

Session: #102

Theme & Session Format

Theme:

2. Net Zero Archaeologies – Sustainability in the Past, Present and Future

Session format:

Regular session

Title & Content

Title:

Mesolithic-Neolithic Transitions [PaM]

Content:

The aims of this session are to present recent archaeological evidence or interpretations regarding Mesolithic/Neolithic transitions, as well as regional syntheses, from as many sites or regions as possible, and thus contribute to the broader understanding of this key period in the evolution of humankind. A Mesolithic hunter-gatherer with a pot is no more to be labelled Neolithic than are the present-day hunter-gatherers who have largely succeeded in maintaining their traditional life-ways, notwithstanding having acquired some present-day industrial attributes. The ‘either/or’ dichotomy and arbitrary dating of the ‘event’ is an academic convention which is giving way to a growing appreciation of the complexity and duration of the Mesolithic/Neolithic transitions across Europe. Contact between migrant Neolithic agro-pastoralists, with their specific life-ways, tool-kits and potentially different life-views, with incumbent Mesolithic hunter-gatherers (and sometimes collectors and fishers as well) took many and diverse forms. Whilst it is clear that over time the Neolithic way of life prevailed, the transitions to farming or assimilation into farming communities could have been more or less rapid, although in some instances they are known to have taken almost a millennium.

Keywords:

Transitions, Mesolithic, Neolithic

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