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Editorial

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As I write this, 2022 is nearing its halfway point and I am strongly anticipating seeing many of you in person for the first time since 2019 at the Budapest annual meeting. It has been a long strange two years—and much of the disruption remains ongoing—but I hope we are learning to live and thrive in our changed world. In this issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology*, we feature six articles covering the sweep of prehistory, from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age and from Anatolia and the Great Hungarian Plain in the east to Iberia in the west and Scandinavia in the north.

Baykara and colleagues start this issue with an extensive and detailed discussion of Lower Palaeolithic occupation evidence from eastern Anatolia. Both regional survey and excavation revealed the presence of Acheulian lithic production, including Levallois and non-Levallois technologies, which they dated, using cosmogenic dating techniques, to *ca.* 300,000 years ago. They rightly argue that Anatolia, as a geographical crossroads between regions and continents, seems likely to furnish further evidence for early hominin occupation; and multi-scalar research such as they carried out is an approach well adapted to identifying and contextualizing it.

Moving into the Mesolithic, we have an excellent example of archival archaeology from Peyroteo-Stjerna and colleagues. They critically re-evaluate a newly accessed series of excavation photographs of shell midden burials from southern Portugal, using a taphonomic lens. Following principles of archaeothanatology, they compare the archival photographic evidence with experimental decomposition data and come to the conclusion that the interred individuals may have been intentionally mummified. A warning for readers: some of the photographs in this article document the decomposition of human remains and might not mix well with meals.

Remaining in Iberia, Cardoso and colleagues detail several recent finds of Early Neolithic crouched inhumations with necked vessels uncovered during salvage excavations in Portugal. They argue that these sites suggest that earlier finds of seemingly isolated necked vessels in western Iberia may well have been part of until-now unrecognized funerary assemblages. Due to the acidic soils in which these vessels were found, no human remains would have survived; and pit burials without megalithic architecture are unlikely to have been recognized as burial sites by the non-archaeologists who recovered most of the vessels. This is an exciting hypothesis and one sure to be tested by future archaeologists.

Shifting eastwards, Siklósi and colleagues develop a multi-scalar approach to the interpretation of Copper Age data from the Great Hungarian Plain. This approach allows them to develop a rich picture of life and social practice, based on the excavation and analysis of material from a settlement and its adjacent cemetery. They highlight the ways

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the two assemblages complement each other, yet give strikingly different pictures of the artefacts available to people at the time. They conclude that traditional typological analysis would, in this instance, have obscured the contemporaneity of the sites—and even of specific burials within the cemetery; and they encourage other researchers to use this case study as inspiration to construct more bottom-up archaeological models, rather than relying on top down generalising categories.

We continue our focus on settlement evidence as we move forward in time to the Scandinavian Late Bronze Age. Through careful excavation and recording, Earle and colleagues have developed a close study of daily life at a small Late Bronze Age farm in northern Jutland. They look at a variety of evidence for technologies practiced on site and distribution of materials and conclude that this was a self-sufficient farm where subsistence activities were supplemented by opportunistic amber gathering along the nearby coast. This is a superb example of the ways detailed, small-scale archaeology informs us not just about daily life but also feeds into our large models of regional interaction and supra-regional trade and exchange.

Our final article in this issue returns us to Iberia where Liceras-Garrido explores gendered practices in the Later Iron Age of the Meseta. Despite an emphasis on masculine practices and flashing swords in the literature about the period, Liceras-Garrido finds ample material to reconstruct elements of women's lives and practices. She brings together evidence from architecture, funerary rites, and texts to argue that women held key roles managing households and wealth, especially in the absence of male relatives who left the region to work as mercenaries. She explores how these arenas of agency flowed into and existed alongside other power dynamics in the Late Iron Age Iberian world.

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