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# Editorial

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The *EJA* has always had a strong publishing profile in the Bronze Age, especially in northern and western Europe. Many editors (myself included!) have been northwest European prehistorians, and we have published some truly foundational work on the European Bronze Age. That being said, European archaeology is vastly more diverse than barrows, round houses, and even my beloved lithic daggers. Over the last decade, the editorial team has worked hard to cultivate authors and readers whose work and interests cover the spectrum of European–or, perhaps better, west Eurasian–archaeology and heritage of all periods. In that light, I consider this issue a spectacular success story. Of the five research articles collected, the furthest west discusses Middle Bronze Age Greece and two address the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic. These five articles are accompanied by two excellent and thoughtful reviews.

The issue starts with Karahan and Arslan's analysis of open air lithic scatters dating to the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic at Biber Deresi in western coastal Anatolia. Due to complex local geomorphological conditions, a discontinuous topography of dense lithic scatters is visible as surface scatters in this region. Karahan and Arslan suggest that these lithic scatters represent areas of secondary deposition revealed by erosion. They identify a range of lithic types and reduction processes, including considerable evidence for retouching, which leads them to assign the assemblage primarily to the Acheulean, with some potential Middle Palaeolithic material also present. Given much lower sea levels at this time, Biber Deresi would not have been coastal, but part of a wider landscape connected to the present island of Lesvos, and a key geographical region linking Asia and Europe.

Remaining in the Palaeolithic, but moving eastwards, Golovanova and colleagues reassess a considerable amount of material previously assigned to the Zagros Mousterian in order to develop a new overview of the Middle Palaeolithic in the broader Caucasus region. Through their reanalysis of historically and recently excavated lithic material, they identify three regional variants, with distinct technological developments and trajectories. They conclude that, although the Neanderthals who made this material were evidently in contact with others far beyond the region, they nevertheless developed and maintained a locally specific set of practices and technologies.

Moving forward in time, Opriș explores the emergence of spread of grog tempering in late sixth and early fifth millennium Romania. Layering data from microscopy, macroscopic analysis, and GIS modelling, Opriș argues that the practice of grog tempering emerged in the Balkans and gradually spread north and east through interpersonal contact and social learning. The persistence of grog tempering over at least five centuries indicates, to him, both social continuity and the importance of local identities linked to the

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production and use of ceramics. Beyond functional arguments, he hints that grog may have represented this continuity or kinship with previous generations through processes of recycling.

Sticking with ceramics, Hale and Sterba employ neutron activation analysis of late third and early second millennium ceramics from Mitrou, Greece, to better understand regional patterns of production and exchange during the Middle Bronze Age (MBA). Their assemblage consisted of 112 sherds of various tablewares from a range of contexts dating to all phases of the MBA of Mitrou. They identify considerable complexity in the assemblage, including a surprising lack of ceramics produced in the site's immediate hinterlands and abundant evidence of contacts with various sites and places around the Euboean Gulf, both local and more distant. They see chronological shifts within these complex patterns of contact, including a more regional or maritime focus to Mitrou's exchange networks in the later MBA.

The final research article in this issue takes us back to central Eurasia and into the Middle Ages, where Franklin and Babajanyan consider the way places accumulate knowledge through a study of AD tenth to fifteenth century Silk Road sites around Vayots Dzor, Armenia. To understand this landscape, they combine their own archaeological study with data drawn from a thirteenth-century history of the region and nineteenth- and twentieth-century travellers' accounts of the landscape. This complex methodology allows them to bring no longer extant sites and inscriptions into dialogue with the preserved archaeological record, and, at the same time, to consider how local knowledge about these sites has developed and changed over centuries. What they find are multiple overlapping processes of meaning-making that articulate throughout the landscape of this region.

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