



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

# PREHISTORY IN THE BALKANS

common cultural heritage

25-27.11.2022 - Ohrid



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
**PREHISTORY IN THE BALKANS**  
COMMON CULTURAL HERITAGE

25-27.11.2022 - Ohrid

Conference organizers

**Center for Prehistoric Research, Skopje**  
**Institute of Archaeology, Tirana**  
**Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade**

Conference coordinators

**Goce Naumov**  
**Edlira Andoni**  
**Kristina Penezić**  
**Ljubo Fidanoski**

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**T**he final component of the Common Cultural Heritage project is the international conference "Prehistory in the Balkans: Common Cultural Heritage". This is the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of this event that the Center for Prehistoric Research has been organizing since 2015, but this time within the Western Balkan Fund supported project and therefore in coordination with the Institute of Archaeology in Tirana and the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. The conference summarizes all stages of the CCH project, but also emphasizes the current state-of-art research regarding the prehistoric heritage in the Balkans.

Therefore, this event is scheduled in three days (November 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>) in the city of Ohrid where both students and specialists will present their knowledge on the cultural heritage from Albania, Serbia and North Macedonia. On the first day of the conference the leading experts of the project will present the performed activities within this framework and their outcome, as well as the perspective and benefits of the project in the future of cultural heritage research, protection and promotion.

This will be followed by a series of presentations of students that were involved in the project. Besides sharing their experiences during the summer workshops and visits of different cities, sites and institutions in Albania, Serbia and North Macedonia, they will present their research related to particular topics concerning prehistoric cultural heritage, as well as its preservation and popularization. This will be accompanied by discussions in which they will demonstrate their abilities to debate on particular topics associated with their subject of interest.

The next day of the conference will be focused on the presentations by the leading experts in Balkan prehistory. Archaeologists from various institutions in Albania, Serbia and North Macedonia will expose their current research regarding the regional prehistoric perspectives, lakeshore settlements, tell sites, pile dwellings, farming economy, pottery networks, manipulation of figurines, landscape studies, and other aspects of Neolithisation of the Balkans. The presentations will encourage discussions that will elaborate the perspectives of Balkan prehistory nowadays and the future directions of its research and promotion. This event will be an excellent opportunity to establish new international collaboration and a more thorough networking among Albanian, Serbian and Macedonian archaeologists and art historians.

Besides the conference, the participants in this final event of the CCH project will also have the opportunity to visit some of the prehistoric pile dwellings on Lake Ohrid (one of them just beneath the venue), as well as the medieval fortress and numerous churches, Roman basilicas, typical Ohrid houses and museums that intertwine in the variety and richness of the multicultural heritage in this region.

- 25.11.2022 -

**09:00 - 09:15**

Goce Naumov and Ljubo Fidanoski  
*Center for Prehistoric Research (CPR)*

**Introduction and opening speech**

**09:15 - 09:30**

Katerina Velkoska  
*Director of the Institute for Protection of Cultural Heritage and Museum - Ohrid*

**Welcoming speech to Ohrid Cultural Heritage**

**09:30 - 10:15**

Kristina Penezić, Edlira Andoni, and Goce Naumov  
*Biosense Institute, Novi Sad / Institute of Archaeology-Tirana / CPR*

**Introducing the Common Cultural Heritage project**

**10:15 - 10:30**

Goce Naumov  
*Center for Prehistoric Research-Skopje*

**Fieldwork workshop at the site of Vlaho in Pelagonia (North Macedonia)**

**10:30 - 10:45**

Kristina Penezić  
*Biosense institute, Novi Sad*

**Fieldwork workshop at the site of Vinča (Serbia)**

**10:45-11:00**

Edlira Andoni  
*Institute of Archaeology-Tirana*

**Fieldwork workshop at the site in Pogradec (Albania)**

**11:00 - 11:15**

Franklin Isufaj

*Department of Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, University of Tirana*

