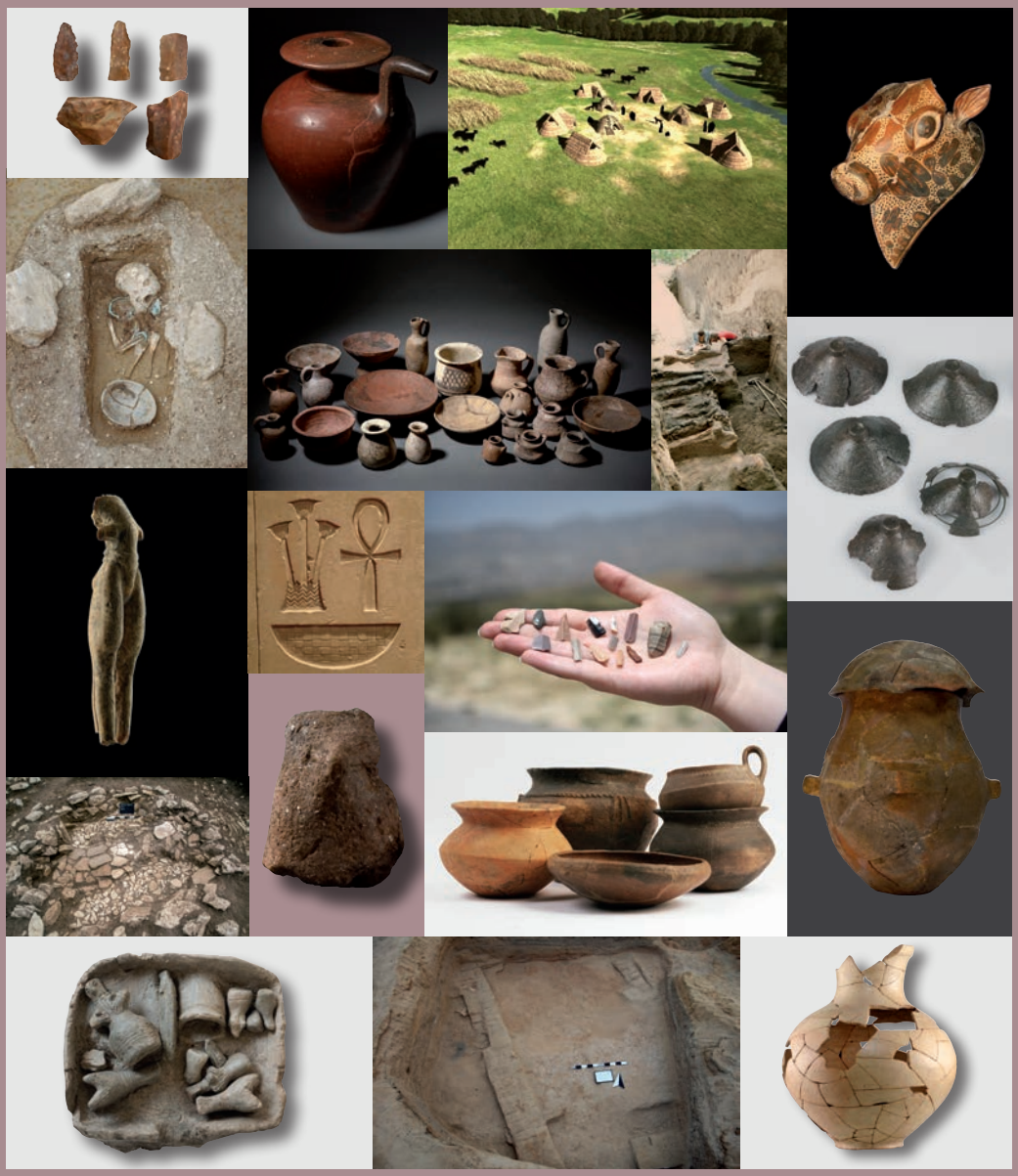
AUSTRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE



PREHISTORY & WEST ASIAN/NORTHEAST AFRICAN ARCHAEOLOGY 2021–2023

Barbara Horejs – Ulrike Schuh (eds.)

ÖAW

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INTRODUCTION

Barbara Horejs



1 Map of research projects of the Department of Prehistory & West Asian/Northeast African Archaeology during the report period 2021–2023 (© ÖAW-ÖAI, M. Börner)

RESEARCH AREAS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PREHISTORY & WEST ASIAN/NORTHEAST AFRICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

The long-established research of Prehistory & West Asian/Northeast African archaeology (the former Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology, OREA) at the Austrian Academy of Sciences was transformed into a department of the »new« Austrian Archaeological Institute (OeAI) at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in 2021. This merging of several institutes into the new OeAI offers a wide range of new opportunities for basic and interdisciplinary research, which support the traditional research focus as well as the development of new projects in world archaeology.

The research areas of the Department of Prehistory & West Asian/Northeast African Archaeology include Quaternary archaeology, Prehistory, Near Eastern archaeology and Egyptology. The groups cover an essential cultural area of prehistoric and early historical developments in Europe, Northeast Africa and West Asia. Prehistory is embedded in the world archaeology concept without geographical borders, including projects beyond this core zone, as well as a scientific and interdisciplinary approach. The focus lies in the time horizon from the Pleistocene about 2.6 million years ago to the transformation of societies into historical epochs in the 1st millennium BC. The chronological expertise of the groups covers the periods Palaeolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. The archaeology of West Asia and Northeast Africa is linked to the Mediterranean and Europe, which enables large-scale and chronologically broad basic research on human history. The department consists of the following seven groups: »Quaternary Archaeology«, »Prehistoric Phenomena«, »Prehistoric Identities«, »Archaeology in Egypt and Sudan«, »Archaeology of the Levant«, »Mediterranean Economies« and »Urnfield Culture Networks«. The groups conduct fieldwork and material analyses in Austria, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Greece, Cyprus, Türkiye, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Sudan and South Africa.


