

**Mining in European History and its Impact
on Environment and Human Societies –
Proceedings for the 1st Mining in European History-Conference
of the SFB-HIMAT, 12.–15. November 2009, Innsbruck**

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Die Geschichte des Bergbaus in Tirol und seinen angrenzenden Gebieten –
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Content

Preface	13
---------	----

Session I: Society and Landscape in Prehistory	15
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DIRK BRANDHERM & ALEXANDER MAASS

Copper Mining, Settlement and Society in the Earlier Bronze Age of Southeast Spain: Prospects for New Research in the Lower Segura Valley	17
---	----

Session II: Mining and Settlement in Pre-Modern Times	23
--	----

ROGER BURT

Economic and Social Structures in Mining Settlement from Pre-Modern to Modern Times. – Was Mining a Good Thing?	25
---	----

ALMUDENA OREJAS & F. JAVIER SÁNCHEZ-PALENCIA

Mining, Rural Settlement and Tax System in Roman Spain	29
--	----

CHRISTOPH BARTELS

Mining Towns in the North-Western Harz District: Foundation, Structure, and Development	35
---	----

MARINA HILBER

Social Interrelations in an Early Modern Mining Area: Marriage Patterns in the Greater Schwaz Area	45
--	----

ALOIS UNTERKIRCHER

- Birth and Death in a Mining-Dominated Region: Population Movement Exemplified by Two Villages in the Greater Schwaz Area (17th-19th Century) 51

GEORG NEUHAUSER

- The Shift Foreman (“Schichtmeister”) – An Important Mining Functionary for the Montafon? 57

Session III:

The Palaeo-Ecology of Prehistoric Ore Mining 61

TIM MIGHALL & SIMON TIMBERLAKE

- Ancient Pollution and Vegetation Change in the Prehistoric Mining and Metalworking Areas of Wales and Ireland 63

ELISABETH BREITENLECHNER, MARINA HILBER, JOACHIM LUTZ, YVONNE KATHREIN, ALOIS UNTERKIRCHER & KLAUS OEGGL

- The Environmental Impact of Ancient Mining Evidenced by a Multi-Proxy Analysis 69

KARIN ANNE KOINIG, RICHARD TESSADRI & ROLAND PSENNER

- Early Atmospheric Pollution Recorded in the Sediments of High Mountain Lakes in the Vicinity of Mining Areas 75

LAURENT CAROZZA, EMMANUEL CHAPRON, ANAËLLE SIMMONEAU, BENOIT MILLE, HERVÉ GUYARD, GUILLAUME ST-ONGE, PIERRE ROSTAN, DAVID BOURGARIT & ALBANE BURENS

- Glacial Fluctuations and Exploitation of Copper Resources in High Mountain During the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age in the French Alps (2500-1500 BC) 81

ASTRID RÖPKE

- Subalpine Colluvia – Preliminary Geoarchaeological Results, Montafon (Austria) 91

Session IV: From Ore to Trade	97
<hr/>	
NEVA TRAMPUŽ OREL & BORIS OREL	
Caput Adriae and the Eastern Alps: Possible Metallurgical Connections During the Transition from the Final Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age.	99
MATTHIAS KRISMER, ULRIKE TÖCHTERLE, GERT GOLDENBERG, FRANZ VAVTAR, PETER TROPPER, JOACHIM LUTZ & ERNST PERNICKA	
A Mineralogical and Petrological Investigation of Early Bronze-Age Copper Slags from the Kiechlberg (North Tyrol, Austria)	107
PATRICK ROSENTHAL & DENIS MORIN	
Roman and Medieval Iron Mining and Smelting at High Altitudes in the South- Western Alps: Mercantour and Ubaye Mountains (Alpes-Maritimes, Alpes-de- Haute-Provence, France)	109
IGNACIO MONTERO-RUIZ, NURIA RAFEL, MARK HUNT, MERCEDES MURILLO-BARROSO, CARMEN ROVIRA, XOSÉ-LOIS ARMADA & RAIMON GRAELLS	
Pre-Roman Mining Activities in the El Molar-Bellmunt-Falset District (Tarragonia, Spain): Indirect Proofs Based on Lead Isotopes Analysis	115
FLORENCE CATTIN, BARBARA GUÉNETTE-BECK, IGOR M. VILLA, HÉLÈNE BARGE, STEFAN ANSERMET, NICOLAS MEISSER, MARIE BESSE	
Sourcing Prehistoric Copper Mining Areas in the Alps: A Lead Isotope Analysis on the Ores from the Valais Region (Switzerland)	123
FRANCO MARZATICO, ERIO VALZOLGHER, HANNS OBERRAUCH	
Dating the Later Bronze Age Metal Production in the South-Central Alps. Some Remarks on the Relative and Absolute Chronology of the Luco/Laugen Culture Franco Marzatico ¹ , Erio Valzolgher ² & Hanns Oberrauch ³	129
JOACHIM LUTZ, ERNST PERNICKA, ROBERT PILS, GERHARD TOMEDI & FRANZ VAVTAR	
Geochemical Characteristics of Copper Ores from the Greywacke Zone in the Austrian Alps and their Relevance as a Source of Copper in Prehistoric Times	145
DANIEL STEINIGER	
The Relation between Copper and Flint Daggers in Chalcolithic Italy	151

