

Friday, 9.00-9.45

Introduction by Johannes Müller, Speaker of ROOTS and Konrad Ott, ROOTS Reflective Turn Forum

Lecture 1: 9.45-10.45

Vesa Arponen

This thing called inequality: concept and operationalization

Philosophy can be defined as the art of conceptual reflection. Philosophy is based on the idea that new empirical discoveries presuppose a conceptual reorientation – a paradigm shift – that makes a given phenomenon “visible” and able to be conceptualized, studied, qualified and quantified. Alongside philosophy and economic theory (Sen, Stiglitz, Milanovic), archaeology of inequality, too, has seen new concepts enter the marketplace of ideas. Concepts, such as the quality of life (Smith), the human experience (Hegmon), the capability approach (Arponen), and more, have begun to be developed for archaeological purposes. In part,

these concepts stand on the shoulders of older concepts such as heterarchy (Crumley), exclusionary vs. corporate power (Feinman), and collective action (Blanton). Arguably, these concepts can be seen to call to into question the more established hierarchy and social complexity based paradigm. However, the new concepts involve some mutual tensions, and the question of operationalizing the new concepts is open. In this paper, we will analyze the dominant paradigm, look at the challenges, their philosophical underpinnings, and the question of operationalization.

Lecture 2: 10.45-11.45

Elizabeth DeMarrais

Heterarchy and long-term change in the archaeology of northwest Argentina

In this presentation, I outline processes of long-term change in Northwest Argentina. Using the concept of schemas, I argue that our large-scale narratives would benefit from more nuanced conceptions of collective agency. Shifting the central focus of the story away from the pursuit of political power by a few elites and toward the material evidence of collective habits, collective attention, and collective decisions, I narrate the story of a populace whose local identities endured over millennia, even in the face of successive conquests. Collective habits revolve around shared, daily subsistence practices for the majority of the population, particularly in smaller-scale societies. In NWA, an enormous amount of labour appears to have been work performed by groups of people – from clearing glacial boulders, building terraces to support

agriculture on slopes, to constructing dwellings with stones, clay and cane. Collective attention refers to schemas organized around visual material culture, including decorated objects (stone sculpture, pottery, metals, and textiles). Collective attention very likely involved Andean principles of animacy, according to which ancestor burials demanded regular offerings to meet reciprocal obligations. Collective decisions refer to politics and decision-making, broadly construed. The degree to which decisions were taken communally may be assessed by the nature of leadership as well as the extent of heterarchical rather than hierarchical social orders. My presentation will focus on understanding heterarchy, not only in terms of its capacity to describe societal relationships, but also to explain how they transform over time.

Lunch

Lecture 3: 13.15-14.15*T.L. Thurston****Reversals of fortune: complacency, vigilance and heterarchy in the distant and recent past***

In historical and environmental archaeology, the material and textual records provide primary data for revealing the tensions and conflicts between various social sectors in medieval and early modern Sweden. To understand these relationships, the archaeologically-adapted use of current social theories from a variety of disciplines is required. Some forms of asymmetry and conditions of inequality serve as good general predictors about when protest, rebellion, or civil war are most likely to occur, while the ways in which these issues are framed and resolved vary from society to society and era to era. Using several kinds information pipelines, I describe some channels through

which we may understand when and why citizens of a polity or subjects of a ruler are likely to protest or rise in response to problems in the relationship between governments and ‘the governed’. In this case study from early historic Europe, a mixed method approach works best: generalizing models using economic and social predictors can be combined or contrasted with exploration of unique contexts. Using the heterarchy concept, collective action theory and the theoretical concepts of political peoplehood and reiterated problem solving, I consider some preliminary ideas for understanding the power of those ‘above’ and ‘below’ and the outcomes of different kinds of conflicts.

Lecture 4: 14.15-15.15*John Robb****Achieving equality: an anarchy theory approach to social evolution in prehistoric Europe***

Discussions of politics in European prehistory normally focus upon explicit political structure, and particularly upon levels of formal hierarchy. These are understood within a social-evolution perspective which models people as inherently seeking to dominate others and which implicitly valorises change and assumes that a lack of change, or of political hierarchy, represents a passive failure to develop. In this paper, I take an opposite approach: to the extent that we can postulate a cross-cultural motivation, people strive to preserve their autonomy. They do this through a wide range of tactics, depending upon the nature of their social context; often it involves cultural action rather than ex-

PLICITLY political structures, and often it results in ambiguous situations. Applying these principles, I argue that (i) inequality is present in all societies, but archaeologists have traditionally overstated the evidence for hierarchy; right up to the end of prehistory, European societies in general display stubborn and resilient equality much more than increasing inequality; (ii) this is not a passive failure to progress, but an active achievement; (iii) the prehistoric sequence shows a regular succession of different ways of preserving local autonomy, from mobility to heterarchical ritual organisation to competitive display and kinship organisation.