Thomas Einwögerer


Barbara Horejs


Katharina Rebay-Salisbury

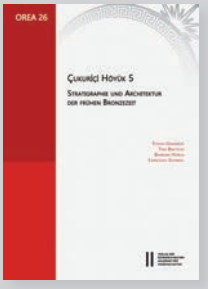

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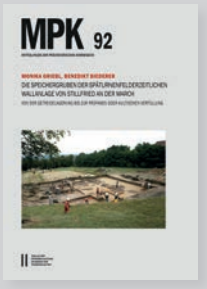
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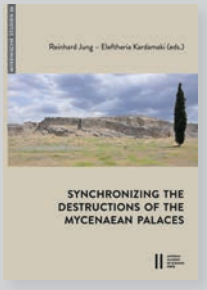
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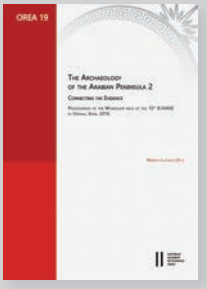
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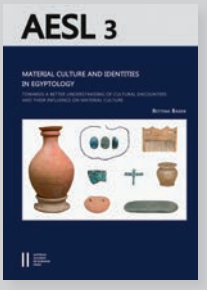


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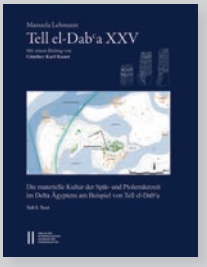
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QUATERNARY ARCHAEOLOGY

Thomas Einwögerer

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QUATERNARY ARCHAEOLOGY

The investigation of Pleistocene and early Holocene hunter-gatherer societies and their environments is the principal topic of the »Quaternary Archaeology« research group. The emphasis is on the adaptation and innovation of technological and socio-economic concepts by Upper Palaeolithic hunter-gatherers against the background of the climatic and environmental developments of the Pleistocene. Consequently, the group's investigations include the study of collections and documentation of previous excavations, but rely more substantially on new field projects carried out in the loess sediments along the major river systems. Geographically, the focus lies on open air sites in the mid-Danubian region and northeastern Romania in the time between 40,000 and 15,000 years before present.

In Austria ongoing research is conducted at Kammern-Grubgraben, Kamegg, and Langenlois, as well as several smaller initiatives in Vienna, Burgenland, and Styria. These include techno-typology, zooarchaeology and subsistence, raw material studies, physical anthropology, aDNA, 3D GIS photogrammetry, isotopic studies, and environmental investigations. The data collected and produced is integrated in the Austrian Quaternary Sites database, and enables a comparison of regional and supra-regional cultural developments with climatic and environmental changes in the last glacial cycle.

In 2019, the research group expanded into northeast Romania, where field investigations at Bistricioara-Lutărie, Ceahlău-Scaune, Dolhasca and Cotu Miculinți are being carried out in cooperation with the Valahia University of Târgoviște. The main focus is an assessment of diachronic occupation patterns of Upper to Final Palaeolithic hunter-gatherer groups along and between major river systems in the eastern Carpathians and the Moldavian plateau (e.g. Bistrita, Siret, Prut). Starting in 2022, two new research areas have been added in South Africa and Israel, both focusing on human-climate interaction and lithic technological development in the timeframes around 90,000 (South Africa) and 40,000–20,000 years before present (Israel). The focus of the South African project is on three well-documented sites, namely Bushman Rock Shelter (Limpopo), Sibhudu Cave (KwaZulu-Natal) and Rose Cottage Cave (Free State). The Israeli research includes reassessments of formerly excavated assemblages from Hayonim Cave, Kebara Cave and others, as well as participation in new fieldwork projects such as Emireh and Manot Caves.





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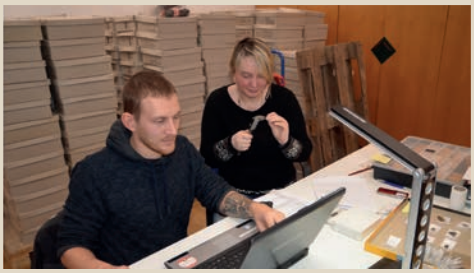


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Captions / Photo credits



1. 3D photogrammetry for a Palaeolithic exhibition, Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
2. Overview of the excavation at Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
3. Primary deposit of different flint varieties in stratigraphic sequence, Middle Prut area, Romania (photo: M. Händel, © OeAW-OeAI)
4. Recovery of a Gravettian double burial, Krems-Wachtberg, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
5. Aerial photo of the rockshelter Teufelsrast Felsdach, Lower Austria (photo: I. Petschko, © OeAW-OeAI)
6. Excavation team, Rose Cottage Cave, South Africa (photo: V. Schmid, © OeAW-OeAI)
7. Gravettian burial of monozygotic twins with adornments, Krems-Wachtberg, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
8. Assessing and sampling of the loess sequence with Upper Palaeolithic find layers, Dolhasca Dealul Viei II, Romania (photo: M. Händel, © OeAW-OeAI)
9. Field evaluation of a drilling core, Kamegg, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
10. Working on Palaeolithic material with students from the University of Vienna at the Krems Branch, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
11. Upper Palaeolithic stone slab construction, possible meat cache, Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: H. Parow-Souchon, © OeAW-OeAI)
12. Stone layer of the Archaeological Horizon (AH) 2, Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: H. Parow-Souchon, © OeAW-OeAI)
13. Excavating a possible meat cache, Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)
14. Photo documentation of the excavations at Emireh Cave, Israel, (photo: N. Gubenko, © IAA)
15. Drone shot of a Palaeolithic stone slab construction, Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: M. Händel, © OeAW-OeAI)
16. Sampling the excavation profiles for geoarchaeological analyses, Dolní Věstonice I, Czech Republic (photo: M. Händel, © OeAW-OeAI)
17. Uncovering a piece of jewellery (*Conus*), Kammern-Grubgraben, Lower Austria (photo: T. Einwögerer, © OeAW-OeAI)

PREHISTORIC PHENOMENA

Barbara Horejs

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PREHISTORIC PHENOMENA

The »Prehistoric Phenomena« group investigates the fundamental changes in human models of society and life that can be observed from the early Holocene to the beginning of the Metal Ages (c. 10th to 3rd millennium BC) in the area from West Asia to Southeast Europe. Our focus is the first sedentary and/or agricultural communities in the Neolithic, their dispersal, socio-cultural structures, and technological and innovative processes that shaped Neolithic societies and new cultural horizons in the following millennia. The timing of this Neolithization varies regionally, starting between c. 9500 and 6000 calBC. In order to understand these fundamental changes, our analyses include distinct socio-cultural phenomena in the formation of early proto-urban communities during the Copper and Early Bronze Ages. The phenomena of Neolithization and intensification, centralization, resource management, technologies, innovations, communications and exchange networks are our key focus and are investigated within a broad geographical and cross-cultural framework. Our areas of investigation include Western Anatolia and parts of the Fertile Crescent (Iran, Türkiye), the Levant (Lebanon, Jordan), the Arabian Peninsula (United Arab Emirates), the Aegean (Greece) and the Balkans (Serbia, North Macedonia, Bulgaria).

