Digging a vertex, finding the edges
Approaches to Social Network Analysis in Archaeology

Examples from the Aegean and Mesoamerica

Social Network Analysis has become increasingly attractive to the social sciences, amongst them an archaeology interested in social and economic interaction. For a long time the term "network" had been used in a metaphorical sense to characterize social, geographical, and economic relations. Current network approaches offer analytical tools for analyzing social facts by measuring contact. In studies of contemporary societies, direct observation can be used whilst a proxy approach is required in archaeology.

The two-day workshop focuses on theoretical and methodological issues, it investigates the potential of formal social network analysis in archaeology.

Archaeological case studies are from the Aegean and from Mesoamerica – two key areas of network studies in archaeology. Without historical links between both hemispheres, these areas are well suited for a comparative perspective. There are similar developments (e.g. obsidian exchange systems, the rise of rivalling state societies), and clear differences (e.g. the role of seafaring transport).

The invited speakers are eminent figures in network analysis in archaeology as well as in the archaeologies of the case study areas. They give an overview of their field of expertise, discuss methodological issues, evaluate the state of affairs and look into future developments. The speakers are introduced and their work is reviewed by respondents from the Cologne–Bonn Research Training Group.
Gary M. Feinman / Mark Golitko / Linda M. Nicholas (Chicago)
A network analysis of pre-hispanic obsidian exchange: Implications for macro-regional dynamics and ancient economies
Respondent: Susanne Reichert (Bonn)

15:30–16:00
Break and refreshments

16:00–17:00
Mark Golitko / Gary M. Feinman / Linda M. Nicholas (Chicago)
Archaeological Network Analysis viewed through Mesoamerican Obsidian: Prospects and Challenges
Respondent: Tomáš Zachar (Cologne)

17:30–19:30
Evening Lecture

Allen W. Wilhite (Huntswill)
Network effects on trade, decision making, culture, and political structure

Conference venue:
Tagungsraum 004
Seminargebäude der Universität zu Köln
Universitätstraße 37
50931 Köln

Please register in advance (ina.borkenstein@uni-koeln.de) or come to the registration desk at the workshop.