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Beyond the Bones: Emotional Narratives in Archaeological Explorations of Death*

Abstract: Experiencing and processing emotions, especially profound grief following a significant loss, provides deep personal insights and understanding that can inform the study of emotional practices and customs related to death and mourning. This paper explores how emotions, from basic to complex, are studied through historical artefacts, evolutionary biology, and cultural contexts, emphasizing their interconnectedness with cognition and behaviour in material culture, their biological underpinnings in brain development, and their manifestations as both group and collective phenomena in societal and interpersonal contexts. Death and funeral contexts offer opportunities to study emotions before and after death. Archaeological remains indicate mortuary rituals, customs, and human behaviour, which allows us to consider incorporating emotional narratives in prehistoric research by surveying conclusions from psychological, ethnographic, anthropological, sociological, historical, and medical studies.

Keywords: past emotions, death anxiety, prehistoric burial contexts, grief, funerary customs, mortuary rituals

Inside my heart is breaking
My makeup may be flaking
But my smile, still, stays on
Queen, 'The Show Must Go On'

Entering death contexts

Archaeologists have a particular affinity for contexts of death. This phenomenon is especially evident when considering prehistoric times and cultural contexts that lack formalised burial practices, with relatively scarce human remains compared to more recent historical periods. The first strong emotion, elation, is

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experienced by researchers in the field when excavating and discovering the funerary contexts. The researcher approaches it from a more nuanced perspective compared to uncovering other common findings in the field, and the excavation methodology used is different.¹ The subsequent analysis of the remains, which provides direct evidence about the individual's lifestyle and the population's physical characteristics, is fascinating. Furthermore, the accompanying burial finds reveal a diverse range of cultural features. It is common for archaeologists to study burial remains as evidence of ritual practices and religion, as well as a representation of economics and social relations and the presence of hierarchy; they assess the value of grave goods, the complexity of grave construction, and the quality of the diet of individuals.

These studies, on the other hand, are not as thorough in the exploration of the psychological aspects related to the contexts of death. Psychology covers topics like human cognition/intelligence, motives, values, emotions, perception, character, and mental disorders. Among these themes, cognition and perception have received much attention in the study of archaeological discoveries. The study of the evolutionary development of cognitive abilities and beliefs involves examining the burial practices and remains of early hominins and related species of *Homo sapiens sapiens* (Coolidge and Wynn 2016; Overmann and Coolidge 2022). Research on perception in archaeology, related to the phenomenological approach, led to the development of sensory archaeology, which emphasizes the importance of all senses, not just sight (Day 2013b). Recently, less than three decades ago, works related to the research of emotions in archaeology have appeared (Tarlow 2000). Although extensive research has been conducted on the topic, it is not as widely accepted, the methodology is not standardised, and only a portion addresses funerary contexts and the deceased.

Modern medical, psychological, and sociological researchers all agree that managing stress in its different manifestations is crucial for maintaining a good quality of life. Various evaluations and measurements of stressful situations have shown that the most significant stress in life is the loss of a loved one (Holmes and Rahe 1967; Lazarus and Folkman 1984; Monroe 2008; Cohen, Murphy, and Prather 2019). Similar conclusions from different approaches show us that even in the past, losing a close person was an unusual event with potentially harmful effects on the individual and the community. Despite this, we can acknowledge the diversity of cultural and individual responses to threatening circumstances.

In this paper, I explore the emotions associated with funerary contexts and the deceased in the past, aiming to investigate the potential for standardizing²

¹ Nilsson Stutz (2016b) described in detail the importance of burial and death contexts in archeology as well as the attitude of archaeologists and the public towards them.

² In contemporary psychological research, there are various approaches considering individuality and situational and physical unrepeatability of emotional responses and

their study, with a focus on cases from prehistoric periods. Written sources from historical periods allow for a linguistic approach to studying emotions in literature, inscriptions on gravestones, and grave goods, using methodologies specific to the appropriate disciplines. Emotions are defined in various ways based on the research approach and topic. The results show that emotions are responses to external or internal stimuli and involve physiological activities. They interact with cognition (thought processes) and play an adaptive role in aiding individual survival. Emotions are partly innate, partly acquired through learning, and are influenced by cultural and social norms (Whissell 2023, 15-16). Additionally, emotions manifest not only at the individual level but also at group and collective levels.