**Utilization of Close Range Photogrammetry in the Accurate Documentation of Neolithic Sites**

**11:15 - 11:30**

Sandra Stefanovska

*Faculty of Philosophy - Skopje*

**A Walk Through Western Balkan Cultural Heritage**

**11:30 - 11:45**

Renuar Mance

*Department of Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, University of Tirana*

**The Risks and the Future of Vlaho, Vinča and Pogradec Sites**

**11:45 - 12:00**

Igor Lekić

*Faculty of Philosophy-Belgrade*

**Exchange and Trade of Spondylus Shells in the Neolithic of Balkans**

**12:00 - 12:30**

Coffe break

**12:30 - 12:45**

Alisa Qafoku

*Department of Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, University of Tirana*

**A Study of the Development of the Neolithic in Albania as well as its Connections with the Pelagonia Basin and the Vinča site**

**12:45 - 13:00**

Uroš Manić

*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

**Late Neolithic Houses in the Central Balkans**

**13:00 - 13:15**

Anastasija Zlatkovska

*Faculty of Philosophy - Skopje*

**Neolithic Anthropomorphic Figurines in the Western Balkans**

**13:15 - 13:30**

Emilija Dejanović

*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

**Body Adornments in the Neolithic of Central Balkans**

**13:30 - 13:45**

Viktorija Mačkovska

*Institute for History of Art and Archaeology - Skopje*

**The Semiotics of the Neolithic Anthropomorphic House Models in North Macedonia**

**13:45 - 14:00**

Ivana Radonjić

*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

**Vinča Miniature Vessels as Children's Toys**

**14:00 - 14:15**

Nemanja Pavlović

*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

**Analysis of the Use-wear on Neolithic Bone Awls: An Experimental Approach**

**14:15 - 14:30**

Dejan Georgiev

*Goce Delčev University - Štip*

**Neolithic Burials in North Macedonia**

**14:30 – 15:00**

Discussion and conclusion

**15:00 – 16:00**

Lunch at Royal Palace hotel

**16:00 – 19:00**

Visit to the city of Ohrid and its cultural heritage

- 26.11.2022 -

**09:00 - 09:30**

Pasko Kuzman

*Institute for Protection of Cultural Heritage and Museum - Ohrid*

**Ohrid from the Stone Age to the Iron Age**

**09:30 - 10:00**

Edlira Andoni

*Institute of Archaeology - Tirana*

**The Early Neolithic Site near Pogradec**

**10:00 – 10:30**

Adrian Anastasi

*Institute of Archaeology - Tirana*

**Ten Years of Underwater Archaeological Research in the Lakes of Ohrid and Prespa**

**10:30 – 11:00**

Goce Naumov

*Center for Prehistoric Research - Skopje*

**A Model of Wetlands Inhabitation in the Neolithic Balkans**

**11:00 – 11:30**

Amalia Sabanov, Ferran Antolín, Goce Naumov and Raül Soteras

*Faculty of Philosophy – Belgrade, German Archaeological Institute – Berlin, CPR*

**What Is Hidden in the Dung? A Case Study of an Archaeobotanical Sample from the Building 2 at the Neolithic Site of Vrbjanska Čuka (Pelagonia)**

**11:30 - 12:00**

Coffe break

**12:00 – 12:30**

Kristina Penezić

*University of Novi Sad, Serbia*

**Belgrade Neolithic Landscapes**

**12:30 – 13:00**

Miloš Spasić

*Belgrade City Museum*

**Intentional Fragmentation of Late Neolithic Figurines from Vinča-Belo Brdo**

**13:00 – 13:30**

Ljubo Fidanoski

*Museum of the City of Skopje*

**The Complex Prehistory of the Balkan Neolithic**

**13:30 – 14:00**

Atanas Kipro

*Institute for Protection and Conservation of Monuments and Museum - Ohrid*

**Matt-Painted Pottery from Ohrid: Regional Connections in the Late Bronze Age (Transitional Period) and the Early Iron Age**