Session V:	
Subsistence and Nutrition in Mining Areas	157
<hr/>	
STEPHEN SHENNAN	
Early Mining and Subsistence: Some Theoretical Considerations	159
ANTON STEFAN SCHWARZ & KLAUS OEGGL	
Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Carbonised Plant Remains from the Kiechlberg at Thaur and its Implications for the Surrounding Vegetation	165
MICHAEL GRABNER, ANDREA KLEIN, HANS RESCHREITER & FRITZ-ECKART BARTH	
Wood Supply of the Bronze Age Salt Mining Site at Hallstatt, Austria	171
OLIVER NELLE & SUSANNE KLEMM	
Wood and Charcoal Supplies for Prehistoric and Mediaeval Mining Activities in the Eisenerzer Ramsau, Styria, Austria	177
THOMAS LUDEMANN	
Fuel Wood Economy of Historical Mining in the Black Forest (Germany)	183
SUSANNE KLEMM	
Remains of Charcoal Production from the Middle Ages to the Modern Period – New Types of Archaeological Monuments in the Eastern Alps	187
ERICH PUCHER	
Hallstatt and Dürrnberg – Two Salt-Mining Sites, Two Different Meat Supply Strategies	193
KERSTIN KOWARIK, HANS RESCHREITER & GABRIEL WURZER	
Modelling the Bronze Age Salt Mines of Hallstatt	199
THOMAS LUDEMANN	
Kiln Site Anthracology and Fuel Wood Ecology in Western Central Europe	209
BARBARA STOPP, HEIDE HÜSTER PLOGMANN & JÖRG SCHIBLER	
Production, Consumption and Ritual: The Evidence of the Animal Bones in the Tyrolian Area During the Bronze Age	215

SABINE DESCHLER-ERB

- Subsistence Strategies in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Hill Settlement of Thaur-Kiechlberg/Tyrol: The Example of the Animal Bones 221

THOMAS PICHLER, KURT NICOLUSSI, MICHAEL KLAUNZER & GERT GOLDENBERG

- Dendrochronological Analysis and Dating of Wooden Artefacts from the Prehistoric Copper Mine Kelchalm/Kitz-bühel (Austria) 227

THOMAS PICHLER, KURT NICOLUSSI, ANDREA THURNER & GERT GOLDENBERG

- Dendrochronological Dating of Charcoal Originating from an Early Iron Age Fire-Set Pit in the Mining Area of Schwaz/Brixlegg (Tyrol, Austria) 233

KURT NICOLUSSI, ANDREA THURNER & THOMAS PICHLER

- The Wooden Remains from the Prehistoric Ore Processing Site Schwarzenbergmoos near Radfeld/Brixlegg (Tyrol) 239

DANIELA FESTI & KLAUS OEGGL

- Transhumance as Potential Subsistence Strategy in the Alps During Prehistory 245

Session VI:

Prehistoric Mining – Primary Production and Reflection in Landscape 253

WILLIAM O'BRIEN

- Copper Axes, Stone Axes: Production and Exchange Systems in the Chalcolithic of Britain and Ireland 255