The main activities in Neolithic research in the years 2021 to 2023 related to excavations in southern Serbia at the Svinjarička Čuka site. A sequence of several occupation layers associated with the Starčevo horizons and with the first solid architecture in the region was recovered and radiocarbon dated (6100–5500 calBC). These remains of farming pioneers in the central Balkans offer a new insight into the early Neolithic dispersal into Europe. Aside from the already established studies on raw materials, ceramics, lithics and all other categories of material culture, a new micro-archaeological pilot study including aDNA, micromorphology, isotopes, radiocarbon modelling, archaeobotany, starch, phytoliths and ground stone use wear has been initiated, aiming at a new understanding of different modes of living among the first sedentary pioneers. A new approach summarized as ›Multispecies Neolithization‹ has been initiated. The long-term research is funded by the FWF, the Austrian Embassy in Belgrade, the OeAD and HEAS. First results are presented in the Visualizing the Unknown Balkans movie, booklet and ongoing exhibition. Further Neolithic studies dealt with materials from Çukuriçi and contextual analyses of excavated data and radiocarbon modelling in Türkiye, green amulets »Crossing the Neolithic Balkans« in Bulgaria, arrowhead use-wear analyses in SW Asia and the final publication of the Platia Magoula Zarkou in Greece. Lithic raw material analyses and resource management studies for the central Zagros Mountain region (Iran) have been conducted. New projects on the social structures and kinship of Neolithic societies have been initiated. The excavations at the Bronze Age harbour site of Kalba (Sharjah, UAE) were continued, accompanied by raw material surveys.



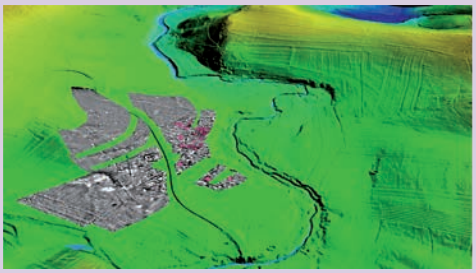




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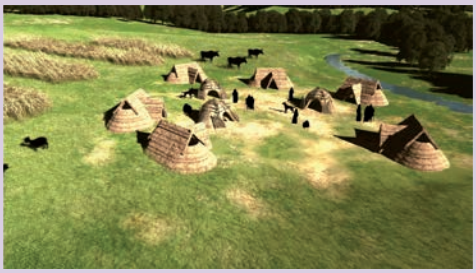
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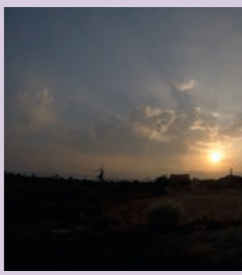






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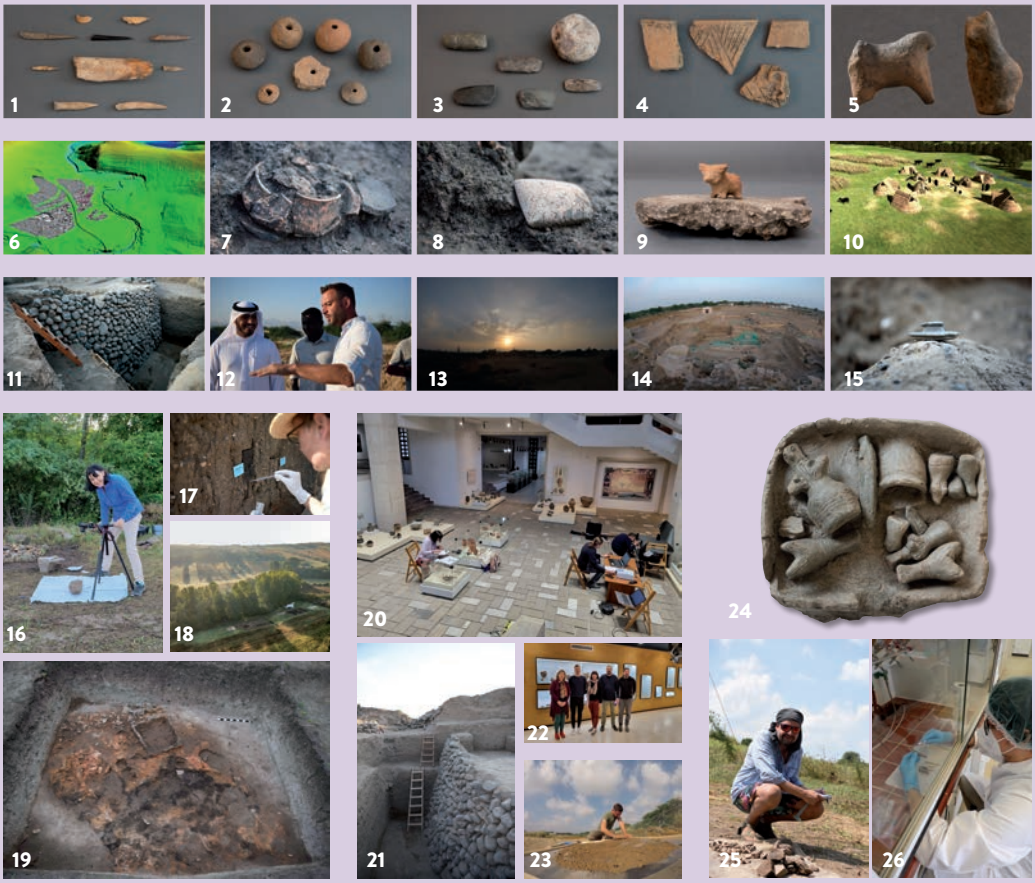
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Captions / Photo credits



1. Neolithic bone tools (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
2. Neolithic spindle whorls, Svinjarička Čuka (photos: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
3. Neolithic stone tools, Svinjarička Čuka (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
4. Neolithic pottery, Svinjarička Čuka (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
5. Neolithic clay figurines, Svinjarička Čuka (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
6. Results of the geophysics survey at the Neolithic settlement of Svinjarička Čuka (image: Eastern Atlas)
7. Neolithic Bowl, Starčevo type, Svinjarička Čuka (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
8. Stone axe in situ within a Neolithic structure (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
9. Neolithic bovine figurine, Svinjarička Čuka (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
10. Reconstruction of the Neolithic settlement from Svinjarička Čuka (reconstruction of the research results by 7Reasons)
11. Bronze Age Wall in Kalba (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
12. C. Schwall with cooperation partners – Kalba Excavations (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
13. Sunset in Kalba (U.A.E., © OeAW-OeAI) (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
14. Overview photo, Kalba Excavations (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
15. Detail of a lid, Kalba Excavations (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
16. L. Dietrich documenting grinding stones in Svinjarička Čuka (photo: B. Horejs, © OeAW-OeAI)