**14:00 – 14:30**

Ivan Vranić

*Institute of Archaeology Belgrade*

**Kale-Krševica, ‘Hellenisation’, and the End of Prehistory in the Balkans**

**14:30 - 15:00**

Discussion and conclusion

**15:00 – 16:00**

Lunch at Royal Palace hotel

**16:00 – 19:00**

Visit to the city of Ohrid and its cultural heritage

– 27.11.2022 –

**09:00 – 12:00**

**Visit of the prehistoric pile-dwelling Ploča-Mićov Grad at Gradište on Lake Ohrid and the House of Robevci - Museum of Ohrid**



# ABSTRACTS

## **Utilization of Close Range Photogrammetry in the Accurate Documentation of Neolithic Sites**

Archaeological sites are one of the main (and most valuable) sources of information that can be used in hypothetical reconstructions of human history. Therefore, it is of great importance that site documentation is accurate so future excavations could proceed smoothly, and to allow peers to examine and reinterpret and be able to create alternative hypotheses and comparisons. Photogrammetry is a method of documentation that has been applied in archaeology fairly recently. Data from aerial and close range digital photos are processed and combined to produce a virtual reconstruction. It allows archaeologists to gather a large amount of data and also works as an analysis tool that can be used efficiently with conventional hardware (such as digital cameras and sensors in our phones).

*Sandra Stefanovska*  
*Institute for History of Art and Archaeology - Skopje*

## **A Walk Through Western Balkan Cultural Heritage**

The Western Balkans is a region where cultural heritage prevails, a heritage that reflects our connected history. Owing to that connection, an important branch for any country has been established, i.e. the cultural tourism. The Skopje fortress is an important site in the Republic of North Macedonia which represents one of the symbols of Skopje and is located in the center of the city. It is a settlement with a life span in different periods ranging from the Chalcolithic to modern Skopje. But, just as there is a positive side, also a negative exists, and that is the low number of tourists. In this paper the positive and negative sides will be presented and a common solution for increasing the number of tourists will be suggested. The other segment of the paper will consider the site in Serbia (Pločnik) that is a reconstructed Neolithic settlement with a great touristic potential. The final part of the paper will focus on the site in Albania (Maliq) with the beginning of life in the Neolithic.

*Renuar Mance*  
*Institute of Archaeology - Tirana*

## **The Risks and the Future of Vlaho, Vinča and Pogradec Sites**

This paper addresses the topic related to the dangers and the future of archaeological sites, such as Vlaho (North Macedonia), Vinča (Serbia) and Pogradec (Albania). The geographical location of these sites will be presented, followed by a brief history of the excavations. The focus will be on the dangers that these archaeological sites may face, but also on perspectives how these problems can be solved. The promotion of these sites or the cooperation between institutions and the local population related to this purpose will be highlighted as well.

Igor Lekić,  
Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade

## **Exchange and Trade of Spondylus Shells in the Neolithic of Balkans**

Bivalves of the genus *Spondylus* are mollusks (phylum Mollusca) of the class Bivalvia (bivalves). There are many *Spondylus* species around the globe and all of them live only in warm seas.

The species *S. gaederopus* lives in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea and extends to the northwestern African coast, but does not occur in the Black Sea, primarily due to its water's temperature and salinity. For a long time debates have been held about the sea from which the shells could come: the Mediterranean or the Black Sea. The discussion was settled by analyzing the quantity of the oxygen isotope in the shells. The analyses proved that the Black Sea could not provide a suitable habitat for *Spondylus*. Within this Aegean environment, the *Spondylus* was a native shell. Throughout the Neolithic, we can archaeologically trace the *Spondylus* trade over nearly three thousand kilometers northward out of Greece extending from the Aegean and the Adriatic Seas, where the shells were harvested, to France, Germany, and Poland, where they were found in the archaeological remains of settlements and cemeteries, in graves, and as isolated finds.

Tracing down the ways of exchange and trade of the *Spondylus* shells is an excellent way to determine the connections between the Neolithic societies, so this paper aims to show those contacts in the Balkan region.