CHRISTIAN GROER

- Early Copper Mining in Western Europe – Comparative Studies on Technological and Economical Aspects of Early Copper Mining in Prehistoric Western Europe 261

FELICE LAROCCA

- Grotta della Monaca: A Prehistoric Copper and Iron Mine in the Calabria Region (Italy) 267

SUSANNE KLEMM

- Bronze Age Copper Mining – Landscape Conditions and Land-Use in the Eisenerzer Alps, Styria (Austria) 271

PAOLO BELLINTANI, ELISABETTA MOTTES, FRANCO NICOLIS, ELENA SILVESTRI, LIVIA STEFAN, MICHELE BASSETTI, NICOLA DEGASPERI & NICOLA CAPPELLOZZA	
New Evidence of Archaeometallurgical Activities During the Bronze Age in Trentino	277
ROBERTO MAGGI & MARK PEARCE	
Changing Subsistence Structures and the Origins of Mining in the Ligurian Apennine Mountains	283
SIMON TIMBERLAKE	
Geological, Mineralogical and Environmental Controls on the Extraction of Copper Ores in the British Bronze Age	289
THOMAS STÖLLNER	
Copper and Salt – Mining Communities in the Alpine Metal Ages	297
VITTORIO CAVANI, VANESSA POLI & MANUELA SECONDO	
A Bronze Age Minerary District in the Idice River Valley (Province of Bologna, Italy)?	315
SARA MARINO	
Stone-Tools with Hafting Groove and Prehistoric Mining Exploitation in Calabria (Italy)	321
PAUL AMBERT, VALENTINA FIGUEROA-LARRE, J.-L. GUENDON, DIEGO SALAZAR SUTIL, HERNÁN SALINAS WILLIAMS & CLAUDE REQUIRAND	
The Copper Mines of the Cabrières-Péret District (Southern-France) between the 3rd and the 1st Millennium B.C.	329
VALENTINA FIGUEROA-LARRE, HERNÁN SALINAS WILLIAMS, DIEGO SALAZAR SUTIL, GERMÁN MANRÍQUEZ SOTO & PAZ NUÑEZ-REGUEIRO	
Prehispanic Hammerstones from the Atacama Desert (Antofagasta Region, North of Chile)	335
ULRIKE TÖCHTERLE, GERT GOLDENBERG & GERHARD TOMEDI	
The Late Neolithic to Middle Bronze Age Settlement on the Kiechlberg/Thaur (North Tyrol, Austria): Raw Materials and Trade Relations	339

MICHAEL KLAUNZER, GERT GOLDENBERG, SIMON HYE, MARKUS STAUDT, ULRIKE TÖCHTERLE & GERHARD TOMEDI	
Prehistoric Fahlore Mining and Metallurgy in the Mauken Valley, Radfeld/Brixlegg, North-Tyrol	345
PEDRO DÍAZ-DEL-RÍO, SUSANA CONSUEGRA, ENRIQUE CAPDEVILA, MARTA CAPOTE, CRISTINA CASAS, NURIA CASTAÑEDA, CRISTINA CRIADO & AURORA NIETO	
The Casa Montero Flint Mine and the Making of Neolithic Societies in Iberia	351
 Session VII:	
<u>Mining Archaeology: The Early History to Early Modern Mining</u>	<u>357</u>
 CONSTANTIN CANAVAS	
Mining Practice in the Medieval Muslim Iberian Peninsula: The Case of Iron. Studying Networks in Cross-Ethnical Context	359
 Session VIII:	
<u>Language and Culture</u>	<u>365</u>
 ISOLDE HAUSNER	
“Rudnicha”, “Zelesna”, “Ferraires”, “Mons metallicus”, “Arziperge” ... – What Eelse? A Cultural Historical Survey on Toponyms as Witnesses of Mining Activities in Austria	367
 BÉATRICE TURPIN	
The Language of Coal Mining in the North of France. A Social and Cultural Approach	373
 ULRICH REIFF	
Project “Berg-Manns-Bilder” Construction of Work Ethic and Mining Identity in Western Harz Region	379
 YVONNE KATHREIN	
Family Names as Indicators for Beginning Mining Activities in Schwaz	385