Literature overview: Archaeology on emotions and death

Archaeological research, particularly with the post-processual approach, recognizes the importance of studying material culture through an emotional lens. Interest in experiencing material culture through all the senses was inspired by the phenomenological approach introduced by C. Tilley (1994). Criticisms of this approach focus on inadequate methodology, lack of replicability, and a tendency to drift into structuralism (Brück 2005; Fleming 2006; Barrett and Ko 2009, Van Dyke 2020; Moyes 2023). Nevertheless, numerous works provide diverse frameworks and possibilities for studies (Day 2013a; Hamilakis 2014; Pellini, Zarankin and Salerno 2015; Skeates and Day 2019; Pellini 2020), with some authors developing reproducible approaches (Hamilton and Whitehouse 2006). Research on emotions and senses is closely related to the body-centred approach in archaeology (Hamilakis, Pluciennik and Tarlow 2002). I will briefly consider emotional research in prehistoric archaeology,³ focusing on emotions related to death.

Tarlow (2000) provides a critical account of the scant attention that research devotes to past emotions, treating them as secondary subjects. Tarlow was the first to specify guidelines and frameworks for studying emotion in archaeology. She argues that social-emotional values could be more appealing to archaeologists than personal emotions, as they are easier to research. She encourages research on emotions in prehistoric contexts by highlighting their relevance in established archaeological themes such as power relations. Emotional ideologies shape power dynamics as emotions like awe, fear, and security underpin authority. Ignoring them impoverishes social understanding so large-scale processes

experiences. However, scales still assess specific parameters to enable individual and collective comparisons in emotional value, form, intensity, etc.

³ For broader discussion see Mitrović 2022; 2023.

must be viewed within locally meaningful emotional contexts (Tarlow 2000). Tarlow gave respect both for emotions as biological universals and the diversity of emotional experiences among communities and societies. She saw introspection as a valid research method with the understanding that we cannot experience the emotions of others, and emotional evaluation differs because they are products of the historical context.⁴ However, she posited that we can assume some ‘common humanity’ (Tarlow 2000, 724) as a basis for studying the past. Her vision was to incorporate social and contextual archaeology research on meaning, cultural value, and social transformation. Archaeological research of emotions can contribute to the long-term history of emotions but should follow guidelines from other disciplines. She urged archaeologists to study the materiality of emotions, theorize emotional practices, and uncover the links between spaces, architecture, and artefacts with emotions by exploring how objects gain emotional significance and influence experiences (Tarlow 2000).

Harris (2006), on the other hand, underlines emotional materiality, emotional geographies and performative emotions as topics for an archaeology of emotions. Harris and Sørensen (2010) further developed a methodology for studying emotions based on material remains from the Late Neolithic site of Mount Pleasant. They defined terms such as *emotion*: the embodied act of being moved to move; *affective fields*: the networks of people and things through which emotions are generated; *attunement*: the practice of attending to the material world and its emotional qualities; *atmosphere*: the emotional experience engendered by being in a particular place and situation (Harris and Sørensen 2010, 153). Critics identified challenges in labelling specific emotions, but there is consensus on the effectiveness of the suggested terms in understanding past emotional values.

Focusing on the Late Moche period (600-800 AD) in Peru, Hill (2013a) links changes in funeral rituals to evolving emotions toward the deceased and an ideology focused on the elites. Burials moved from cemeteries to homes, suggesting a long-term, daily relationship with the dead. This shift replaced public burial events accessible to non-relatives with private rituals like prayers or offerings at home, limiting access to the deceased and privatizing the associated emotions. Benches with bodies within them served as daily reminders of death and places for interaction with the deceased, fostering a subtle, intimate emotional connection, in contrast to the intense emotions of public leader burials that renewed societal myths (Hill 2013a). Hill argues that burial practices give archaeologists insights into the prehistory of emotion by highlighting the importance of senso-

⁴ She challenges the assumption that people in the past were empathetic based on how skeletons with disabilities were treated. She questions if their physical limitations truly defined them, wondering about their other abilities and whether they were genuinely cared for or exploited (Tarlow 2000).

ry experiences of death, mourning, and memory in recovered objects and their spatial relationships.

