



BIWEEKLY COLLOQUIUM  
Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 4:15 p.m.

**PALEODEMOGRAPHY OF THE MESOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC IN  
CENTRAL BALKANS: A REVIEW OF METHODS AND RESULTS**

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Demographic reconstructions (paleodemography) have become increasingly important in the archaeology of the European Neolithic as it has been hypothesized that transition to farming and sedentism resulted in an unprecedented population growth – a full scale demographic transition with profound and long-term consequences for society, culture and biology. These changes cannot be understood without the knowledge of demographic factors which played a dual role as both causes and consequences of various socio-cultural and biological processes. In this lecture I present methods and empirical results of the latest paleodemographic research of the Central Balkan Mesolithic and Neolithic populations. During the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE Central Balkans was the corridor for the spread of the Neolithic from Greece to Central Europe and beyond. There is evidence of contact and interaction between the first farmers and the local Mesolithic communities in the Danube Gorges area that provides a rare opportunity to study the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition in great detail. After the establishment of the Neolithic way of life, the Central Balkans witnessed a rise of the Late Neolithic communities during the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium with more complex society, economy and technology. Given the theoretical relevance of demography for understanding the particularities of the historical process, paleodemographic research has been undertaken in order to address these important questions: 1. How can archaeologists reconstruct population dynamics in the Central Balkan Mesolithic and Neolithic at various spatial and chronological scales? 2. Is there a population increase corresponding to the hypothesized Neolithic Demographic Transition in Central Balkans on the macroregional and microregional scales? 3. Is there a correlation between climate, demography and culture in the period between 9000 and 4500 years BCE?

**Venue: Leibnizstraße 1, Seminar Room 204**