

BIWEEKLY COLLOQUIUM  
Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 4:15 p.m.

FROM THE AEGEAN SEA TO THE PARISIAN BASIN.  
ECONOMIC MODELS, INTERACTION AND CRISIS  
Arne Windler

The distribution of artefacts made of *Spondylus gaederopus*, a shell from the Mediterranean Sea, is one of the earliest examples for long-distance exchange in Europe and is associated with the process of Neolithisation during the late 6<sup>th</sup> Millennium BC. *Spondylus* artefacts can be found throughout Europe, from Greece to Central Germany and from the Ukraine to the Parisian Basin. Although the shell has been in the focus of prehistoric archaeology for nearly 130 years, there is still an ongoing debate about the sources, meanings and modes of exchange.

The distribution of *Spondylus* shell artefacts is described as a prestige good or gift exchange par excellence, but we have to be aware of a premature categorisation. There has to be a critical reflection of Karl Polanyi's trichotomy of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange. An alternative model from economics will be discussed and used to describe the development of the distribution: The foreign trade theory can help to explain the rise as well as the decline of the pan-European exchange network.



*Spondylus* bracelets from the graveyard of Varna (4500 BC)

Venue: Leibnizstraße 1, Seminar Room 204