Interesting in this context is the volume *The Archeology of Anxiety: The Materiality of Anxiousness, Worry, and Fear* (Fleischer and Norman 2016), which includes papers on emotions in the past in various geographical and temporal settings, some of which investigate funeral rituals.

One of the authors featured in this volume, Nilsson Stutz (2016a), explores the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers around the Baltic Sea, noting that funeral rituals highlighted the importance of the body's integrity through individual burials, which were protected from disturbance. These unique ritual acts helped communities manage anxiety. The author identifies two potential sources of anxiety. First, the ritual helps the community say goodbye to the deceased, defining the body as a corpse while retaining the characteristics of a living being. Funerals occurred shortly after death, preventing decomposition and preserving the deceased's subjectivity, with the body previously exposed for forgiveness. The Zvejnik site reveals the faces of the deceased were covered with masks, transforming the body and the deceased. Second, there may have been fear and insecurity about performing the ritual correctly, which could threaten the order and survival of the community.

Burial in Bronze Age Jordan was also performed according to established customs (Chesson 2016). Secondary burials in shaft tombs transformed individuals into deceased entities through commemorative rites. Chesson (2016) also associates anxiety with the risk of failing funeral customs. Examining anxiety through parameters such as quality of life, nutrition, health status, and the risk of providing food, Chesson concludes there was constant anxiety regarding individual and community survival. The author notes that burials at Bab adh-Dhra' contain the smallest bones of the youngest deceased accompanied by grave goods, which is interpreted as an obligation to the dead and a way to manage the risks of failure.

Meanwhile, Croucher (2019) examines the emotions of mourning in post-mortem rituals that involve special treatment of the deceased's skull. In the Pre-Pottery and Pottery Neolithic of the Middle East and Anatolia (9500-5200 BCE), about 90 specimens were found with plastered (a mixture of limestone and water) skulls, shaped into human faces with colouring and shells or sea snails for eyes (Figure 1). Traditionally interpreted as evidence of ancestor worship and social hierarchy, Croucher suggests that this practice also reflects regret for the loss and a desire to remain close to the deceased. The selective plastering and separate internment of skulls were influenced by factors such as circumstances of death and relationships with the living. Plastered skulls were often reburied in household contexts, showing signs of wear, repair, and reuse, indicating different phases of use and modification.



Figure 1. Plastered skull from Jericho, Jordan Archaeological Museum, author Dosseman, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons, downloaded from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jordan_Archaeological_Museum_Plastered_skull_2013_0265.jpg

In her book, Spikins (2015) analyses compassion in human evolution, suggesting that tenderness, trust, and moral behaviours were crucial for survival and development. Using various burial evidence, she argues for the importance of empathy and care in human history, challenging traditional views focused on competition and aggression. Spikins views anthropological remains with severe injuries or disabilities as suggesting long-term care for individuals, indicating significant resources were invested in vulnerable members. Examples include the burial of a Neanderthal from Shanidar Cave in Iraq, who survived for years with severe injuries, and the grave of a disabled child from the Upper Palaeolithic site of Lagar Velho in Portugal. Moreover, she sees burials with carefully placed artefacts, flowers, or red ochre, such as those at Sungir in Russia, as signs of respect and care. Spikins also discusses symbolic burials reflecting the emotional and spiritual importance of the deceased, like the elaborate burial of a woman and a newborn from the Mesolithic site of Vedbæk in Denmark. She explains cases where older individuals were buried with younger ones as evidence of intergenerational care and concern for family and community connections. The burial of an elderly woman with a young child at the Gravettian