*Alisa Qafoku*  
*Institute of Archaeology - Tirana*

### **A Study of the Development of the Neolithic in Albania as well as its Connections with the Pelagonia Basin and the Vinča Site**

In the Albanian territories, there are three phases of the Neolithic starting from the Early until the Late Neolithic, whereas there is a connection between the basin of Pelagonia and Vinča. Seeing the extent and development of the territory of this prehistoric period, I will present how rich it is and where there are similarities with neighboring cultures, such as in the processing of ceramics, the construction of houses etc. Life during the Neolithic in our country took place in very favorable natural conditions. During the development of the project, we were able to see similarities and come to more concrete conclusions. As much as it can be similar in ceramics, we can see the change in structure on other sites or vice versa.

*Uroš Manić*  
*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

### **Late Neolithic Houses in the Central Balkans**

Sedentary way of life in the Neolithic led to a long-term occupation of sites and formation of longer-lasting habitats. The Late Neolithic in Central Balkan is mainly characterized by the Vinča culture. Houses during this period are above-ground buildings made in the wattle and daub technique, with elaborate spaces. This presentation is focused on building technologies and house structures from different Vinča culture sites, and information we can obtain about everyday life from investigating Late Neolithic households.

## **Neolithic Anthropomorphic Figurines in the Western Balkans**

This paper studies Neolithic anthropomorphic figurines from the Republic of North Macedonia, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Albania. Building the first houses, organization of the earliest settlements, cultivation of plants and domestication of animals are the Neolithic achievements that changed the course of human development and still remain crucial segments for all communities. These social, economic and building innovations also reflect how the Neolithic people perceived the world around them and their place in it. To define and explicate this relation they used clay i.e. ceramics as material which was already known to them; they employed pottery as medium where their own ideas about the world were registered, as well as those related to their own bodies. In the Balkans, there are artifacts representing human figure not only as a reflection of their actual appearance, but also as manifestation of mythical characters which were part of their lives.

The focus was to study the Neolithic anthropomorphic figurines from different aspects, such as construction, typology and morphology and their symbolism. Regarding technology, the assemblage was examined with respect to raw material, construction techniques, surface treatment and decoration. In terms of morphology and typology, the figurines are analyzed in the context of their form, representation, sex and iconography.

*Emilija Dejanović*  
*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

### **Body Adornments in the Neolithic of Central Balkans**

Personal ornaments are an important part in defining the identity of social communities. Analysis of changes in materials, colors and shapes of body adornments can give us an insight into Neolithic identity. The aim of this work is to peek into their lives with the help of those ornaments and to see how people in the Neolithic times looked like, how they dressed, decorated their bodies, what kind of jewelry they used etc. This will be achieved by analyzing figurines, beads, jewelry, fabrics etc.

*Viktorija Mačkovska*  
*Institute for History of Art and Archaeology - Skopje*

### **The Semiotics of the Neolithic Anthropomorphic House Models from Macedonia**

The anthropomorphic house models are one of the most common finds from the Middle Neolithic in Macedonia. Almost every site that dates at the Middle Neolithic has a few of them. The most interesting fact is that those objects have more decorative than utilitarian purposes. The house models have a lot of semantic meaning with a variety of symbols displayed on them. The question is why did people from prehistory make them? There are different types of these models however they all have one purpose and probably the same function. The typology of the models, their similarities and differences will be presented in this paper. One of the most interesting things about these artifacts is that they are represented only within the Republic of N. Macedonia.

## **Vinča Miniature Vessels as Children's Toys**

Ceramic miniature vessels appear at almost every prehistoric site, especially during the Late Neolithic Vinča culture, when ceramic reproduction was very diverse. They have different shapes and mostly imitate vessels for everyday use. During the interpretation, they are most often given cult significance, while in recent decades they have been seen as children's toys. This paper aims to show and point out the importance of these miniature objects as children's toys because they carry a lot of valuable information about what childhood looked like in prehistoric times. They bear witness to the growing up of children who improved their skills through play, which would later be an integral part of their lives. They also demonstrate the relationship between parents and children, and their support during production, as both children's and adults' fingerprints were identified on the surface of miniature vessels. By analyzing fingerprints, it is possible to obtain many valuable data such as the modeling methods related to the reconstruction and assumed age of the person who made them.

