



**BIWEEKLY COLLOQUIUM**  
Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 5.00 pm

NORTH-WESTERN JUTLAND AT THE DAWN OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MILLENNIUM: NAVI-  
GATING LIFE AND DEATH IN A NEW SOCIOECONOMIC LANDSCAPE?

**Niels Johannsen**

Aarhus University

This lecture presents recent and current research on the Late TRB / Funnel Beaker period of north-western Jutland (ca. 3100-2800/2750 BCE, i.e. the Middle Neolithic II-V). This period brings a distinct transition to a clearly novel set of mortuary practices to north-western Jutland, integrated with what appears to be a whole new constellation of ritual life. The new type of grave structure, the stone heap grave, is the most substantial and most thoroughly investigated archaeological manifestation of these new practices, and it represents a marked break with the megalithic tradition. However, compared to the state of research on the new funerary practices, relatively little is known about the basic way in which the people who constructed these graves lived. For a number of reasons, which include culture-historical, taphonomical and, not least, research-historical factors, significant questions remain as to the patterns of subsistence economy, settlement, mobility and organization of the groups that inhabited north-western Jutland during this period. While much remains to be done, this problem is at the focus of current research efforts, some of which are reported here.

A key question raised by the stone heap grave custom in particular, but also by associated trends in mortuary customs across large parts of continental Europe to the south and east, seems to be to which degree the new mortuary practices corresponded to, and were perhaps causally rooted in, general trends in modes of socioeconomic organization – i.e. in the economic strategies, the settlement and mobility patterns and the social units, relations and hierarchies of the societies in question. This lecture discusses the material from north-western Jutland in relation to that overall question, and to material from adjacent part of Europe. In addition to previous and new analyses of well-known material, I present new empirical results from field work conducted in the region in 2013. This work includes excavation of stone heap grave cemeteries and identification of settlement sites (late TRB and early Corded Ware period). I also discuss limitations of the current empirical record of the region, and how ongoing and future activities may realistically remedy some of these limitations and thus bring us closer to answering specific questions associated with this culture-historical complex. Finally, I discuss how the developments in north-western Jutland during this period, as presently known, may be understood in relation to subsequent cultural developments in the region.

**Venue: Leibnizstraße 1, Seminar Room 204**