

Identification of economical adaptation of Neolithic to Iron age people in Northeast China using faunal remains case studies: Shangjifangyingzi and Wangbabozi

DM. Suratissa¹, Tang Zhuo-Wei² and Zhu Hong²

The Shangjifangyingzi, and Wangbabozi faunal remains were analyzed to find out the chronological distribution and economical situation. We analyzed 41,179 bone fragments from Wangbabozi, and 7,573 from Shangjifangyingzi settlement. Total percentage of identifiable portion in each site did not exceed 20% due to the fragmentation of bones by both natural and cultural activities. Assemblage composition revealed that all the inhabitants of two sites had actively involved in domestication. Minimum six kinds of animals in each site have been domesticated or tried out for domestication. For example, in Wangbabozi occupants had initiated domestication of water buffalo during Shang Zhou period; however, due to drastic change of climatic condition from warm-wet to cold-dry, it had been failed.

The Shangjifangyingzi site, subsistence economy concentrated on the procurement of domestic fauna with a minimum use of wild resources, which were always more than 80% for utilizing domesticates. But we don't have enough evidence to fully understand the process whereby the northeast China people adopted domestic artiodactyls. However, the changing nature of economy appeared to be relatively rapid, and sheep and goat became important staples formerly, and remained so until recent times in some part of northeast China. According to the meat weight analysis, in Shangjifangyingzi cattle played a major part in contributing meat to inhabitants during both periods, and followed by pig however, in Wangbabozi it was pig. Nevertheless, the Wangbabozi, emphasis was placed on the procurement of wild resources; especially red deer and wild pig were present by the evaluation of meat weight contribution through chronology. These faunal sources highlight the importance of cattle, sheep/goat, and pigs to Northeast China economy and diet. Total domestic meat contribution in Shangjifangyingzi amount to 65% in both periods. Nevertheless, in Wangbabozi, this situation was completely different where most of their meat derived from wild resources other than domesticates, especially from red deer and wild pig. Even though, through out time these people increased the intensity of domestication.

Key words: Subsistence strategies, Meat weight contribution, Number of identifiable Species (NIS), Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI)

¹ Dept. of Zoology, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka and Frontier Archaeological Research Center, Jilin University, Changchun, China

² Frontier Archaeological Research Center, Jilin University, Changchun, China.