

Mobile and Terrestrial but Firmly Rooted on the River Banks: Biological Anthropology of Lepenski Vir and the Iron Gates Gorge Mesolithic

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ABSTRACT

Archaeological interpretation often links both the European Mesolithic and the complexity with reduced mobility and permanent or semi-permanent settlements. The Iron Gates Gorge (IGG) Mesolithic, on the banks of the Danube, with substantial formal disposal areas for the dead and canonized architecture, especially as manifested at the site of Lepenski Vir, fully conforms to this notion. Different aspects of bioarchaeological analysis – when evaluated concurrently – offer a counter-intuitive picture: at the time of its most complex development, the site of Lepenski Vir represented a focal point for a larger, more mobile hunter-gatherer group that identified with the site, its burials and its smaller resident population. The article explores the evidence provided by human skeletal remains and possible reasons behind these contradictory results.

KEYWORDS

Biological Anthropology; Bioarchaeology; Europe; Mesolithic; Lepenski Vir; Mobility; Hunter-Gatherers

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