GEBHARD BENDLER

- Plans, Manuscripts, Books: The Library and Mining Archives of the
“Montanwerke Brixlegg AG” (Tyrol) 390

Session IX:

- Documentation of Archaeological Excavations and
GIS-supported Integrative Data Management 395
-

ANDREW U. FRANK

- What Is the Use of Ontologies Concerning Organizing Data in Multidisciplinary
Projects? 397

GERALD HIEBEL, KLAUS HANKE & INGRID HAYEK

- GIS Supported Implementation of Ontology Based Data Management for
Multidisciplinary Research 405

PIERRE GRUSSENMEYER, BENOIT CAZALET, ALBANE BURENS & LAURENT CAROZZA

- Close Range Terrestrial Laser Scanning and Photogrammetry for the 3D-
documentation of the Bronze Age Cave “Les Fraux” in Perigord (France). 411

PETRA SCHNEIDHOFER

- 3D Recording of the Stratigraphic Excavation at Steinabrunn, Austria 423

HERWIG ZEINER & SILVIA RUSSEGER

- Imdas pro 4.0 – Presentation of Cultural Data in Modern Design 429

- List of Authors 435
-

- Sponsors 469
-

Preface



The mineral resources of the Alps attracted mankind since early prehistory and gave distinction to extensive swaths of land in the Alps still visible today. The investigation of the history of mineral extraction is a fascinating subject of research and its understanding demands knowledge in natural sciences. This becomes evident right from the onset of mining research in the Alps. Remembering the pioneers in this field Georg Kyrle was a geologist, Ernst Preuschen and Karl Zschocke were miners and Matthäus Much had a strong interest in natural sciences which discloses the importance of interdisciplinarity since the beginnings of mining history.

Mining, in particular metal production had a sustainable impact on social, cultural and economic systems of the Alps. All in all, mining activities lead to the development of specific mining landscapes which are seen as a specific category of the Cultural Landscape today. For a better understanding of these mining landscapes and the determinants of mining in the Alps the Special Research Program (SFB) “HiMAT - The History of Mining Activities in the Tyrol and Adjacent Areas: Impact on Environment and Human Societies” was established at Innsbruck University to study the socio-economic and environmental determinative factors for the rise and decline of Alpine mining districts in an interdisciplinary network. Such an integrative approach copes with modern research standards. Since the establishment of the SFB in 2007 the huge added value of interdisciplinary networking became obvious very quickly, although not without a process of learning how to communicate with other disciplines and how to use the benefits most efficiently. After three years research we decided that the time was due for a presentation of our results and a broader discussion on a European scale. Thus, the SFB HiMAT hosted the Mining in European History-Conference at Innsbruck University.


Remembering the conference, the most prominent impression is that our interdisciplinary research project HiMAT really gained momentum from the discussions and interactions between the different disciplines. From what we have heard, this holds also true for most of the participants of the conference. With this conference transcript, we want to keep this momentum

going and make the knowledge and insights presented at the conference available in a written form.

For the first time, the European in History-Conference hosted an assemblage of scientist from all disciplines involved with ancient mining on a European scale. More than 150 scientists from 15 nations have attended the conference. Contributions included archaeological, palaeoecological, geological, geographical historical, ethnological, linguistic and technical aspects of ancient mining activities and ongoing research on these topics providing the current state of the art in these fields. Comparisons between different mining districts or between different phases of mining activities described in the 60+ contributions will hopefully encourage the detection of common patterns, foster new findings, raise new perspectives and questions and contribute to new interdisciplinary cooperations. Therefore we have included a list of authors of this conference transcript at the end along with contact information and brief description of the field of expertise.

We are very grateful to all authors who contributed to this volume, as well as to all sponsors who have supported the SFB HiMAT and the Mining in European History Conference. Last but not least, the positive feedback encouraged us to repeat the “Mining in Euroean History-Conference” in 2012, and we are looking forward to see you in Innsbruck.

On behalf of the editors,



A.Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Klaus Oegg

Innsbruck, June 2010

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