



Photo: View of Stromboli from La Calcaia (Panarea) by H. Dawson.

SFB 1070 · RESSOURCENKULTUREN. Soziokulturelle Dynamiken im Umgang mit Ressourcen

## RESOURCECULTURES Dialogue

**14.05.2019 | 18:00 c.t. | Schloss Hohentübingen | R. 165 | Klass. Archäologie**

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### **Reframing Insularity: Communities, Places, and Resources in the Mediterranean Longue Durée**

Island colonisation in the prehistoric Mediterranean is mostly related to permanent settlement during the Neolithic; however, it is becoming increasingly clear that islands were used for a variety of purposes both before and after this period. While island biogeography can usefully explain patterns in the maritime spread of the Neolithic (in terms of island size/distance/local resources), it becomes less relevant by the Bronze Age, when exchange networks developed to the point that resources could be obtained elsewhere. On the one side, a diachronic perspective reveals that peaks in island activity matched large-scale socio-cultural and economic phenomena (such as the spread of agriculture or increased maritime interaction). On the other, resource desirability and strategic location within networks fluctuated according to historically contingent factors, operating at the local level. In fact, these perspectives are not contradictory but complementary. Horden and Purcell refer to an underlying current in the Mediterranean Longue Durée, “an attitude to interact rather than to be isolated” (from “The Corrupting Sea”, 2000: 404). Ultimately then, communities may have valued islands because of two intrinsic properties, which facilitated interaction: 1. they are *well-defined* spaces, and 2. they are *in-between* spaces. This paper will discuss issues of connectivity and isolation in light of both tangible and intangible properties of islands. Such an approach can highlight changing meanings of insularity both in Mediterranean prehistory and more broadly.