

Barbarians Prehistory

from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age

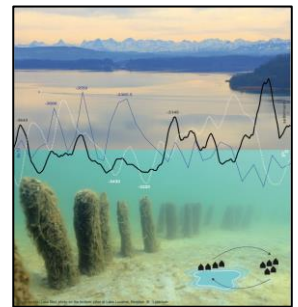
Michaelmas term 2021, (mostly) every other Friday, 4–5pm

Lectures will be given in the Institute Lecture Room & on Teams

Week 1: 15 October. Dr Caroline Heitz & Dr Martin Hinz, University of Bern

Changing Climate, Rising Lake Levels – Mobility and translocality as resilience capacities of Neolithic settlement communities in the northern Alpine foreland

Using high temporal resolution data from the UNESCO World Heritage pile dwellings in the northern Alpine Foreland, we investigate how Neolithic communities coped with climate change between 3500 and 3250 BCE. The rising lake levels made former settlement areas on the lake shores uninhabitable and led to temporal interruptions of local settlement activities. To critically examine the narrative of the causal influence of climatic variability, we use archaeological information on settlement features as well as various global and regional paleoclimatic proxy data utilizing inferential statistics. From this, we can infer that settlement systems were resistant to seasonal flooding but vulnerable to longer-term lake level rises of higher magnitudes. Settlement communities as such, however, were resilient to both, as spatial mobility and translocal socio-spatial configurations were an inherent part of their way of life.



Week 2: 29 October. Prof Josh Pollard, University of Southampton

'It's the End of the World as We Know It': New work on the West Kennet palisade enclosures, Avebury



Since 2017, the Living with Monuments Project has seen the investigation of various Neolithic sites in the Avebury landscape, a number of which were the focus for settlement during the time when the region's great monuments were being built, others locations that themselves became monumentalised. This lecture will focus on the results of fieldwork during 2019 and 2021 on one of the most enigmatic of those locations – the late Neolithic West Kennet palisade enclosures in the shadow of Silbury Hill. A colossal construction in its own right, the enclosure complex highlights intertwined themes of landscape occupation, history and connections near and far that feed into a general understanding of the terminal Neolithic in the British Isles.

Week 3 : *Wednesday* 10 November. Dr Jeffrey H. Altschul, SRI Foundation

Collaborative Synthesis and the Future of Archaeological Research

In large part due to public mandates, archaeologists have amassed a huge amount of data over the past 50 years. Much of these data have been interpreted at the project level, but not synthesized in any systematic matter. Faced with similar issues, other environmental sciences developed a form of collaborative synthesis that allowed them to leverage new and legacy data to address issues confronting contemporary society. The Coalition for Archaeological Sciences, which has adapted this model to archaeology, is the subject of this talk.



Week 4: 26 November. Dr Aaron Watson, Kilmartin Museum

Optical monuments: Animating light at prehistoric chambered cairns in Britain and Ireland



Experimental fieldwork reveals that passage tombs can perform as immersive camera obscuras. If luminous, animated images were visible to people in prehistory, how were they understood?

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