Lunch

Lecture 5: 16.00-17.00*Bill Angelbeck****Seeing like a capitalist: challenging egoistic interpretations of feasting and potlatch dynamics in the archaeological record***

Archaeologists can often view the societies of the archaeological record through the lens of their contemporary experience, including Western capitalism. James Scott described “Seeing Like a State”, and its consequences. With my focus on economic biases, I will describe theorists that are “Seeing like a Capitalist.” Some identify “rational economic actors” primarily as pursuing individual gain, or others find “aggrandizers” as the active, entrepreneurial agents of change in past societies; both entail a focus on Homo economicus. These arguments proceed as if the socioeconomic dynamics of capitalist societies are cultural “laws” applicable to most societies, rather than seeing these as reflections of their own cultural and socioeconomic prejudices. As a researcher in this culture area (who is somewhat offended by all of this), I will address how these interpretations are tainted by capitalist views, which lead to errors in interpreting the archaeological record. I will explore feasting and

potlatching with cases from the Northwest archaeology, ethnography, and ethnohistory, and show how these individualist arguments are often in stark contrast with indigenous statements about their own modes of interaction politically and economically. To do so, I apply an anarchist analysis to evaluate the dynamics of feasting relations on the Northwest Coast to show how the long history of potlatch interpretations since Franz Boas have often been tainted by capitalist misunderstandings. Due to its theoretical focus on social power, anarchism can provide a critical perspective for archaeologists, presenting analytical tools to think about the dynamics of societies in the past. For one, it can help us shift from considering historical processes that are individually pushed (centralized and capitalist) to those that are collectively driven (decentralized and communitarian), as well as to better characterize the dialectic between such social structures.

Lecture 6: 17.00-18.00*Bernd Simon****A new social psychological perspective on intergroup conflict: from politicized struggles for recognition to tolerance***

In the presentation, I outline a new perspective on intergroup conflict (Simon, in press). While building on social psychological foundations laid down in self-categorization theory, the new perspective is also critically informed by and incorporates insights from the disciplines of social, political, and moral philosophy. It is organized around the principal working hypothesis that many intergroup conflicts, especially those in modern, culturally diverse societies, can be fruitfully understood as politicized struggles for recognition (PSR). In addition, I propose four more specific corollary hypotheses,

which concern polarization, respected collective identity, embedded dual identity, and tolerance, and discuss pertinent evidence from our own empirical research. The distinctive innovative contribution of the new perspective is that it shifts researchers’ attention to the multi-level nature of intergroup conflict and to the novel concepts of recognition and identity as a different equal. Simon, B. (in press). A new perspective on intergroup conflict: The social psychology of politicized struggles for recognition. *Theory & Psychology*.

Dinner

Lecture 7: Saturday, 9.00-10.00*Martin Furholt****A world without chiefs? The dynamics of top-down and bottom-up agencies within Neolithic communities in Europe***

My paper discusses evidence for the negotiation of political power in Neolithic communities in Europe, focusing on an integration of overall structural settings and individual, historical narratives. While starting out from a Marxist political economy approach, I try to overcome the biases and shortcomings of this approach by making multiple and contradicting agencies more visible, explicitly strengthening our understanding of bottom-up and intermediate agents, balancing and resisting

top-down efforts of creating centralized social hierarchies. This is done by integrating Collective Action and Anarchist Theories into a model of social change. As case studies, I will discuss and contrast early Neolithic LBK communities and those of the 3rd millennium BC. Comparing these two different periods, I will highlight structural changes in the nature of power and social relations, which fundamentally alter the possibilities for bottom-up resistance to top-down centralization efforts.

Lecture 8: 10.00-11.00*Orrí Vésteinsson****Silver, inequality and agency in the Viking Age***

In Viking Age Iceland, there are conflicting indicators about the relationship between wealth and social status. There are clear signs of material inequality but they do not correlate with evidence – both archaeological and literary – for status differences. It is particularly evident that people of low social status and limited economic means could own valuables – silver, weapons and jewelry – raising the question what power of transformation such goods had. I will argue that for practical purposes they were not exchangeable in the mar-

ket place, but could buy their owners limited agency. Silver could buy life – it was used primarily in compensation for killings – but for the largest part valuables in the possession of lower status people bought intercession with the other-world – as votive deposits and grave goods. The great influx of silver into northern Europe in the Viking Age created pressures on pre-existing social relations and paved the way for a realignment where wealth inequality increasingly became the primary determinant of social status.

Lecture 9: 11.00-12.00*Reinhard Bernbeck****From feasts and daily drudgery to the suppression of revolts: the Ancient Mesopotamian case***

In this talk, I discuss general issues of “inequality”, arguing that this term always needs one (or several) referent(s) in order to be anthropologically relevant. I then consider one well-known case of the emergence of social inequalities, ancient Mesopo-

tamia in the time from the late 6th to the 4th mill. BCE. Past ideology and the development of abstract labor play a major role in my discussion as well as various present-day interests in this process.

Lunch followed by an excursion to SchleswigCONTACT: Gido Lukas / glukas@roots.uni.kiel.deFURTHER DETAILS: www.cluster-roots.uni-kiel.de/en/calendar-events

Friday, October 18

9.00-9.45 Introduction
 9.45-10.45 **Vesa Arponen:** This thing called inequality: concept and operationalization
 10.45-11.45 **Elizabeth DeMarrais:** Heterarchy and long-term change in the archaeology of northwest Argentina

Lunch

13.15-14.15 **T.L. Thurston:** Reversals of fortune: complacency, vigilance and heterarchy in the distant and recent past
 14.15-15.15 **John Robb:** Achieving equality: an anarchy theory approach to social evolution in prehistoric Europe

Break

16.00-17.00 **Bill Angelbeck:** Seeing like a capitalist: challenging egoistic interpretations of feasting and potlatch dynamics in the archaeological record
 17.00-18.00 **Bernd Simon:** The social psychology of politicized struggles for recognition

Dinner 19.30 Forstbaumschule

Saturday, October 19

9.00-10.00 **Martin Furholt:** A world without chiefs? The dynamics of top-down and bottom-up agencies within Neolithic communities in Europe
 10.00-11.00 **Orri Vésteinsson:** Silver, inequality and agency in the Viking Age
 11.00 -12.00 **Reinhard Bernbeck:** From feasts and daily drudgery to the suppression of revolts: the Ancient Mesopotamian case

Lunch

13.00-open end Excursion castle Gottorf

