



**BIWEEKLY COLLOQUIUM**  
Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 4:15 p.m.

**TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS IN PREHISTORY:  
BACK TO CHILDE OR FORWARD TO NEW HORIZONS?**

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Archaeological narratives are heavily influenced by contemporary discourses and Zeitgeist-phenomena. The study of prehistoric technology was the starting point of prehistory as an academic science. However, for a long time a systematic approach was hindered by using technology as a dating-evidence. This has changed considerably with the radiocarbon revolution and the advent of calibrated c14-dates since the 1980s which now enables prehistory to do actual research on technical innovations and their social consequences instead of simply assuming the connection of technical and social change based on theoretical preassumptions.

The rate of innovations in its techniques is much higher in the genus Homo than in any other animal. This did not only allow already early hominids to carve their own ecological niche, but also enabled drastic changes like the Neolithization or the rise of pristine states in the Near East. While new techniques certainly do not force behaviour upon its users, it opens up possibilities and is a key factor for such „revolutions“. In my lecture I will outline new research on prehistoric techniques and innovation processes and highlight how their study can give valuable insight in crucial problems faced by scholars dealing with the archaeological record by presenting case studies from my own research and the TOPOI-project „Digital Atlas of Innovations“.

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