Promoting early career researchers

The interdisciplinary support of 17 doctoral students and 16 postdocs is guaranteed by the Integrated Research Training Group of the CRC. By embedding it in the concept of the Graduate School "Human Development in Landscapes" (GSHDL), the graduate program benefits from longstanding experience in interdisciplinary education as well as from established national and international research networks.

Participating institutions

Involved in the research activities are eight institutes (Geography, Geosciences, Clinical Molecular Biology, Ecosystem Research, Computer Science, Prehistoric and Protohistoric Archaeology, Classical Archaeology and Philosophy) and the Johanna-Mestorf-Academy of Kiel University, the Centrum for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology and the State Museum Gottorf Castle.

Collaborative Research Centre 1266:

„Scales of Transformation: Human-Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies"

www.sfb1266.uni-kiel.de

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The research of the CRC 1266 encompasses material culture from Late Palaeolithic flint artefacts to Attic vase images (1–4), geomagnetic mapping and soil archives in sediment cores (5–6) as well as remains of plants and pathogens of microscopic and molecular analysis levels (7–8; photos: ALSH/S. Jagiolla/A. Müller/S. Dreibrodt/C. Mischka/K. Rassmann/W. Dörfler/S. Kornell).

Cover photo:
Excavation of Maidanetske - a Chalcolithic large-scale settlement ("mega-site") of the Cucuteni-Tripillian cultural complex in Ukraine (excavation campaign 2016, photo: S. Jagiolla). Located on the excavation site are house structures of a proto-urban population agglomerisation of the 4th century BCE.

Scales of Transformation: Human-Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies
Collaborative Research Centre 1266: „Scales of Transformation: Human-Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies“

Resource exploitation and sustainability, natural disasters, population accumulations in mega-cities, epidemics, ideological and cultural diversity, globalised communication and trade, social and political conflicts – these are all topics of current dialogues on the complexity of human existence. In this context, the scope of activities between humans and the environment is of central importance across various dimensions. Equally significant is the globally divergent speed in the emergence and spread of technical innovations and the resulting socio-economic inequalities.

Where and when did all this begin? What factors triggered the transformations that led to such substantial social and economic differences? How did the natural environment change and what did this mean for human populations? What role did humans assume as cognitive actors, who have always been able to deal with changing environmental conditions in a reactive, adaptive and invasive manner? In relation to subsistence and residency behaviour, how should material goods, social structures and preferences be assessed as parameters?

Within a diachronic perspective, the CRC 1266 investigates transformation processes that influenced the history of mankind during the time span from 15,000 BCE until the beginning of the Common Era, describing developments from the Palaeolithic base camp to the Aegean polis. In the process, substantial and enduring reorganisations of socio-economic interaction patterns between humans and the environment are discussed and compared for different temporal, spatial and social dimensions.

Research foci
Transformations are dynamic processes that reflect changes of tensions between humans and the environment. CRC 1266 research examines factors and their effects in the context of human behaviour (e.g. social relations, culture, economy, and ideology), human ecology and the environment (e.g. landscape, biosphere, geosphere and climate). Research parameters include power structures, social inequality, conflicts, technological knowledge and specialisation, subsistence, demographic processes, ritual practices, the emergence and spread of diseases, temperature fluctuations and resource constraints of prehistoric and archaic eras. These individual indicators of transformation are recorded for societies with different social constellations in investigation transects of specific European regions. In order to process diverse scientific proxies, archaeological, palaeological and palaeogenetic archives are developed in collaboration efforts between the subprojects.

Cluster A
A 1 Theories of transformation
A 2 Integrative modelling

Cluster B, C, D, E
B 1-2 Complex foragers
C 1-2 Horticulturalists
D 1-3 Agriculturalists and first metallurgists
E 1-3 Pre-state and state societies

Cluster F
F 1 Supra-regional crises
F 2 Socio-environmental transformations
F 3 Dynamics of plant economies
F 4 Tracing infectious diseases
F 5 Social dimensions of technological change

Cluster G
G 1 Timescales of change
G 2 Geophysical prospecting

Cluster Z
Z 1 Central administration
Z 2 Datamanagement and presentation

The clusters and subprojects investigate transformations in human development in the context of their climatic and vegetation history, including Neolithisation, metal processing, urbanisation and the formation of states as well as associated socio-economic dynamics. Theoretical, conceptual and methodological emphases provide the interpretive framework (diagram: C. Reckweg).

Extensive fieldwork, including prospections and excavations, constitute the baseline for the investigations. The evaluations combine analytical approaches from the humanities and both the natural and life sciences and thus promote reciprocal method development.