site of Dolní Věstonice in the Czech Republic illustrates this practice. These and other examples led Spikins to conclude that compassion and emotional connections significantly influenced human social structures and behaviours. However, there is a lack of critical discussion on possible explanations beyond positive emotional attitudes. Additionally, the method is not clearly described, allowing for other interpretations based on the authors' imagination. One study proposes a different interpretation of some Upper Paleolithic evidence: Petru (2018) suggests that unusual burials from that period indicate a fear of the deceased, particularly those with physical or mental disabilities, who were considered irregular and dangerous, necessitating their annihilation by burial. Grave goods, such as those in Sunghir, are explained as the community's attempt to remove everything related to the deceased, viewing them as contagious. According to Petru, some individuals may have held prestigious positions due to their uncommon appearance, causing fear after their death due to belief in their exceptional powers. This interpretation focuses on negative emotions rather than compassion, as argued by Spikins (2015). Unfortunately, Petru provides only a brief conclusion without a detailed analysis. Both authors seek analogies in historical and ethno-anthropological examples but do not engage in a deeper discussion of alternative possibilities. Petru (2018) begins by stating that there burials dated to the Upper Paleolithic are few, meaning that only exceptional individuals believed to have supernatural powers and feared by the community were buried. However, she does not provide numerical data or an overview for comparison with other periods, nor does she explain what happened to people she describes as 'normal' or those who 'led normal lives'. Spikins, on the other hand, implies that people are naturally compassionate and that caring for others is innate. She positively presents diverse archaeological remains as evidence of this behaviour, but she does not critically review different interpretations or consider knowledge from other disciplines.

This overview indicates that emotions related to prehistoric burial contexts are read on several levels: 1) emotions experienced prior to death, during the life of the individual, such as compassion, empathy, fear; and 2) emotions felt after death, such as fear, sadness, sorrow, anxiety, and those related to closeness. The contrasting perspectives of Spikins (2015) and Petru (2018) on the same remains highlight the challenges in drawing accurate emotional conclusions from material evidence, rather than being the result of the author's imagination and creativity.

Archaeologists have limited data for research, which consists of tangible remains of the environment, material culture, and the individuals (personalities) themselves.⁵ For a comprehensive study of emotions, it is crucial to consider the

⁵ I presuppose the coexistence and inseparability of people, natural, and material environment. However, that topic is beyond the scope of the paper. Thus, these terms are used broadly here rather than from a theoretical standpoint.

connection between objects and emotions, the universality of emotions or the existence of similar emotional experiences throughout history and among cultures, and the existence of collective emotions because archaeological remains result from communal actions.⁶ These questions can then be examined in both contemporary and past contexts of death and burial.

Quest for past emotions

Material culture, comprising remnants of the past, results from the behaviours of individuals and communities. Cognition, emotion, and behaviour are interconnected and mutually dependent (Lench, Darbor and Berg 2013). Their interrelationship has been studied and successfully applied primarily in psychotherapy (Ellis 1962, Willson and Branch 2006). By analysing excavated artefacts, archaeologists can also study past emotions, similar to how they reconstruct behaviour and cognition from material evidence. It is understandable that by discovering objects, researchers do not unearth the behaviours or thoughts of people from the past. However, applying detailed analyses and theoretical perspectives allows for hypotheses to be made about their lives. Over the past decades, such research has multiplied and ingrained itself in archaeology,⁷ whereas the field of emotions has yet to gain a solid foundation.⁸

Basic emotions

Evolutionary psychology examines the existence of basic emotions and their universality across cultures, periods, and species. Some scientists identify only a few basic emotions such as happiness-sadness or pain-pleasure, while others count as many as eighteen. The key figures in this field are Paul Ekman and Robert Plutchik. Ekman (1999) identified six basic emotions (anger, surprise, disgust, joy, fear, and sadness) through facial expressions, noting cultural differences in emotional recognition. Plutchik's (2001) psycho-evolutionary theory proposed eight basic emotions arranged in pairs on a 'wheel of emotions'

⁶ See more in Mitrović 2022, 2023

⁷ Prehistoric material remains were often interpreted as indicators of economically motivated behaviour of 'more gain for less effort', leading to optimal foraging theories (Winterhalder 1981; Zeder 2012). Since C. Renfrew defined cognitive archaeology in 1982, numerous studies have further developed this field (Renfrew and Zubrow 1994; Coolidge and Wynn 2016; Iliopoulos and Malafouris 2020; Henley, Rossano and Kardas 2020; Overmann and Coolidge 2022)

⁸ For instance, the Global Encyclopedia of Archaeology by Smith in 2020 does not include an entry on emotions.

