



[CfP] Resources and Transformation in pre-modern Societies

What:

Presentations and Posters on *Resources and Transformation in pre-modern Societies*

When:

2020, May 14th-16th

Where:

Ruhr-University Bochum, Department of Archaeological Sciences & Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum, Germany

Deadline:

Submission of abstract latest **February 29th 2020**

Submission to:

Peter.Thomas@bergbaumuseum.de

Cost:

No conference fees. We can offer a travelling grant for doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, if a paper is accepted.

What else?

We can also offer support for accompanying partners with children, please contact us in advance.



General Information

The ReSoc conference **Resources and Transformation in pre-modern Societies** is organised by the Leibniz Post-Doc School “Resources in Society” (ReSoc) hosted by the Ruhr-University Bochum (RUB) and the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum (DBM). The aim of the conference is to provide a forum for a transdisciplinary discourse on transformation of knowledge, culture and landscapes in relation to resources. In three sessions, with two distinguished keynote speakers each, we will cover aspects with a multitude of different methodological and theoretical perspectives.

May 14th

- **Reception & Evening Lecture**

Evening Lecture by [Roland Hardenberg](#) (Goethe-University Frankfurt, Frobenius-Institut Frankfurt)

May 15th–16th

- **Session A: Skill, Embodiment and the Growth of Knowledge**

Keynotes: [Trevor Marchand](#) (SOAS University of London) & [Maikel Kuijpers](#) (Universiteit Leiden)

- **Session B: Life Worlds in Resource Landscapes**

Keynotes: [Timothy LeCain](#) (Montana State University) & [Nils Anfinset](#) (University of Bergen)

- **Session C: Resources and Complex Systems**

Keynotes: [Iza Romanowska](#) (Barcelona Supercomputing Center) & [Angelos Chliaoutakis](#) (Technical University of Crete)

- **Session D: General Poster Session**

Submissions in the form of an abstract should be submitted to Peter.Thomas@bergbaumuseum.de by **February 29th 2020**, indicating the session in which you would like to participate. Notification of acceptance will be given until latest **March 15th 2020**. If your paper is accepted, please send an extended abstract (up to 5 pages plus up to three figures) by **April 19th 2020** for publication in our conference’s abstract volume. Extended abstracts will be published in online proceedings, receiving a DOI. A final publication is envisaged for 2021.

The conference will start with a public evening lecture on **May 14th 2020** and last until **May 16th 2020**. Participants can take a guided tour through the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum on Saturday **May 16th 2020** in the afternoon.

For further information, please visit the [website of the conference](#).



Detailed Information for the Sessions

Session A: Skill, Embodiment and the Growth of Knowledge

- Session organisers: [Maja Gori](#), [Constance von Rűden](#)
- Keynotes: [Trevor Marchand](#) (SOAS University of London) & [Maikel Kuijpers](#) (Universiteit Leiden)
- Keywords: craft, embodiment, skill, technical practices, resources

If we understand resources as socially produced constructs, knowledge and its transmission represent a key aspect in approaching the relationship between resources and societies. Indeed, knowledge is relevant in almost every aspect of a community: it is not only central for its subsistence economy and the appropriation of raw materials and thus for the survival of the community, it is also necessary for their contestant social cohesion. Of course, many aspects of a group's knowledge are not visible in the archaeological record, but the knowledge inherent in crafts is well-reflected through its materiality. Raw materials, tools, unfinished and finished goods allow insights into the skill of a craftsperson (Ingold 2011, 2013). They reflect his or her choices and social needs, as well as the habitualized activities guided by tacit knowledge. Beyond this, learning or the appropriation of techniques and their involved skills from one generation to the next or from one group to another is a crucial aspect for the spread of such resource knowledge. Next to embodiment and the materiality of the things involved, this spread of knowledge is also driven by cultural choices and the people's socio-cultural identity.

The session aims to bring together researchers interested in the reconstruction of the resource "technical knowledge" by material remains and aims to address how such a resource can be spatially and temporally spread.

Session B: Life worlds in resource landscapes

- Session organisers: [Yiu-Kang Hsu](#), [Peter Thomas](#), [Thomas Stöllner](#)
- Keynotes: [Timothy LeCain](#) (Montana State University) & [Nils Anfinset](#) (University of Bergen)
- Keywords: daily practices and routines in landscapes, life worlds, knowledge, resources

What "resourcers" (resource-suppliers) perceived as relevant for their decisions is a key issue in understanding how resource-landscapes and specialized activities involving (mineral) resources has evolved in ancient societies. The decision - if a resource was worth exploiting, or if a landscape was considered appropriate to start an enterprise - has to do with the level of knowledge, world-views and expectations of the people involved. Normally the material evidence of production sites does not provide many clues about basic life-world-concepts. However, we consider practices, which left their mark in the landscape, as one hint for the reconstruction of at least aspects of such basic perceptions, might they have been driven by social, economic or ritual/religious ideas and experiences. Ethnographic accounts tell us about the importance of experiences on structure and perceived causalities that decide the way of doing and constructing a life-practice. This session is dedicated to the discussion of such interdependencies on the basis of the theoretical models and special observations that ethnographers, archaeologists, sociologists made within their empirical studies, whose datasets often seemed illogical at first.



Session C: Resources and Complex Systems

- Session organisers: [Frederik Schaff](#) (Ruhr-University Bochum), [Michael Roos](#) (Ruhr-University Bochum), [Frank Hillebrandt](#) (FernUni Hagen)
- Keynotes: [Iza Romanowska](#) (Barcelona Supercomputing Center) & [Angelos Chliaoutakis](#) (Technical University of Crete)
- Keywords: Complexity, Resources, Modelling

In this session, we want to explore methodological approaches that deal with the complexity of high-level archaeological questions by taking a resource-based view. Under a high-level question, we understand a question that deals most comprehensively with human behaviour in its specific spatiotemporal context. More concretely, we do not want to focus on a single aspect of the archaeological record for a given region and time, but want to understand the dynamics of the past society in a given geographical area over a long time span (typically several hundred years).

A particularly interesting approach to such issues is to build formal, data calibrated simulation models with artificial societies populating an artificial world. However, inevitably one encounters a huge 'lack of data', especially when it comes to modelling human behaviour. Hence, ethnographic and anthropological work that aims at detailed descriptions of daily life and decision processes in past societies, likely providing more than one hypothesis, is a crucial part of such a discussion.

Furthermore, we recognise that the availability of resources, be it material or culturally produced and accumulated, is an important aspect when trying to understand such higher order questions. The distribution and availability of resources (including, e.g., knowledge) structures and limits the potential activities of the humans that lived in the specific spatiotemporal context. Taking a resource-based view is thus most helpful in selecting the elements in the model or making inevitable assumptions on past human societies, be it individual behaviour or social processes.

Session D: General Poster Session

- Related to any session or the overall topic. All manners of research methods are acceptable. Open questions or research proposals that will stimulate a lively discussion are also possible in this slot!
- There will be a best-poster award for young academics.