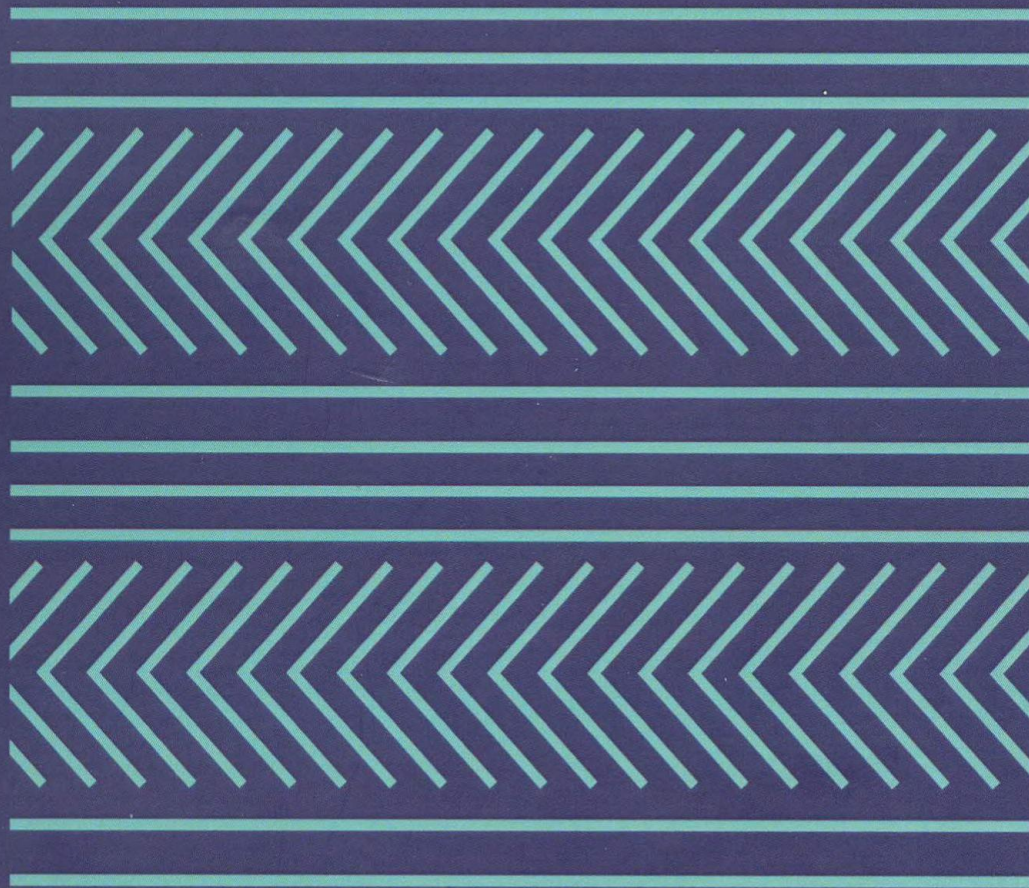


# ENE — 2019 Conference

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1<sup>st</sup> Conference on the  
EARLY NEOLITHIC of EUROPE

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southeast Serbia, provides first insights into the Early Neolithic occupation in the region, including the information on one of the earliest recorded agricultural activity in the central Balkans. In the paper, we present the investigations at the site and the initial results of zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical analyses, which offer a first glimpse into the Early Neolithic subsistence economy of the region based on the spectrum of plants and animals used by the occupants of the site. We then put our findings into a broader picture for the central Balkans, which brings us closer to understanding of the beginnings of agriculture in what has sometimes been described as a Neolithic 'transit zone'.

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ORAL PRESENTATION 6

## **Dietary adaptations at the Early Neolithic in the Danube Gorges: Neolithized foragers or Mesolithized farmers?**

Camille de Becdelievre<sup>1</sup>, Jelena Jovanovic<sup>2</sup>, Zuzana Hofmanová<sup>3</sup>, Gwenaëlle Goude<sup>4</sup>, Sofija Stefanovic<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Laboratory for Bioarchaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade

<sup>2</sup>Laboratory for Bioarchaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade; Biosense Institute, University of Novi Sad

<sup>3</sup>Department of Biology, University of Fribourg; Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics

<sup>4</sup>Aix Marseille Univ, CNRS, Minist Culture, LAMPEA

<sup>5</sup>Biosense Institute, University of Novi Sad; Laboratory for Bioarchaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade

It is now considered that migrants originating from Near-Eastern Neolithic communities brought the farming way of life into Europe, reshaping then the ecological niche, the socio-cultural organization, as well as major bio-demographic features. Although the Neolithic expansion is well-documented at a regional level, the nature and consequences of local interactions with foragers are still debated. The Danube Gorges prehistoric

sites represent an archaeological complex of particular importance to tackle these issues because of its location between southeastern and central Europe, its temporal continuity (Mesolithic-Neolithic occupation, 9500-5500 cal. BC), and unique bioarchaeological record. Over the past decades, knowledge about the local process of Neolithization has greatly expanded thanks to the application of various biogeochemical analyses: stable isotope analyses have reconstructed subsistence practices, radiogenic strontium analyses have identified the presence of non-local individuals at the Early Neolithic and genome-wide data analyses have evidenced the presence of individuals descended from Near-Eastern Neolithic communities. These different markers are here compared in order to reconstruct the diet of migrants, of locals, and of their putative descendants, and thereby to explore the mechanisms of dietary adaptations upon successive generations at the earliest Neolithic. Although aquatic resources played a major role in the local subsistence, some non-local individuals descended from Near-Eastern Neolithic communities (first generation migrants) had a more terrestrial diet. While the descendants of local fisher-hunter-gatherers mostly continue to perpetuate their dietary traditions, the descendants of migrants also mostly adopted the local fishing practices, suggesting a local process of “Mesolithization”. Examined within the funerary context, these bioarchaeological markers also indicate that the Neolithization of the Gorges should not be seen as a straightforward pattern of acculturation but rather as a complex mosaic of cultural and behavioral interactions. This study thus illustrates how the life history perspective may contribute to a finest understanding of the Neolithization process.