

ENE —2019 Conference

6-8 November, Barcelona



CSIC



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1st Conference on the EARLY NEOLITHIC of EUROPE

The Unit '*Archaeology of Social Dynamics*', hosted in the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC-IMF, Barcelona), in collaboration with the Maritime Museum of Barcelona, has organized the **1st Conference on the EARLY NEOLITHIC of EUROPE** (Barcelona, 6-8 November, 2019). This conference aims to be a meeting of researchers studying the early Neolithic in Europe and surroundings areas, in relation with the neolithisation process in the continent. This process followed different rhythms and presented singularities in each geographic area, and was therefore a very complex phenomenon. In order to address this scientific challenge, the conference is organised in nine thematic sessions:

1. **Neolithic spread and supraregional interactions** (Chair: Catherine Perlès, Université Paris Nanterre). This session will be devoted to understanding the origin of the earliest farming communities in Europe, focusing on their diffusion from the Near East into Europe, the subsequent spread within the continent and the development of supraregional interactions. We will take into account population movements/migration, plants, animals and abiotic material circulation and technological transfers between regions. Comparative studies of the similarities or differences observed in key aspects of the neolithisation processes in these regions are also encouraged. Another research topic covered by this session is the role of the north African Neolithic in the early stages of the neolithisation process in parts of southern Europe, such as the southern Iberian Peninsula.
2. **Chronology and modelling** (Chair: Stephen Shennan, University College London). The introduction of the Neolithic followed different dynamics in each geographical area in the European continent. Chronological modelling has changed and redefined our understanding of the neolithisation processes with the development of high resolution and precise regional models. The establishment of a high resolution and robust chronology for the appearance and spread of Neolithic novelties is able to determine the timing of social interaction between the last hunter-gatherers and first farming societies. This session is intended to be a forum for the critical assessment of chronological models, dating methods and radiocarbon programs as a way to refine the understanding of the timing and rhythms of the processes related to the development of the Early Neolithic.
3. **Human–environment interaction** (Chair: Jean-François Berger, Université Lumière Lyon). This session aims to investigate human-environmental interaction during the early stages of the Neolithic in Europe. We intend to unite the archaeological record with environmental sciences to produce integrated regional studies about past human-environmental interaction at the beginning of the farming economy. Contributions will focus on environmental and human responses to climate changes, their effects on population dynamics and on the process of the spread of farming itself. Specific research topics covered within this session include the impact of sea level changes on coastal settlements, human responses to

aridity and hydrological stress, impact of human activities on the landscape, resilience or vulnerability of the first farming systems to climate instability and their relationships with the ecosystems in which they developed.

4. **Population characteristics and dynamics** (Chair: Mattias Jakobsson, Uppsala Universitet). Defining bioanthropological characteristics of the first farming communities and local hunter-gatherers is a key approach to gain a better knowledge about the agents of the neolithisation process. This section will integrate aspects dealing with health and stress markers in skeletons or genetic and epigenetic characterization of populations. Studies on population dynamics could include research on group size, age structure, endogamy-exogamy in reproduction or death and birth rates. Mechanisms of migration, of both hunter-gatherers and farmers and their demographic interaction, via substitution, interbreeding or group fusion and fission are also important aspects to elucidate in this session.
5. **Territory and settlement** (Chair: Daniela Hofmann, University of Hamburg). The new economic bases inherent in the development of farming communities entailed a new type of relationship with the territory and resources. We propose that the settlement pattern can be analysed as a proxy to approach human-territory interaction and the inhabitation of landscapes, taking into account aspects such as settlement duration, nature and seasonality of occupations or inter-site relationships, among others. The exploitation of resources will also be approached, stressing the mobility of Neolithic communities in their territories. Contributions focusing on intra-site perspectives, such as the organization of the inhabited spaces according to the activities carried out there, or the development of territoriality as a social strategy, are also encouraged.
6. **Subsistence** (Chair: Amy Bogaard, University of Oxford). The beginning of arable farming and animal husbandry are among the most significant questions to track changes in Early Neolithic life, although the rhythm of the changes and their spread through Europe are still under debate. This session aims to bring together researchers working on the introduction of new species, the exploitation of wild resources—including hunting, fishing or gathering—and husbandry strategies, taking into account regional singularities. Studies approaching human diet by means of isotopic analyses, tooth micro-wear, etc. are also welcomed. The ultimate goal is to obtain a Europe-wide perspective about when and how farming was adopted in different regions, and the characteristics of the subsistence strategies.
7. **Technological processes** (Chair: Annelou van Gijn, Universiteit Leiden). A range of technological innovations derived from the broad socioeconomic changes that took place during the Mesolithic to Neolithic transition. For this session, we are interested in contributions dealing with both innovations and the continuity and/or transformation of previous technological processes. In this sense, we especially encourage contributions focusing on the appearance and proliferation of new technologies, tool-types and tasks associated with the new subsistence practices, such as sickle blades and harvesting, cooking and storage technologies related to pottery production and use, and exploitation of new raw materials and resources due to a more intensive use of the territory.
8. **Funerary practices** (Chair: Christian Jeunesse, Université de Strasbourg). Rites related to funerary practices reveal customs and habits connected with human behaviour in the face of death, symbolic thought and ideology. On the one hand, these topics will be addressed by means of the study of mortuary sites, emphasising the location of tombs and their relationship with others in the vicinity, to determine the character of these places. Special attention will be paid to the funerary architecture as well as the arrangement of the space in order to accommodate the corpses. On the other hand, contributions concerning the body position, its arrangement for burial and the characteristics of objects and offerings linked to the individuals as grave goods are considered for this session.
9. **Symbolism** (Chair: Goce Naumov, University Goce Delcev). Shifts in symbolic concepts and representations are some of the key innovations appearing in the Neolithic. The relevance of human iconography, symbolic depictions at open-air painted or engraved sites, the use of pottery as a surface to represent graphic conventions and symbols, and the monumentalization of the landscape are some of the manifestations of a new way of understanding concepts related to human beings, society and the relationship with

nature appearing in the Neolithic. This session aims to be a forum for the discussion of traditional and new approaches in the study of these phenomena among the last hunter-gatherers and the first farmers and their contribution to the understanding of the neolithisation process.

The call for abstracts is open from October 1, 2018 to May 15, 2019. We positively welcome multidisciplinary approaches, regional syntheses and/or contextualised case studies. For more details, please check the conference website: www.ene2019.org.