*Nemanja Pavlović*  
*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

### **Analysis of the Use-wear on Neolithic Bone Awls: An Experimental Approach**

Bone awls represent the biggest group of Neolithic bone tools. Because of their morphology they are assumed to have been used for the treatment of leather, plant fibers, in basketry, and ceramics processing. The main aim of this study was the experimental traceological investigation of the usage of awls on different materials and during different time intervals. It was based on the usage of replicated tools on three different groups of materials: clay, rushes, and leather, in different time intervals, which were further analyzed microscopically and macroscopically to establish and document traces. The results show that in correlation with time and manner of use, traces differ in appearance and location on the bone tool. Taking into consideration the results of similar experiments we can conclude that during the Neolithic awls were multifunctional tools which were conditioned by usage duration and the way they had been used.

*Dejan Georgiev*  
*Goce Delčev University - Štip*

### **Neolithic Burials in the Republic of Macedonia**

During the Neolithic in the Republic of Macedonia the deceased were buried within the settlements in which they lived –beneath the floors of the houses. In the last sixty years, a total of 42 Neolithic burials have been discovered at several archaeological sites: Barutnica, Vršnik, Grnčarica, Pista, Tumba Madzari and Cerje. These intramural burials have the potential to provide a great insight into the lives of the first sedentary communities in the Balkan Peninsula. This paper will provide a general overview of the funerary practices of the Neolithic communities which existed on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

## **Ohrid from the Stone Age to the Iron Age**

Archaeological evidence of the oldest inhabitants in the Ohrid area were discovered with the initial research of several sites in the surrounding region. Then, the rich traces of life were ascertained on the territory of the current city of Ohrid. The oldest Early Neolithic settlement is the Zlastrana site (excavated in 1988) located in the Debarca area, which also has a co-existing relationship with the surveyed Kraloj Zagoni site near Vraništa, in the region of Struga. Following a chronological scale, the next settlement is the Early and Middle Neolithic site near Dolno Trnovo (excavated in 1987), established on a fertile lowland north of the Ohrid suburban district "Kaj Crnogorcite." It has been active in the same time with the initial phases of the Ohrid "Penelope", a lakeside "luxurious" pile-dwelling east of Ohrid Hill, which is spread from the densely populated quarter next to the square of St. Kliment Ohridski to the outflow of the waters from Biljanini Izvori into the lake. This powerful Ohrid pile-dwelling (also dendrochronologically dated) coexisted with several other lake settlements, and among them undoubtedly is the Ploča Mičov Grad pile-dwelling in the Bay of Bones near the Gradište peninsula, along the eastern coast of Lake Ohrid. Ohrid's "Penelope" was established on the marshy terrain on the Ohrid Bay at the end of the Early Neolithic until the end of the Iron Age, while during the Bronze Age the inhabitants of this settlement began to move to the higher western part of the Ohrid Hill. From this era until the end of the time of the Golden Masks and afterwards, through all historical periods until today, the life on the Ohrid Hill has flown continuously. The Ohrid Penelope existed until the end of the Iron Age and then it died out covered with 4.5 to 6.0 m of clay and soil, to be discovered again, after 2,600 years, with the archaeological excavations in 2003 and 2006.

### **The Early Neolithic Site near Pogradec**

The Early Neolithic site near Pogradec on the coast of Lake Ohrid was excavated in three campaigns: in 2016, 2021 and 2022. The archaeological excavations have provided interesting data related to the construction and architecture of the buildings, the material culture and rituals. Samples for archaeobotanical and radiocarbon analyses were collected from the different building levels.

Three building levels and another possible one, built on top of each other, were discovered in 2022. Heavily burned daub was used for the earliest buildings, while unburned daub was used for the last one.

