

EDITORIAL

If you follow the social media accounts of our journal or visit our website, you had a chance to read some of the papers even before this issue was released thanks to the August launch of an online publication process for new forthcoming papers. You may know this format as ‘online first’, ‘in press’ or ‘first view’. New papers scheduled for publication will now be released in the Forthcoming section of our website. With this feature, we take another step towards more fluent and open dissemination of new research published in *Archeologické rozhledy*.

We live in a rushed world where yesterday’s news is hopelessly old and attracts little interest. However, academic publishing lags behind this trend of instant information flow, and for good reason. If done properly, research cannot be hastened into the ‘quick ‘n’ easy’ emission of superficially-reviewed and barely-edited papers. Recently revealed cases of serious misconduct and corruption taking place even among journals in renowned indexes should be a warning to all of us. The production of a quality research paper simply requires time not only from the author but also on the journal’s side.

You may indeed object that as a journal editor I am obviously biased. Nonetheless, on other occasions, I am also a paper author and I know the flip side of the coin very well. After you finally finish your paper, exhausted but rather proud of that piece of work, you have to wait, sometimes many months. At last, you receive the paper back but completely in stitches after having suffered heavy bombardment by reviewers’ inquisitive comments. Even if you pass this test, your paper must withstand the harsh scalpel of editors who never omit the chance to change something. Meanwhile, the merciless grant deadline clock is ticking. Once (and if) you finally have your paper published, is not uncommon for an entire year to have passed since you had that feeling of certainty that your research was sound, complete, and ready to be published instantly.

The worst moment comes when a fresh reader of your paper approaches you with a detailed question regarding your newly published research because by then, you are usually working on a completely different topic and have already forgotten virtually everything about your previous paper. And yet, if that was the worst problem facing academia today, we would be a bunch of very happy people.

At *Archeologické rozhledy*, we work to decrease these waiting times as much as possible. According to the most recent figures, 80% of submissions passed from submission to final approval within 112 days, which I consider to be a good figure in the general context of archaeological journals. By introducing the Forthcoming section, we will be able to decrease the waiting time for a finished edited paper to reach the public.

Let’s take a look at those who endured the rigorous process of peer-review scrutiny to be published in this issue. It starts with two papers dealing with early medieval warfare, each from a different perspective. Jiří Košta and his colleagues present a unique new find of a late Merovingian sword from Northeast Bohemia. Although retrieved from a situation that does not allow broader contextualisation within the late 7th and 8th century in Bohemia, the authors have done excellent work on metallographic analyses of the sword. I am sure that the paper will significantly contribute to the studies of early medieval weaponry and its production.

In the following article by Joanna Witan and her colleagues, readers can learn more about the potential consequences produced by a sword or other weapons. During the excavation of a small rural cemetery dated between the 11th and 12th century in Dolany in Northwest Bohemia, a skeleton featuring numerous injuries was identified. Interweaving multiple pieces of evidence with detailed osteological analysis, the authors consider the individual not to be a victim of a mere skirmish but rather a more serious combat or even a battle. Above all, the study set an example for tracking personhood within early medieval society, when the rural population still largely lived outside the historical record.

With the following two papers, we change our perspective from an individual to a broader scope. Adéla Pokorná and colleagues examined the plant economy in the territory of the Czech Republic during the Bronze Age. The analysis involves data from 39 sites that the authors gathered through years of archaeobotanical research. The diachronic scope of the study makes it possible to identify the major shifts and trends of subsistence strategies in the 2nd and early 1st millennium BC. Therefore, I am certain it provides a good overview and will help to address potential research gaps in the future.

In her topical review, Danuta Żurkiewicz gathered comprehensive evidence of tempering with grog during the production of Neolithic stroke-ornamented pottery in the Polish Lowlands. While this phenomenon has remained out of the research spotlight, Żurkiewicz reveals grog temper to be a potential proxy for tracing the origin of some post-Linearbandkeramik communities in the area. Moreover, she discusses the roots of this practice, arguing for symbolic meaning rather than simply technical utility. New thoughts presented in this review will undoubtedly stimulate the future research agenda.

Václav Vondrovský