Prehistoric Networks in the longue durée: Palaeolithic Innovations enabling the Neolithic Revolution


Digital Atlas of Innovation
Prehistoric Networks in the *longue durée*: Palaeolithic Innovations enabling the Neolithic Revolution

The conference will focus on the long-term development and diffusion of Prehistoric technology in the late Pleistocene and early Holocene. Two major fields will be tackled:

1. The relevance of hunter-gatherer-networks in the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic for the adaption and diffusion of key technologies enabling the Neolithic way of life.

2. The impact the Neolithic Revolution had on long-distance networks, and whether these changed significantly or continued to exist.

The Neolithic Revolution has been seen as one of the most important shifts in the development of human technical systems. Yet, our understanding of this process is blurred by a lack of data concerning the extent and persistence of communication networks and their relevance for the conjuncture of key technologies.

The conference brings together specialists researching the Late Palaeolithic, Epipalaeolithic, Mesolithic and Early Neolithic periods to discuss the role of networks for the transfer of prehistoric techniques.

We want to focus on the long-term development and functioning of communication networks (gift-giving, raw-material procurement, marriage alliances etc.) in Late Palaeolithic and Neolithic societies. And building thereon, the impact of such networks on the tradition and diffusion of technical know how as a precondition for the shift we call the Neolithic Revolution.

While we might model localised autochthonous Neolithisation processes, the diffusion of the Neolithic stimulus is difficult to dismiss. On the contrary, we want to suggest a change of perspective and focus on communication networks and question their relevance for the conjuncture of key technologies which might have triggered the Neolithic Revolution. Fernand Braudel’s concept of the *longue durée* will be applied systematically to the evolution of late Pleistocene and early Holocene societies, thereby focussing on the long-term development and functioning of communication networks and their impact on social, political and economical structures.

Specifically we are interested in the following key questions:

- Which social mechanisms enabled societies to conserve and trade the knowledge of techniques necessary for the Neolithic way of life?

- What was the role of networks for the diffusion of Neolithic technology? Is it possible to trace these networks back into the Mesolithic and Palaeolithic?

- We would like to discuss the potential of Palaeolithic innovations. Is it possible to pinpoint the origin of the innovations enabling the Neolithic? Can we trace back trajectories that began long before the Neolithic?

- Which networks were able to bridge climatic and environmental boundaries? Is it possible to interpret the exchange of goods and ideas within networks as being set up intentionally or is this an unintended bi-product of the networks?

- How did networks change when more and more societies took over the Neolithic way of life? Were new technologies incorporated into existing networks or were they responsible for major changes in long-distance communication?
8:30 h  
**Greetings and Introduction**  
Gerd Graßhoff (Berlin)  
Speaker of the Excellence Cluster TOPOI

9:00 h  
**Thomas Terberger** (Hannover)  
Major and Minor Palaeolithic Innovations and their Impact on Hunter-Gatherer-Societies

9:30 h  
**Miriam Haidle** (Frankfurt/Tübingen)  
Capacity Building in the Palaeolithic, Performance in the Neolithic

10:00 h  
**Michael Baales** (Olpe/Bochum)  
Palaeolithic Networks and their Importance for the Diffusion of Technical Know-how

10:30 h Coffee Break

11:00 h  
**Henny Piezonka** (Berlin)  
Late Palaeolithic Hunter-Gatherer Networks in Northern Eurasia

11:30 h  
**Birgit Gehlen** (Cologne)  
Grand-scale Networks of the Mesolithic. The Trapezoid Blade industry

12:00 h  
**Sophie De Beaune** (Lyon)  
A Technical Perspective on the Development of Palaeolithic Art

14:30 h  
**Discussion of morning session**

13:00 h Lunch Break

14:30 h  
**Eleni Asouti** (Liverpool)  
Woodland Management before the Neolithic Revolution

15:00 h  
**Danny Rosenberg** (Haifa)  
Paved with Stones: The Evolution of Ground Stone Tools in the Late Epi-Palaeolithic and Early Neolithic of South-Western Asia

15:30 h  
**Daniel Schyle** (Cologne)  
 Tradition and Innovation in the Chipped Stone Industries of the Late and Epi-Paleolithic in Western Asia

16:00 h Coffee Break

16:30 h  
**Jürgen Renn** (Berlin)  
The Neolithisation as a longue durée-Niche Construction Process

