
Iron is one of the most significant metal commodities and its discovery had a decisive impact on the development of human history – thus a whole prehistoric era is called by its name. From the first millennium BC on, iron virtually permeated all spheres of ancient life, either as a material for weapons and tools or as a currency. Furthermore, those who mastered the iron working were, according to the written sources, highly esteemed in ancient societies; the tales of the first inventor – Prometheus – are excellent examples of this phenomenon.

It is therefore the main aim of this seminar to draft a development of the iron technology in ancient Greece from its beginning in the 11th century BC to the time of the Alexander the Great: that means first to reconstruct the production and consumption of iron and in next step to clarify the social context of the metallurgy and their masters – the smiths. The data gathered from the latest excavations of metal-working installations at various sites in the Aegean – in particular in Turkey (e.g. Klazomenai/İskele, Phokaia/Foça) – together with the technological and material analysis of the metal findings from ancient settlements, sanctuaries or necropolis provide a fresh insight into the meaning of the technological knowledge within the specific cultural setting of ancient times.