

# Editorial

## *Corded World*

In the late 19th century, German researchers Friedrich Klopffleisch and, later, Alfred Götze identified a set of archaeological sources they called “schnurkeramische Kultur” (Corded Ware culture). By the turn of the 20th century, this concept had become widespread in many European countries, effectively defining the phenomenon of cultural unification across a vast area in the 3rd millennium BC. In the first decades of the 20th century, Corded Ware finds inspired the development of studies on European prehistory, transcending local geographical and cultural boundaries. They played a key role in the ethnicising concepts of Gustaf Kossinna’s “Siedlungsarchäologie”, as well as in the formulation of the first ideas of interregional scope, presented by Vere Gordon Childe, concerning the key role of steppe migrations in the cultural and demographic changes in European prehistory. It was probably the methods of “Siedlungsarchäologie” that decisively influenced Corded Ware researchers’ commitment to in-depth typological studies characterising individual regions. The history of research on the Final Eneolithic comprises numerous studies that meticulously characterise finds from specific areas and discuss their chronology. The works of, among others, Miroslav Buchvaldek, Peter Vilhelm Glob, Karl Heinz Struve, Jan Machnik, and Mats Malmer established the direction of research for many years, serving as a starting point for subsequent generations of researchers striving to improve the proposed interpretations. They were the quintessence of the spirit of so-called “cultural-historical archaeology”. However, Corded Ware studies did not lose their appeal even in interpretations proposed by new methodological trends in European archaeology, as evidenced in works written in both a processual and postprocessual spirit. They continue to play a leading role today in research inspired by the latest technological advances (including AI and bioarchaeological analyses, primarily those related to ancient DNA studies).

The multitude of authorities and the inherent universality of material studies fostered contacts and collaborations between researchers from various countries. In the second half of the 20th century, the “Schnurkeramik Symposiums”, meetings of Corded Ware specialists from multiple regions, became a phenomenon. The last such symposium, organised by Palle Siemen, took place in Esbjerg, Denmark, in

1994. A continuation of the legacy of these meetings was the “Corded Days in Kraków” conference, organised in Kraków in 2011. This was the last major gathering of specialists in Corded Ware studies to date. This 63rd volume of *Archaeologia Polona*, titled *Corded World. Final Eneolithic societies* contains six articles, which are modified versions of the presentations delivered at that time. The contents of other papers published in this volume also remain in the spirit of the “Schnurkeramik Symposium”. They present various issues related to the Final Eneolithic, including the publication of new materials, new chronological studies, and detailed analyses of selected groups of objects. These papers, although not a comprehensive summary of the state of Corded Ware research, provide a significant portion of knowledge for specialists working on the prehistory of the 3rd millennium BC. A better understanding of the Corded Ware phenomenon requires a multiplicity of perspectives and consideration of research from all regions. The present volume of *Archaeologia Polona* thus provides diverse information and demonstrates the benefits of confronting different perspectives on the issue of “Corded Ware”. It is an invitation to revive the tradition of “Schnurkeramik Symposiums”, whether in the traditional format of a meeting or in a new one.

The texts in this volume are complemented by an obituary of archaeologist and museologist Wojciech Piotrowski, written by Jacek Lech. Piotrowski, who was professionally connected with the archaeological site at Biskupin, was also co-editor of volume 47 (2009) of *Archaeologia Polona*.

We also wish to draw readers’ attention to the detailed report from the International Symposium “12th International Conference of the UISPP Commission on Flint Mining in Pre- and Protohistoric Times: *Excavating in the Land of the Devil: Past and Current Research on Prehistoric Flint Mines*”, held in Worthing (West Sussex), 6–8 May 2025, authored by Aleksandra Wołk.

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# Cord Days in Kraków

1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011



Photo: K. Tunia



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