A substantial quantity of pottery was found even though the excavated area was not large. The vessels and figurines have close affinities with those of the nearby Early Neolithic sites in Albania and some others in North Macedonia, like Dolno Trnovo near Lake Ohrid and in Pelagonia.

*Adrian Anastasi*  
*Institute of Archaeology - Tirana*

### **Ten Years of Underwater Archaeological Research in the Lakes of Ohrid and Prespa**

Since 2012, the Institute of Archeology at the Academy of Albanological Studies in Tirana, has been conducting systematic research in Lake Ohrid and Lake Prespa within the national project "Underwater Archaeological Map of the Albanian Coast". Four prehistoric pile-dwelling settlements have been identified: three in Lake Ohrid and one in Great Prespa Lake.

The objectives of the first phase of this research were to identify and diagnose these sites with non-destructive methods. Thus, absolute C14 dating was carried out, pottery samples were taken for typological studies, underwater graphic documentation was made and their protective zoning was completed. The objectives of the second phase are the in-depth study of these sites individually, where surveys, excavations, archaeometric and paleo-environmental analyses have been foreseen.

## **A Model of Wetlands Inhabitation in the Neolithic Balkans**

Prehistoric communities were often faced with climate changes and they adjusted their modes of existence to conditions providing optimal advantages. Subsistence was based on the most nutritious edibles and resources, but also the settlements were established or modified accordingly. Due to such conditions, the majority of settlements were erected on river terraces, hills or in wetland areas. This paper's special focus is on the Neolithic wetland sites in the Balkans which illustrate the assorted approach in adaptation and landscape modification. They are determined in various areas considering lakes and valleys in the regions of Thessaly, Drama, Korçe, Ohrid, Pelagonia, Skopje, Polog, Dojran, Mačva, Tuzla etc. The excavation data provide sets of information regarding the architectural features of settlements, material culture and nourishment resources, particularly concerning the tells and pile dwellings inhabited in the Neolithic, Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age. Considering such environments and diverse modes of architectural adjustment, the prehistoric settlements will be regionally presented with a particular focus on pile dwellings and tell structures. In addition, the communication between these regions will be asserted due to similarities in the Neolithic material culture indicating migration or exchange between communities.

*Amalia Sabanov*  
*Faculty of Philosophy - Belgrade*

*Ferran Antolín*  
*German Archaeological Institute - Berlin*

*Goce Naumov*  
*Center for Prehistoric Research - Skopje*

*Raül Soteras*  
*German Archaeological Institute - Berlin*

### **What Is Hidden in the Dung? A Case Study of an Archaeobotanical Sample from the Building 2 at the Neolithic Site of Vrbjanska Čuka (Prilep)**

The processing of sediment samples for archaeobotanical analysis can bring to light many different types of finds apart from plant remains. Such a find can be fragmented remains of animal dung or even entirely preserved pellets originating from various animal species. This paper will summarize the current state-of-art techniques for the study of such remains as well as for understanding the relationship of dung remains and plant remains in the samples. Through their analysis it is possible to tackle nutrition and foddering of domestic animals in the past, which can help round off the topic of agricultural economy, as well as contribute to the environmental reconstruction of the surroundings of the settlement. Collected from Early Neolithic levels at the site Vrbjanska Čuka, the sample number 50 from Building 2 contained very large quantities of sheep or goat pellets among other material. These remains helped us discuss topics like near-site animal herding strategies, the use of dung as fire fuel, animal nutrition and the use of agricultural by-products like chaff, straw and so on. The further investigation and more advanced analysis could bring more data and let us delve deeper into these topics. We hope our talk will draw attention to this type of finds and inspire integrating more sites in future analyses that allow more regionally relevant conclusions.