17. Micromorphology sampling by L. Webster (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
18. Surrounding landscape at Svinjarička Čuka (photo: M. Börner, © OeAW-OeAI)
19. Svinjaricka Cuka's "burnt house" dating to the early Neolithic (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
20. Members of the PP-group documenting finds in the Museum of Kazanlak, Bulgaria (photo: D. Melman)
21. Trenches along the Kalba wall. The site is situated close to the Gulf of Oman (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
22. Visit of the new museum in Krumovgrad, Bulgaria by team members (photo: Museum staff, © OeAW-OeAI)
23. C. Schwall sieving the desert sand for finds (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
24. House model from Platia Magoula Zarkou, Greece (model: M. Börner, © OeAW-OeAI)
25. M. Brandl analysing stones at Svinjarička Čuka (photo: F. Ostmann, © OeAW-OeAI)
26. O. A. R. Haro sampling bone tools from Serbia (photo: D. Wieser, © OeAW-OeAI)

PREHISTORIC IDENTITIES

Katharina Rebay-Salisbury

Team

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PREHISTORIC IDENTITIES

»Prehistoric Identities« emerge from the interaction between humans, animals, plants, material culture and landscapes. Aspects of how people saw themselves and others include age, sex and gender, descent, social relationships, ethnicity, status and religion. Many of these aspects are inextricably linked to the human body, through which the world is experienced and which is the biological basis of existence.

The research group »Prehistoric Identities« is embarking on a new way of identity research that discusses contextual information on an equal footing with bioarchaeological data. Increasingly, the analysis of human bones and teeth focuses on individual life histories of prehistoric persons, with the help of the latest scientific methods. Detailed osteological analyses allow the reconstruction of biographies, including stress events and traumas, and form the basis for reconstructing health and nutrition. Examinations of human genetic material reveal relationship patterns, lineages and genetic origin. Isotope analyses provide valuable information about nutrition, mobility and migration. Bioarchaeological data form the basis of the third science revolution in archaeology, and in combination with established archaeological methods, are currently revolutionizing research into prehistoric identities.

Material culture is, however, also directly involved in the creation and maintenance of identities; it serves to express identities, for instance through choices of dress and jewellery, and to categorize people. Recording and interpreting artefacts, their spatial distribution and chronological development is one of the core competences of archaeology. The archaeological context in its temporal and cultural depth now needs to be reemphasized.

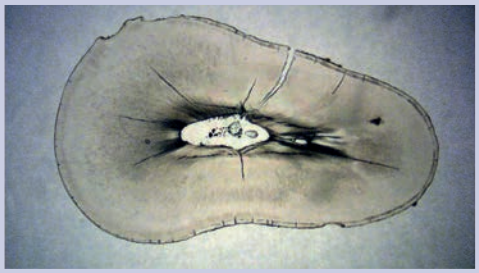
Initially based on Katharina Rebay-Salisbury's ERC Starting Grant project »The Value of Mothers to Society«, which examined how female identity changes through motherhood, the group explores themes such as sex and gender, kinship, marriage patterns and genetic relationships. Mobility and migration, as well as the experience of being a foreigner, represent a further research focus. Case studies from Austria and neighbouring countries form the foundation of a contextualization of these themes within European prehistory.

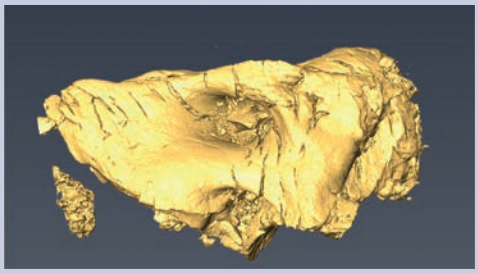
More than ever, a detailed examination of all aspects of identity, as they develop over time, intersect and influence each other, allows us to understand the human experience in prehistory, while at the same time allowing us to explore the archaeological record in a new light.

The research group provides a discussion forum for OeAI researchers generally interested in using both biological and cultural indicators to capture individual and group identities, which comprises researchers studying all chronological and geographic areas.

The group maintains collaborations with national institutions such as the Museum of Natural History Vienna, the forensic medicine departments in Vienna and Innsbruck, the University of Vienna and its HEAS (Human Evolution and Archaeological Sciences) platform, and engages in an active network of scholars within Europe.





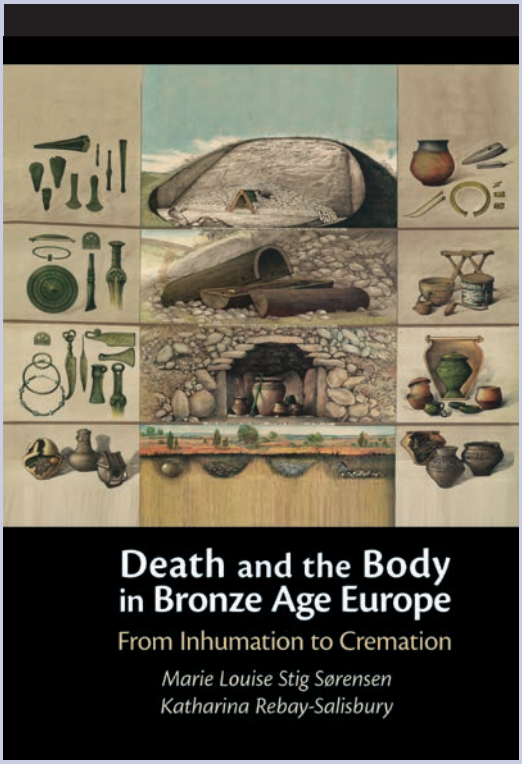


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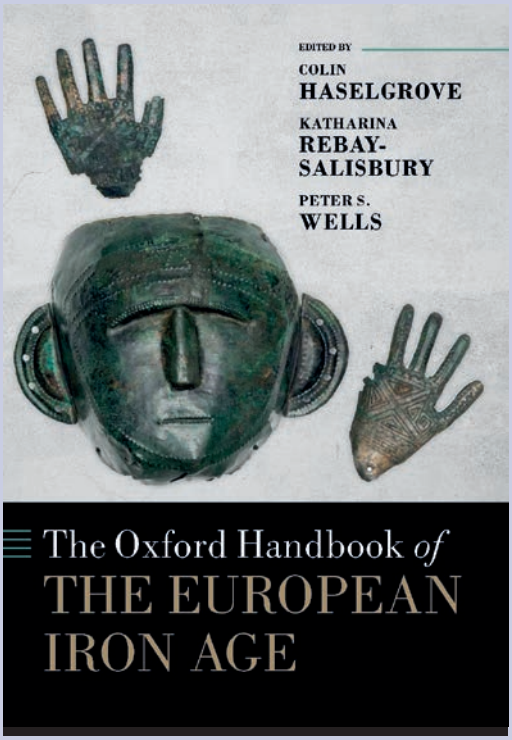
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PLANUM 5


