

PART 3: CULTURAL INTERACTION: MODES AND CHANNELS OF MOVEMENT AND TRANSMISSION

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This conference session was founded on a basic theoretical insight into movement: any example thereof is a temporality with duration, intermittent break(s) and a certain pace and rhythm. Furthermore, movement reverberates with the surroundings of cultural landscapes and geographies in negotiation with available transport technologies, all of which co-determine migrational trajectories. Movement should, therefore, not be considered only in terms of the physical points between which it occurred but, rather, as a unique temporal phenomenon through which new human worlds emerge. This session invited contributions that addressed concrete, on-the-ground movements, while simultaneously paying attention to how movement was coupled with cultural responses to new forms of materials, ideas and knowledge in a mutually conditioning relationship.

Two sub-themes were announced under the general session head which are reflected in this published collection of articles to different degrees. The first sub-theme highlighted migratory patterns of people, animals and plants (including studies of origin, direction and distances). Similarly, the second sub-theme highlighted itinerant patterns of material novelties, such as metalwork, pottery, amber, glass, and stone. Most contributions addressed this second sub-theme. Concrete, on-the-ground

movement and the means of transporting materials and people are integrated in both these themes. The same holds true for the ways movements were linked up with particular mobility categories and systems during the Bronze Age.

The fourteen articles resulting from this conference session all focus upon how culture became widespread in the Bronze Age. They often specifically explore whether the movements underlying the archaeologically-mapped dispersals of objects may have been connected to short-distance or long-distance movements or even to a larger pattern of increased mobility as such. Metal objects, the raw materials from which they were made and the attached technological innovations constitute a favourite subject, succeeded by the crucial exotica of amber and textiles. Even the ritual and social traditions of rich hoards and burials are addressed from the perspective of mobility and local responses to the foreign and exotic.

Most articles are concerned with mobility as well as its entanglement with local strategies of reception along prevailing routes and transfer channels. Articles often also address the means and directions by which culture was transmitted, such as water-borne traffic along rivers and across seas.