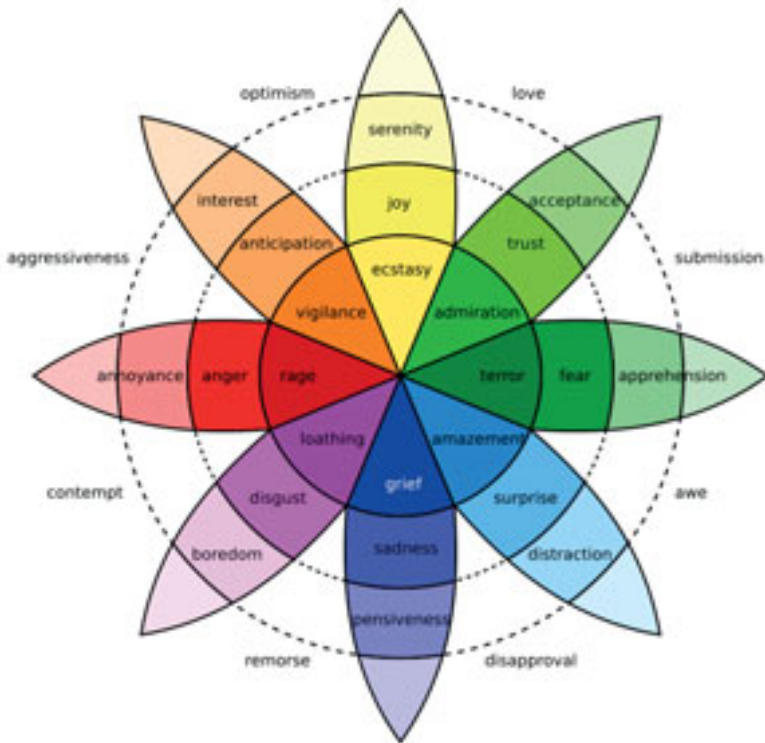


Figure 2. R.Plutchik’s Wheel of emotions, downloaded from
 Wikimedia Commons, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/
 File:Plutchik-wheel.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plutchik-wheel.svg)

(Figure 2), each with varying intensities, immediate behavioural response, and evolutionary purposes. Alan Sroufe’s (1996) developmental theory suggests that humans are born with three basic emotions – joy, fear, and anger – which evolve over time.

To determine how far back in the past we can go when reconstructing human emotions, it is essential to examine their biological foundations through brain development. The triple brain theory outlines three evolutionary brain layers: the primitive ‘reptile’ brain responsible for instinctive behaviours, the limbic system in mammals for complex emotions and mother-offspring bonds, and the cerebral cortex in higher mammals like humans for advanced cognitive functions (Whissel 2023).

In *The Archaeology of Mind*, Panksepp and Biven (2012) examine in detail the neuro-evolutionary origins of emotions, highlighting seven emotional systems present in all mammals: SEEKING (curiosity), FEAR (anxiety), RAGE (anger), LUST (sexual desire), CARE (maternal care), GRIEF (separation

stress), and PLAY (social joy). These systems generate strong emotional feelings in humans and similar, albeit not identical, emotions in other mammals due to the neocortex's role in emotion interpretation. Emotional experiences occur at three levels: primary instinctual responses, secondary unconscious learning mechanisms, and tertiary conscious cognitive processes. This model suggests that animals also experience emotions at a fundamental level, with primary emotional processes essential for survival.