Death and the Body
in Bronze Age Europe
From Inhumation to Cremation
Marie Louise Stig Sørensen
Katharina Rebay-Salisbury






EDITED BY
COLIN
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The Oxford Handbook of
THE EUROPEAN
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protein biology

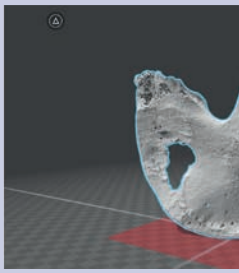
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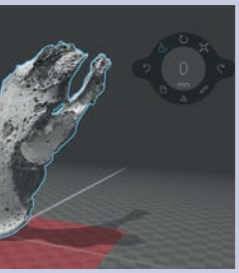
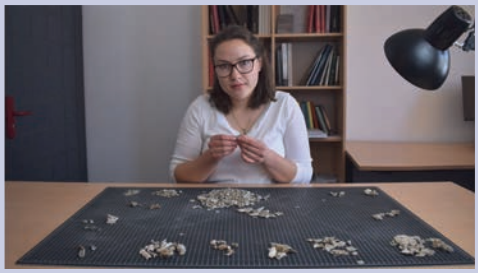




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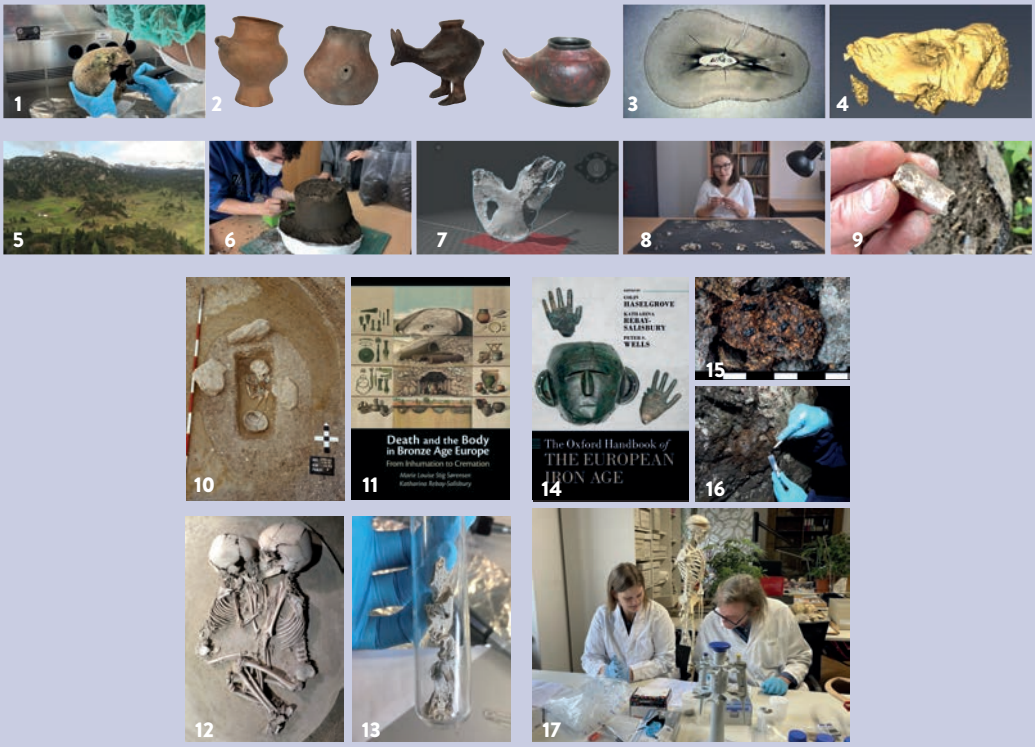
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1 Anja Furtwängler takes aDNA samples (photo: K. Rebay-Salisbury, © OeAW-OeAI)

2. Bronze and Iron age feeding vessels (photo: K. Rebay-Salisbury, © OeAW-OeAI)

3. Thin section of a dental root (photo: F. Kanz, © MedUni Vienna)

4. Micro CT scan of a cremated petrous bone from Inzersdorf (image: L. Waltenberger, © OeAW-OeAI)

5. Grafenbergalm (photo: P, Scholz, © DAI)

6. Excavating a Late Bronze Age urn from St. Pölten (photo: K. Rebay-Salisbury, © OeAW-OeAI)

7. 3D scan of a pelvic bone (image: K. Rebay-Salisbury, © OeAW-OeAI)

8. Domnika Verdianu examining cremated human remains (photo: L. Waltenberger, © OeAW-OeAI)

9. Cremated remains from an Iron Age urn from Berg (photo: P. Psota, © OeAW-OeAI)

10. Bronze Age child burial from Franzhausen II (photo/©: Federal Monuments Office, Vienna)

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13. Cremated petrous bones prepared for CT scanning (photo: L. Waltenberger, © OeAW-OeAI)

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15. Excrements from the Hallstatt salt mines (photo/©: ANWORA-NHM)

16. Sampling excrements in the Hallstatt salt mines (photo/©: ANWORA-NHM)

17. Hannah Skerjanz and Fabian Kanz taking peptide samples at the NHM Vienna (photo: K. Rebay-Salisbury, © OeAW-OeAI)

ARCHAEOLOGY IN EGYPT AND SUDAN

Bettina Bader

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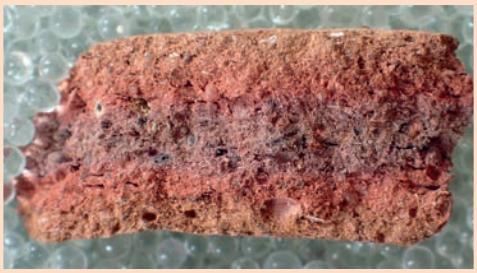
ARCHAEOLOGY IN EGYPT AND SUDAN

The investigation of the material, cultural and social foundations of past societies (both with and without writing) in Egypt and Sudan from prehistory to beyond the end of pharaonic times forms the focus of the research group »Archaeology in Egypt and Sudan«. Research concentrates on the interpretation of material culture, its contribution as an equivalent source to texts and pictorial evidence, but notably also on fieldwork hosted by the Egyptian government and publication in multiple national and international cooperations.