17:00 h  
**Trevor Watkins** (Edinburgh)  
Was the Neolithic New? Extensive Networks of Sharing and Exchange from the African MSA to Neolithic southwest Asia

17:30 h  
**Dietmar Kurapkat** (Berlin)  
Early Neolithic Special Buildings and Networks of Architectural Knowledge in Southwest Asia

18:00 h  
**Discussion of afternoon session**

20:00 h Conference Dinner
9:00 h
Anna Belfer-Cohen / Nigel Goring-Morris (Jerusalem)
The Role of Networks for the Transfer of Technical Innovations in the Levantine Épi-Palaeolithic

9:30 h
Nigel Goring-Morris / Anna Belfer-Cohen (Jerusalem)
The Neolithisation in the Southern Levant

10:00 h
Ryszard F. Mazurowski (Warsaw)
Tell Qaramel within the Networks of the PPN

10:30 h Coffee Break

11:00 h
Ianir Milevski / Hamudi Khalaily (Jerusalem)
The Plastered Skulls Cult and the Levantine Neolithic Social Fabric

11:30 h
Harald Hauptmann (Heidelberg)
The Sculpture from Nevali Çori and its wider Context

12:00 h
Svend Hansen (Berlin)
Neolithic Figurines in the Near East

12:30 h Discussion of morning session

13:00 h Lunch Break

14:30 h
Mehmet Özdogan (Istanbul)
Early Neolithic Monuments: Göbekli Tepe and Beyond

15:00 h
Hala Alarashi (Lyon)
Pre-Pottery Neolithic Personal Adornments in the Northern Levant: Between Innovations and Inherited Traditions

15:30 h
Joris Peters (München)
The Domestication of Animals as a Long-Term Process

16:00 h Coffee Break

16:30 h
Florian Klimscha (Berlin)
Why should Societies become Neolithic?

17:00 h
Johannes Krause (Jena)
Cooperation Models of Neolithic Societies according to Archaeo-Genetic Research

17:30 h
Shinya Shoda (Nara / York)
Different Narratives on Innovation Processes: the innovation of Early Pottery by Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene Societies in East Asia

18:00 h Discussion of afternoon session

20:00 h Conference Dinner
9:00 h  Güneş Duru (İstanbul)
Social Innovations and their Impact on Networks: The Emergence of Public and Private Spaces

9:30 h  Yutaka Miyake (Tsukuba)
Innovative Techniques in the Early Neolithic Site of Hasankeyf Hoyuk, Upper Tigris

10:00 h  Necmi Karul (İstanbul)
Early Neolithic Settlements in the Tigris Region

10:30 h Coffee Break

11:00 h  Mihriban Özbaşaran (İstanbul)
The Early Neolithic in Central Anatolia

11:30 h  Çiler Çilingiroğlu (İzmir)
The Neolithic Package re-thought in the Context of Prehistoric Networks

12:00 h  Fokke A. Gerritsen (İstanbul)
The Initial Neolithisation of Northwest Anatolia

12:30 h  Discussion of morning session

13:00 h Lunch Break

14:30 h  Barbara Helwing (Lyon)
Metal Objects in the PPN

15:00 h  Bernd Müller-Neuhof (Berlin)
Conflicts as Constituents of the Neolithization

15:30 h  Bill Finlayson (London/Amman), Cheryl Makarewicz (Kiel)
Communal, Public and Ritual: the Built Environment and the Neolithic Transition

16:00 h Coffee Break

16:30 h  Marion Benz (Freiburg), Nicole Reifarth (Tübingen), Elisabeth Völling (Würzburg)
On the Threshold – Conflicting innovations and Traditions during the Early Holocene in Northern Mesopotamia

17:00 h  Final discussion; end of the conference
Organisers

Excellence Cluster TOPOI
Research Group D-6
https://www.topoi.org/group/d-6/

Svend Hansen
(German Archaeological Institute – Eurasia Department)
Florian Klimscha
(Excellence Cluster TOPOI)
Jürgen Renn
(Max Planck Institute for the History of Science)

Chairpersons
- Hans-Georg K. Gebel (Berlin)
- Lee Clare (Berlin)
- Jörg Adam Becker (Halle-Wittenberg)

Guest are welcome, but we would kindly ask you to register at the conference office.

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Picture credits
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