*Kristina Penezić*  
*University of Novi Sad, Serbia*

## **Belgrade Neolithic landscapes**

The broader Belgrade territory was home to over 100 Neolithic sites dated both to the Early Neolithic Starčevo and Late Neolithic Vinča cultural groups. During this long period (ca. 6200-4500 BC), the first settlements adapted to the sedentary way of life occurred. The Neolithic is characterized by the formation of new lifestyles, households, social relations, and shared landscapes, among others. These social relationships within the Belgrade landscapes will be analysed, focusing on several sites whose chronological span encompasses both Early and Late Neolithic, emphasizing the spatial and time aspects of the formation of social relationships in the Neolithic.

*Miloš Spasić*  
*Belgrade City Museum*

## **Intentional Fragmentation of Late Neolithic Figurines from Vinča - Belo Brdo**

Vinča culture figurines are one of the most recognizable objects of Balkan Neolithic. In the cultural-historical archaeology, a vast number of studies were solely devoted to the analysis of Vinča culture figurines, which were mainly concentrated around issues of figurines' function, their role in rituals and cults, and their possible association with social organization. New research questions exposed novel aspects of figurine production, representational strategies, identity issues, function and use, formal diversification, and human-animal relationship. Thus, the figurines are now conceived as active social agents that curated and shaped life in the Balkan Late Neolithic villages. Recent studies have also revealed the existence of significant number of deliberately broken or damaged figurines. The presentation will explore the patterns of deliberate fragmentation and damaging of figurines' heads found during the earliest excavations at Vinča, as well as possible social significance of this practice.

## **The Complex Prehistory of the Balkan Neolithic**

The sudden emergence and rapid spread of the Aegean Neolithic in the Balkans is still a very challenging topic. Given the quality and quantity of the new research in the contact area between the most south-eastern parts of Europe and Anatolia some new insights are possible. The main foci of these insights will be on the very beginning of the Neolithic in the Fertile Crescent, its development and diversity, its social and economic backgrounds, its chronological and spatial spread, etc. Also, some of the main objectives of this theoretical approach will be dedicated to the interaction between the earliest Neolithic societies in Anatolia with nature and its consequences in the development of the earliest agricultural systems in the world. One of the most evident results of these complex processes, lasting even 5,000 years, of Neolithic prehistory in Anatolia is the phenomenon of Neolithization. This phenomenon is one of the most important human milestones in the shaping of early societies and the birth of civilizations. Finally, one question will remain open through this theoretical journey of the Neolithic background in the Aegean – whether our modern definition of civilization, both cultural and chronological, should be modified.

*Atanas Kipro*

*Institute for Protection and Conservation of Monuments and Museum - Ohrid*

### **Matt-Painted Pottery from Ohrid: Regional Connections in the Late Bronze Age (Transitional Period) and the Early Iron Age**

The main goal of this paper is the presentation of matt-painted pottery (the majority of which is fragmented) from the sites of Plaošnik and Samoilova Tvrđina in Ohrid. This pottery originates from the Late Bronze Age (Transitional Period) and the Early Iron Age and is largely unknown to the general and scientific public. Through the analysis of the typology of vessels and the painted decorative patterns from Ohrid an attempt will be made to establish regional connections in the Western and Central Balkans in the Transitional Period and the Early Iron Age. First and foremost connections will be drawn among the regions of Ohrid, Korça and Prespa as well as the upper Aliakmon River valley, Northern Epirus and the middle and lower Vardar River valleys.

*Ivan Vranić*

*Institute of Archaeology Belgrade*

### **Kale-Krševica, ‘Hellenization’, and the end of prehistory in the Balkans**

Kale-Krševica is a fortified settlement located near the town of Vranje, in south-eastern Serbia, active from the late 5<sup>th</sup> until the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. According to most European periodizations, these centuries belong to the end of the Early and the beginning of the Late Iron Age. Yet, the ‘Greek’ nature of the discovered material culture, along with the scholarly practice in former Yugoslavia and the modern-day North Macedonia, open up a possibility that the settlement (together with many other similar archaeological sites in Bulgaria, Albania and Macedonia) represents the earliest historic period in the region. The goal of this presentation is to look into the recent trends considering the cultural changes behind the concept of ‘Hellenization’ and its role in our perspectives about the end of prehistory in south-eastern Europe.





