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From ancestry to farming practice: understanding the Neolithic as a process in Europe

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Figure: The blé meunier d'Apt, a rare and now protected traditional landrace of bread wheat, photo courtesy of M. Gérard Guillot and the Parc naturel régional du Lubéron, Provence

Genomic studies of ancient human (and animal) populations have begun to answer the long-standing 'whodunnit' question relating to the Neolithisation in Europe. But the question of 'who' is different to that of 'how' (or 'why'). In order to understand how Neolithisation proceeded as a phenomenon, farming practice is central. In this talk I consider how the emerging perspective of process archaeology, distinct from processual or post-processual archaeology, offers a useful framework for investigating Neolithisation. I frame recent case studies in the reconstruction of Neolithic farming practice in Europe to illustrate the potential of this approach.

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