Group and collective emotions

The intra-psychological perspective sees emotions as internal to individuals, excluding social context. In contrast, the socio-cultural paradigm considers emotions as culturally created and regulated within interpersonal relationships. The cultural context shapes and regulates emotional expressions through learned and inherited frameworks (Holodynski and Friedlmeier 2010). The study of group emotions is vital for archaeology, as it involves understanding how emotions were shared and expressed collectively through the analysis of artefacts related to communal activities. Group emotions, as defined by Parkinson, Fischer, and Manstead (2005), occur when group members share experiences, interact, uphold common values, identify as part of the group, and express emotions collectively. These emotions are distinct from personal ones, as they are triggered by group-related evaluations (Smith and Mackie 2015). Collective emotions, different from group emotions, refer to shared emotional responses among individuals in society, such as during a traffic collapse (von Scheve and Ismer 2013). These emotions are culturally and socially embedded, manifesting in personal encounters and social identifications. Research on collective emotions includes shared moods, emotional atmospheres, and their connections to social phenomena (von Scheve and Salmela 2014a). Rosenwein's work (2006) on medieval history introduces the concept of an emotional community, a group sharing common interests, where individuals can belong to multiple, sometimes conflicting, communities.

Articulating death emotionally

Emotional and material aspects of death

Death and funeral contexts offer opportunities to study emotions before and after death. Archaeological remains as presented in Table 1 are commonly employed as indicators of the mortuary rituals, customs, and human behaviour. Religion and ritual involve (often intense) emotions as the intrinsic part of the participant/at-

tendant's experience⁹, which allows us to consider the possibility of interpolating their narratives on emotions by surveying conclusions from psychological, ethnographic, anthropological, sociological, historical, and medical studies.

Table 1. Material remains of past death contexts (excluding written sources) depicting possibilities to explore emotions

	before death	after death
human remains	quality of life: subsistence, illness, activities, and resulting stress	burial: immediately after death or delayed; disposal or display of the body
	living with injuries and defects: caring, empathy, compassion	difference: cremation or inhumation?
	* moment of death: violent? sacrificial act?	primary or secondary burials?
		position of the inhumated deceased
		anthropophagy?
funeral and burial context	settlement, atmosphere, quality of life	burial location: proximity to residential buildings, i.e. world of the living
		number of funeral attendants
		elaboration and complexity of burial
		funeral offerings, status of the deceased
		animal remains: human-animal relationship

Settlement: Atmosphere and quality of life

The inspiring and groundbreaking book *The Geopolitics of Emotions* (Moïsi 2009) has shown that analysing emotions at a societal level can help us understand global and large-scale events.¹⁰ During the transition to food production in the southern Levant, nuclear families emerged as the prevalent form of family structure since they allowed for efficient resource management. This shift brought about conflict due to unequal land yields and limited resource sharing. Despite household autonomy, as identified in standardised domestic structures in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B, community leaders maintained social order through standardised housing and egalitarian mortuary practices (Byrd 1994, 2002). In Anatolia throughout the PPN periods, at sites such as Çayönü Tepesi (Verhoeven 2002), house compartments increased in number and decreased in size over time, indicating the greater competition and increasing autonomy of smaller social groups. This shift suggests a growing desire for privacy, potentially leading to loneliness, and as Byrd (1994, 694) suggested, heightened

⁹ Insoll (2004) states that a ritual combines mental processes, physical actions, emotions, knowledge, movements, and communication.

¹⁰ See more in Thrift 2004 and articles published in the journal *Emotion, Space and Society* <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/emotion-space-and-society>

tensions and negative emotions such as jealousy. On the other hand, hearths and fireplaces in open yards between houses indicate communal food preparation and consumption, nurturing positive emotions among family members and neighbours (cf. Conati Barbaro 2021). The presence of ramparts and ditches at sites may suggest conflicts between settlements and communities, leading to a life filled with fear and tension. Harris (2016) interprets causewayed enclosures in the British Neolithic as crucial in shaping community life and managing social anxieties. Through gatherings and shared practices, these enclosures helped communities navigate their fears and strengthen social bonds. Srejšović wrote that Mesolithic inhabitants in the Iron Gates gorge lived in fear due to the surrounding dark forests (Srejšović 1969). No further evidence was provided to back up this argument. As personal observations differ,¹¹ the phenomenological approach related to the emotional experience of the landscape requires more extensive research.