The combination of an early literate society with a rich artistic legacy and the favourable state of preservation of relics of material culture places Egyptologists in a privileged position for reconstructing the history of its inhabitants. Material culture comprises an extensive body of evidence, much of which remains understudied. Thus, the systematic study of material culture from Egyptian settlements and cemeteries to obtain relevant data for the reconstruction of several aspects of socio-economic and cultural history is a main goal. This includes insights into the daily life and death of elite and non-élite people as well as into local histories and regional developments in order to gain a more emic-informed, pluralistic view of ancient Egyptian culture and the society that created it. We also look to neighbouring areas in order to overcome the still widespread bias of Egypt being perceived as a culturally isolated society. Working with material from both ongoing excavations and museum collections across the world, the work is based on modern theoretical approaches to material culture. Using modern recording methods and analyses when possible, a bottom-up approach to Egyptian history is promoted and the somewhat neglected study of objects given a boost. There is no specific limit in terms of period or object class, but any object is set within its context and therefore in a wider interpretational framework.

Research at the OeAI Cairo Branch covers the Pharaonic and Roman periods as well as modern Egypt, from the Delta in Lower Egypt to the First Cataract in Upper Egypt. Long-term excavations are conducted in Tell el-Dabᶜa (since 1966) and in Kom Ombo (since 2017). Further short-term field investigations take place in Hisn al Bab and Aswan. The Kom Ombo project – co-financed by the Austrian Science Fund – researches the development of the Upper Egyptian city of Kom Ombo from the Early Dynastic period to the 19th century AD.

Thus, alongside a multiregional approach, the research group also embraces an increasingly diachronic framework. Additional goals include the processing and publication of some aspects of the excavations at Tell el-Dabᶜa, as well as the maintenance, standardization and collation of existing analogue and digital archives of that site, providing a basis for further research.


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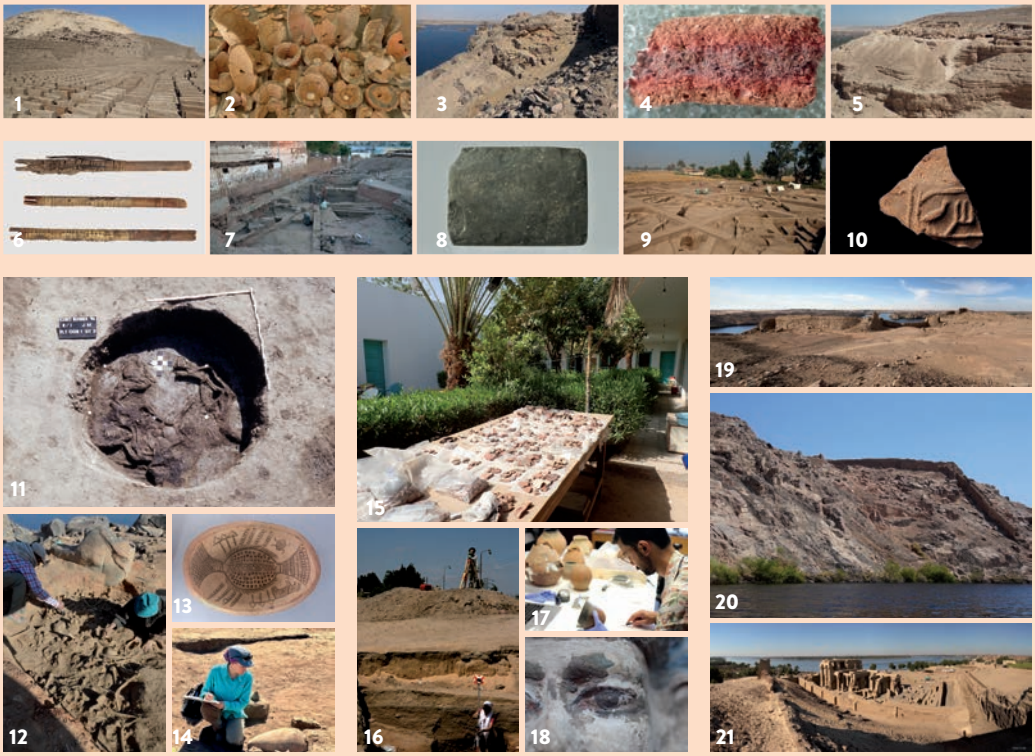
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1. Deir el Ballas, Reconstruction work at the South Palace by The Egypt Heritage and Archaeology Fund (photo/©: B. Bader)
2. Bases of closed vessels with holes in their bases, Tell el-Dabᶜa (photo/©: B. Bader)
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4. Section of a Nile clay fabric from Tell el-Dabᶜa (photo/©: B. Bader)
5. Deir el-Bersha, North Hill (photo/©: B. Bader)
6. Arrows from Area 9, Hisn el-Bab (photo: P. Rose, © OeAW-OeAI)
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8. Rectangular balance weight from late Middle Kingdom settlement layers, Tell el-Dabᶜa (photo: A. Krause, © OeAW-OeAI)
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15. Sorting out pottery at Dayr al-Barsha (photo/©: B. Bader)
16. Surveying at Tell el-Retaba (photo/©: R. Rábeková)
17. Aaron de Souza documenting pottery at Uppsala (photo/©: A. de Souza)
18. Close up of Ushabti of Renseneb, Brussels, E3228 (photo/©: B. Bader)
19. Hisn el-Bab (photo: P. Rose, © OeAW-OeAI)
20. Hisn el-Bab, fort, view from the Nile to the west (photo: P. Rose, © OeAW-OeAI)
21. Kom Ombo (photo: N. Gail, © OeAW-OeAI)

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE LEVANT

Felix Höflmayer

Team

Felix Höflmayer (head)
Katharina Streit
Agnes Woitzuck

Assoziiert

Lyndelle Webster





ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE LEVANT

The research group »Archaeology of the Levant« examines the development of societies from the sedentarization in the Neolithic, covering the emergence of the first urban centres in the Early Bronze Age, the ›first globalization‹ of trade and political contacts in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages to the emergence of the Israelite kingdoms in the Iron Age and their absorption into larger empires (c. 10,000–586 BC).

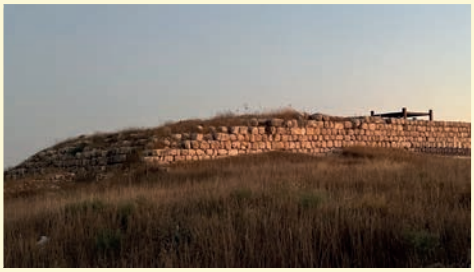
Since 2017, the research group has been carrying out the Austrian excavations at Tel Lachish, one of the major Bronze and Iron Age sites of Israel, under the direction of Katharina Streit and Felix Höflmayer. Current excavations are focusing on the development from the Middle to the Late Bronze Ages in Area S and the excavation of the Middle Bronze Age palace and the potential Iron Age water system (Area P). Additionally, the research group is exploring different options for digital publication, both of the ongoing excavations and of the extensive excavations of the British Wellcome-Marston-Expedition of the 1930s.

