

Early career researchers and equal opportunity

The 17 doctoral candidates and 16 PostDocs of the CRC receive targeted training and a framework of supervision in the Integrated Research Training Group. Together with the Graduate School "Human Development in Landscapes", we provide interdisciplinary education and foster equal opportunities.



Photo-Credits
Cover: Excavation in Stolniceni/M. dal Corso. Upper row: Geophysics in Mang de Bergen/J. Kneisel; Excavation in Duvensee/C. Reckweg; Excavation in Mang de Bergen/J. Kneisel; Sediment cores/S. Dreibrödt; Archaeobotanical fieldwork in Stolniceni/W. Kirleis; Time series/L. Cristiano; aDNA sample preparation/S. Kornell. Content: Excavation in Stolniceni and Vráble/M. dal Corso, N. Müller-Scheessel, IODP „Sample Party"/J. Menke.

Participating institutions

The 60 researchers of the CRC are affiliated to a variety of scientific institutions: eight institutes (Geography, Geosciences, Clinical Molecular Biology, Ecosystem Research, Computer Science, Prehistoric and Protohistoric Archaeology, Classical Archaeology, Philosophy) and the Johanna-Mestorf-Academy at Kiel University, the Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology, and the State Museum Gottorf Castle.

SCALES OF TRANSFORMATION:

Human-Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies

CRC 1266 SCALES OF TRANSFORMATION

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

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CRC 1266



Collaborative Research Centre 1266:

“Scales of Transformation: Human-Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies”

What are the substantial transformations that describe human development from 15,000 years ago to the beginning of Common Era? How did the interaction between natural environment and human populations change over time? What role did humans play as cognitive actors trying to deal with changing environmental conditions? Which factors triggered the transformations that led to substantial societal and economic inequality?



The understanding of human practices within social and environmental contexts is one of the most fundamental aspects of archaeological research. Moreover, in current debates, the dynamics involved in human-environmental relationships have become a major issue looking at the sometimes devastating consequences of human interference with nature. Archaeology, with its long-term perspective on human societies and landscapes, is in the unique position to trace and link comparable phenomena in the past, to study human involvement with the natural environment, to investigate the impact of humans on nature, and the consequences of environmental change on human societies.

Looking at the period from 15,000 to 1 BCE, the CRC 1266 takes a diachronic view in order to investigate the processes of transformation that led to the development from late Pleistocene hunter-gatherers to early state societies, thus covering a wide array of societal formations and environmental conditions.

When studying these different settings, we focus on identifying and explaining transformations and their triggers. We define transformations as processes leading to a substantial and enduring reorganisation of socio-environmental interaction patterns. As transformations do not only occur on different temporal scales but also on different spatial and social scales, we focus on different landscapes, from the Mediterranean to the Arctic, and various social constellations, from Palaeolithic camp sites to the Aegean polis.

Research

Our research is based on extensive fieldwork, including prospections and excavations. Archaeological, palaeo-ecological, and palaeo-genetic archives are researched by combining methods from the humanities, the natural sciences, and the life sciences, thus promoting reciprocal method development.

Since our main interest is change, our research parameters include power structures, social inequality, conflicts, technological innovation, specialisation, subsistence, demographic processes, ritual practices, the emergence and spread of diseases, temperature variations, and constraints on resources. These indicators for transformation are recorded from sites throughout various European transects spanning the period of 15,000 years. In order to process a large range of scientific proxies, the subprojects of our research network collaborate in the development of methods and the formulation of interdisciplinary results.



THEORY AND MODELLING

- FOCUS 1 A1 Theories of transformation
- A2 Integrative modelling

SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENTS OF CHANGE

- FOCUS 3 F1 Supra-regional crises
- F2 Socio-environmental transformations
- F3 Dynamics of plant economies
- F4 Tracing infectious diseases
- F5 Social dimensions of technological change

TRANSFORMATIONS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORMATIONS

- FOCUS 2 B1-2 Complex foragers
- C1-2 Horticulturalists
- D1-3 Agriculturalists and first metallurgists
- E 1+3 Pre-state and state societies

SETTING THE FRAME

- FOCUS 4 G1 Timescales of change
- G2 Geophysical prospecting

CENTRALISED TASKS

- Z1 Central administration
- Z2 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).