross-cultural anthropological research may be more suitable. Moreover, whereas such cross-cultural anthropological insights (e.g. round dwellings are more likely to be associated with seasonal occupation) can be used as a starting point, prehistoric archaeological artifacts may speak for themselves. Most commonly, archaeologists infer seasonal practices from prehistoric evidence through settlement patterns, types of farming, lifecycles of animals and plants, and oxygen isotopic analyses of marine mollusc shells among others, while continuously developing new methods and sampling techniques.

This session welcomes contributions dealing with seasonal practices in non-state sedentary and (semi-)nomadic groups, from ethnographic, historical anthropological, and archaeological perspectives. The topic of seasonality may be addressed through a socio-political organization (e.g., fusion and fission of groups, fluctuations in leadership), dwellings, use of space, crafts, and farming/foraging practices. Based on the Pecha Kucha format, the presentations will be limited to 20 slides with 20 seconds of commentary for each slide. Both single ethnographic and/or archaeological cases studies, as well as comparative approaches to seasonality, are welcome. The main aim of the session is to foster dialogue between socio-cultural anthropologists and archaeologists dealing with seasonal practices.

The link for submission: <https://vanda.univie.ac.at/call-for-papers/>