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Neolithic Postgraduate Symposium

The value of creative analogies in the Neolithic



School of History and Archaeology
Cardiff University

Monday 28th June 2010

Call for Papers

This day symposium explores how and why we integrate analogical insights into our theorising of Neolithic worlds. Papers are encouraged to tackle the influence and challenges of an analogical approach to these theories. We are concerned with the diversities and multiplicities of different approaches, looking towards the ways these can affect archaeological theory from any perspective, including research that includes the work of theorists in the hard sciences (e.g. Thomas Bayes), art history (e.g. Alfred Gell), philosophy (e.g. Bruno Latour, Jacques Derrida) and anthropology (e.g. Tim Ingold, Maurice Bloch, Marilyn Strathern). These influences enable us to move beyond considering all non-Western groups as 'other' and 'timeless', and to instead consider analogy as a vital technique used to broaden the range of possibilities in interpretation and to widen imagination (e.g. Alasdair Whittle). Is it not through complex, challenging and multi-contextual dialogues that new understandings emerge? By looking at the use of analogy critically, this symposium poses a fundamental challenge to archaeological theory. Can an archaeology that focuses on the use of analogy really be substantiated?

This symposium offers an opportunity to go beyond descriptive accounts by providing a platform for discussing the value of analogy and homology in our interpretation of the Neolithic past. Our scope is multidisciplinary and encourages students, early-career postgraduates and researchers working on relevant topics in the field of Neolithic archaeology in Europe to present their research in a friendly and informal atmosphere.

An abstract of no more than 250 words for a twenty-minute paper should be submitted by Friday 30th April 2010 to Ffion Reynolds or Seren Griffiths by email ffionreynolds@hotmail.com or seren_griffiths@hotmail.com. Postal mail submissions should be sent to School of History and Archaeology, Humanities Building, Cardiff University, Colum Drive, Cardiff, CF10 3EU.