From 2013 to 2016, Katharina Streit conducted five field seasons at the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age site of Ein el-Jarba in the Jezreel Valley (Israel), uncovering architecture and tombs from these periods, as well as the southernmost imported pottery sherds of the Halaf culture. This excavation project is currently in the final stages of publication.

A third major ongoing project focuses on the history of Austrian excavations in the southern Levant that were conducted by the German theologist Ernst Sellin under the auspices of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna. Sellin carried out excavations from 1902 to 1904 at Tell Taʿannek (Taanach), from 1907 to 1909 at Tell es-Sultan (Jericho), and from 1913 to 1914 at Tell Balatah (Shechem). Excavations at Shechem also continued after World War I on behalf of the German Archaeological Institute. While the excavations at Taanach and Jericho have been published, no final report for Shechem exists. Currently the research group is documenting finds from Shechem in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and tracing still existent field documentation in several archives in Israel, Europe, and the United States.

In addition to archaeological fieldwork and publishing legacy data, the research group is also striving to create a scientific absolute chronology for the Bronze and Iron Ages based on radiocarbon data. For this aim, the research groups is cooperating with several ongoing excavation projects throughout Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Lebanon.





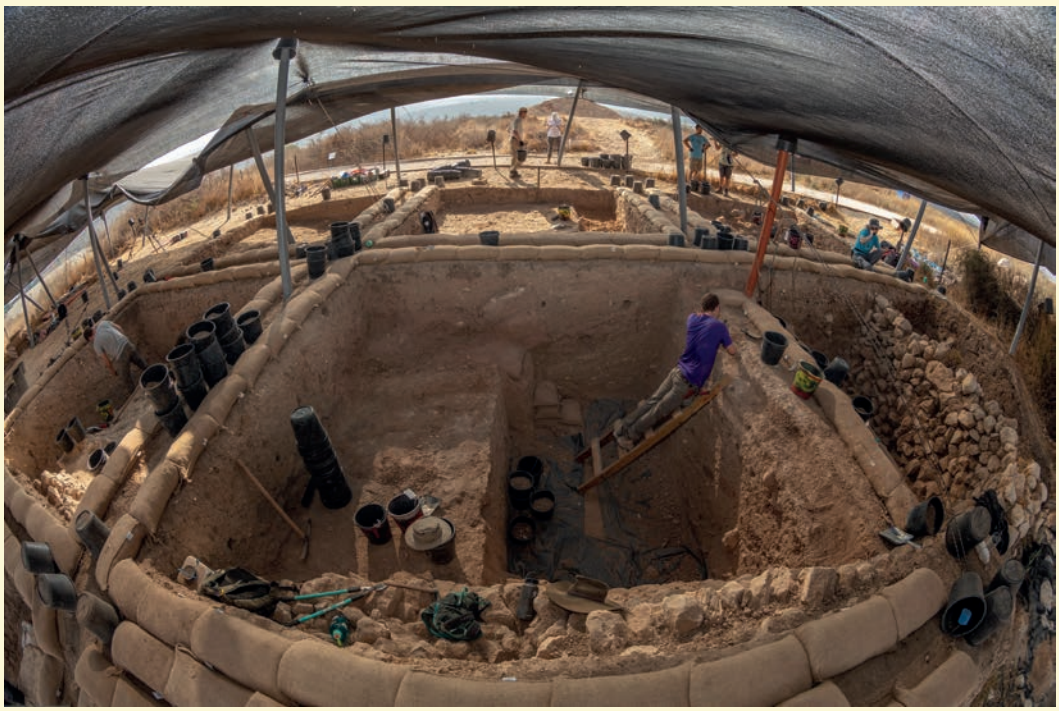
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Captions / Photo credits



1 Tel Lachish excavations (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
2. Neolithic seal (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
3. Tel Lachish from the northeast (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
4. Excavation of a Late Bronze Age pit (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
5. Tel Lachish, Iron Age podium (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
6. Tel Lachish excavations Area P (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
7. Tel Lachish excavations Area P (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
8. Tel Lachish excavations Area P (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
9. Tel Lachish excavations (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
10. Tel Lachish excavations Area P (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
11. Geomagnetic survey, Tel Lachish (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
12. Tel Lachish excavations (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
13. Tel Lachish excavations Area P (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)
14. Tel Lachish from the northeast (photo/©: OeAW-OeAI)

MEDITERRANEAN ECONOMIES

Reinhard Jung

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Reinhard Jung (head)
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Eleftheria Kardamaki
Karin Kopetzky
Michaela Zavadil





MEDITERRANEAN ECONOMIES

Analysing the economy of past societies is fundamental for reconstructing the structures and contradictions that characterized those societies. The research group »Mediterranean Economies« investigates the economic structures and processes of different Bronze Age societies around the Mediterranean by combining a wide array of archaeological, archaeometric and historical approaches.

In Lebanon, K. Kopetzky's Chekka project resumed work in 2022. Together with the University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, core-drillings for geological and environmental analyses were taken at 11 sites in the hinterland of Chekka. In the same year, excavations on Tell Mirhan continued. Along the central wall of the MBA rampart, external buttresses were exposed. In the Iron Age II sector, the so far most recent remains of this settlement were revealed. They seem to date to late Iron Age IIB–C. In addition, possible cedar transport routes from Mount Lebanon to the Bay of Chekka were explored with the help of a forest technician from the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna.

On Cyprus, T. Bürge has worked on the pottery and other material remains from the ongoing excavations at the Late Bronze Age city of Hala Sultan Tekke in the west of the Larnaca Bay area. Within the framework of her project on depositional practices, she has studied artefacts from various ›ritual‹ pits and wells in the burial area of the site. In the east of the Larnaca Bay area, R. Jung supervised the pottery study of the Belgian excavations at Pyla-Kokkinokremos and cooperated with T. Pedrazzi on the numerous Canaanite jars.

In Greece, R. Jung, E. Kardamaki, K. Kaza-Papageorgiou and others investigated the largest known Mycenaean workshop area at Kontopigado south of Athens. This included stratigraphy, architecture, interpretation of the 2020 geophysical survey, study of the pottery and archaeometric investigations such as phytolith analyses on mill stones and organic residue analyses on all classes of pottery.

