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LECTURE-SERIES "WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY SEMINARS"

THE NEOLITHIZATION IN SOUTHERN EASTERN EUROPE

In southern Eastern Europe, Neolithization was quite different from that elsewhere. Here, a significant mass of the local population, carriers of the genetic complex of „Eastern hunter-gatherers“, was preserved up to the Bronze Age (Allentoft et al. 2024). The latter seems to have acquired agriculture and cattle breeding at least in the fifth millennium BCE through the diffusion of ideas (Motuzaitė-Matuzevičiūtė 2020). This fact needs to be explained in the pan-European context of Neolithization, mainly through migration (Guilaine 2012). The peculiarities of Eastern European Neolithic allow us to better understand the nature of early agricultural societies and the character of their dispersal in Europe as a whole. Thus, there was a frontier between easternmost early farming societies and ceramic hunter-gatherer groups in southern Eastern Europe. Since at least 1987, D.Ja Telegin delineated two cultural „zones“ in southern Eastern Europe (Ukraine and Moldova): one linked to local hunter-gatherer heritage and the other including early farming societies of Balkan and Central European origin (Telegin 1987). The latter zone was formed when the early farmers of Criș culture entered the region between Carpathians and Dniester river around 5800-5700 cal BCE. The Neolithization, spanning from 5250-5100 BCE, gradually extended across western Ukraine, Podillia and Volhynia, reaching the rivers of Southern Buh and Teterev with the expansion of Linear Pottery Culture.

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