At Pheneos (Corinthia), M. Zavadil studied the MBA and LBA pottery in the find material, which was provided by K. Kissas in 2019. In the Argolid, M. Zavadil and E. Alram-Stern began work on the publication of the pre-Mycenaean features and finds from K. Demakopoulou's excavations on the Upper Acropolis of Midea. Upon invitation by H. Reschreiter, M. Zavadil participated in firing experiments with handmade pottery at Hallstatt.

In 2021, Jung participated as a cooperation partner of E. Pernicka in his research project on the provenance and distribution of Mycenaean gold (based on minimally invasive portable laser ablation technology).

Since 2022, R. Jung has taken part in a project lead by T. Scarano that focused on the provenance and use of different pottery classes found in the MBA to Final BA settlement of Roca Vecchia (Apulia, Italy). On Sicily, R. Jung started a new cooperation with A. Crispino for investigating a Bronze Age necropolis in the Neapolis of Syracuse in 2023. Geophysical prospection indicated the positions of possible rock-cut chamber tombs.





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1 Geological drilling below Col des Cedres, Lebanon (photo: S. Connor, © OeAW-OeAI)

2. Documentation of Bronze Age tomb in the Neapolis area of Syracuse, Sicily (photo: A. Buhlke)

3. The acropolis of Midea, Greece (photo: M. Zavadil)

4. Geomagnetic survey in the Neapolis area of Syracuse, Sicily (photo: R. Jung)

5. Timber transport survey in Wadi Asfur south of Qnat, Lebanon (photo: K. Kopetzky, © ÖAW/ÖAI)

6. View on the bay of Chekka, Lebanon (photo: Ch. Schwall, © OeAW-OeAI)

7. Topographical survey in the Neapolis area of Syracuse, Sicily (photo/©: A. Buhlke)

8. Pit firing experiment at Hallstatt, Austria (photo/©: M. Zavadil)

9. Paleo-environmental investigations in the Wadi el-Jouz next to Qalaat el-Mseilha, Lebanon (photo: S. Connor, © OeAW-OeAI)

10. Hala Sultan Tekke, Cyprus, pottery deposit in Tomb UU (photo/©: P. M. Fischer/NSCE)

11. Grinding stone from Kontopigado, Attica, Greece (photo/©: K. Kaza-Papageorgiou)

12. Documentation of Bronze Age tomb in the Neapolis area of Syracuse, Sicily (photo: R. Jung)

13. Study of Canaanite jars from Pyla-Kokkinokremos (photo/©: R. Jung)

14. Work on Tell Mirhan, Lebanon (photo: M. Börner, © OeAW-OeAI)

15. Mycenaean workshop area at Kontopigado, Greece (after K. Kaza-Papageorgiou 2016)

URNFIELD CULTURE NETWORKS

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URNFIELD CULTURE NETWORKS

The research group »Urnfield Culture Networks« is committed to the long-term study of the Bronze Age in Central and Southeastern Europe with a special focus on the emergence and spread of the Urnfield Culture (13th–8th centuries BC) and the interactions with neighbouring cultural phenomena. The economic and religious aspects of the Bronze Age are the central topic of various regional studies. In addition to the traditional focus on long-investigated sites in Austria, such as the settlement Stillfried an der March or urn burial grounds Franzhausen- Kokoron and Inzersdorf ob der Traisen, the research group's programme includes field projects and sampling campaigns in Southeast Europe and Italy with the involvement of local specialists and cooperation partners. The ongoing research projects cover a wide range of topics such as burial customs, the emergence of central hilltop settlements, and resource exchange networks. Early career scientists are explicitly supported by the doctoral and master theses dealing with selected questions within the current projects.

One of the highlights over the last years is the publication of the first volume of three comprehensive books by M. Griebl, dealing with different aspects of long-term research at the hilltop site Stillfried in Lower Austria, including storage pits and the economy, fortification and the deposition of animal and human remains within the settlement. Particularly fascinating are the results concerning the deposition of wild animals (wolf, deer, boar), indicating that most of them were kept in captivity.

With several interdisciplinary projects focused on Bronze Age metallurgy, the research group has positioned itself as an international competence centre in this field. Large sampling campaigns of metal objects and subsequent analyses, as well as fieldwork, provided new insights into metal production and copper raw material distribution and exchange networks. In the region of Eastern Serbia, we discovered settlements involved in copper production and associated urn cemeteries of copper producers dating between 2000 and 1600 BC. As our data convincingly demonstrated, after 1600 BC, the copper from the southern Alps (Trentino) entered the region of the Balkans and became the dominant raw material for local bronze production over the next five centuries.

Our excavations at the sites Novo Selo near Bijeljina and Kopilo near Zenica, both located in Bosnia-Herzegovina, brought to light burial grounds from the Bronze and Early Iron Ages showing a variety of mortuary practices. The ongoing in-depth analyses of finds and human remains from both sites will help us to grasp cultural dynamics in the area and elucidate mutual influences and communication within prehistoric Europe.







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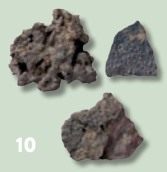
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2. Sampling of the find at the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, Croatia (photo: M. Gavranović, © OeAW-OeAI)
3. View at the site Velika Humska Čuka, South Serbia (photo/©: Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade)
4. Belt buckle with incised decoration, Late Bronze Age, Lipac near Doboj, Bosnia and Herzegovina (photo/©: University of Vienna)
5. Excavations at the site Kopilo near Zenica in 2022, Bosnia and Herzegovina (photo: M. Gavranović, © OeAW-OeAI)
6. View of the site Novo Selo near Bijeljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Copper and Bronze Age burial mound (photo: I. M. Petschko, © OeAW-OeAI)
7. Excavations at the site Banjska Stena, eastern Serbia (photo: I. M. Petschko, © OeAW-OeAI)
8. Excavations at the site Čoka Njica, Eastern Serbia (photo: T. Urban, © OeAW-OeAI)
9. Charred cereal rings from Stillfried an der March, Lower Austria (photo: M. Griebl, © OeAW-OeAI)
10. Different copper slag fragments from the site Trnjane, East Serbia (photo/©: University of Vienna)
11. Burned house remains at the Late Bronze Age site Dolina, Croatia (photo/©: D. Ložnjak Dizdar, Institute of Archaeology in Zagreb)
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13. Sampling of the organic materials in Kopilo near Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina (photo: I. M. Petschko, © OeAW-OeAI)
14. View at the cemetery of Kopilo in 2021, Bosnia and Herzegovina (photo: T. Urban, © OeAW-OeAI)