Illness, injuries, and physical deformities

Tarlow (2000) criticizes in detail the loose interpretation of the presence of compassion and sympathy in the community based on studies of individuals who had a physical deformity, disease, or injury. The argument about compassion is based on the need for care for those individuals, which some works describe as ‘people with disabilities’. She challenges the notion of disability, highlighting that being considered ‘unfit’ for physical tasks does not imply a uniform sense of ‘inability’ across cultures. Disability is often valued in economic terms, such as food procurement and calorie contribution to the community. However, other activities such as spirituality, craft production, and political strategy also require various abilities. Moreover, it is important to differentiate between mere survival and being treated well, as physically unfit individuals could have been abused in other ways while still being provided with food (Tarlow 2000). While Spikins (2015) supports the theory of compassion, Petru (2018) ascribes to the members of the community a belief in the supernatural powers of individuals with deformities who were thus provoking fear.¹²

¹¹ Srejšović’s (1969) book is remarkable, since he masterfully uses archaeological findings to weave the story of the daily lives of communities. However, his observations on emotions lack further support. As personal experiences can vary, the author of this paper shares her impressions from fieldwork at the Vlasac site in the Iron Gates in 2008: Although the high cliffs were visually striking, I generally felt no fear. I admit to feeling unsafe due to the thunders, lightnings, and stormy weather in the gorges at night, but I also couldn’t help but be amazed and excited by the magnificent display in the sky.

¹² Petru did not provide strong support for her assumptions regarding why people who ‘deviated from normal’, as she stated, would be believed to have supernatural pow-

A variety of other emotions should be considered in this context. We could think of pity which is similar to compassion, but is characterised by passivity, psychological distancing, and a sense of superiority (Kimball 2004). Unlike compassion, which involves active efforts to help, pity can be seen as turning away, even disgust. However, Kimball (2004) argues that pity can be the appropriate emotional response in situations characterised as tragic, where compassion is impossible or inappropriate, such as in cases of terminal illness or imminent death. In these contexts, where there is no possibility to help, where no hope or positive outcome exists, pity is a more suitable emotion than compassion, which can stem from denial or false hope.¹³ We could go even further by considering the mockery and sneering (which constitute emotional violence) at people with visible disabilities in the past. Over the past two centuries, these individuals have been exploited for entertainment, notably in circuses and fairs in the US and parts of Europe, with dwarfism (achondroplasia) particularly targeted (Pritchard 2021). They were often displayed as exotic and monstrous curiosities, labelled as both funny and scary.

Extensive research can be undertaken into the dynamics between caregiver and care receiver roles. Caregivers can experience negative emotions, such as anxiety, anger, depression, sadness, disgust, shame, guilt, and loneliness (Khalaila and Cohen 2015, Bassal et al. 2016), which can also be examined in historical contexts. There is, however, little research on the emotions of care recipients (cp. Newsom 1999). Archaeologists could consider the emotional experiences of disabled individuals and question guilt, depression, anxiety, fear, frustration, along with gratitude about (economic) dependence on others.

The moment of death:
Violence and sacrifice

Violence is often closely associated with intense emotional states, particularly anger (Anderson and Bushman 2002). Victims of violence often experience a range of emotions, including fear, anxiety, anger, and depression (Johansen, Wahl and Weisaeth 2008; Lamothe et al. 2019). Despite the abundance of research on prehistoric violence (e.g. in European Mesolithic and Neolithic:

ers or why they would induce fear. The concept of ‘otherness’ could be used to question whether community saw them as ‘strange’, ‘different’ or ‘others’, and further explore fear. However, the discussion on this is lacking. Cross-culturally, there is little evidence and limited literature on fear from shamans, which mention only a few ethnographically studied communities.

¹³ Kimball’s (2004) arguments could be further discussed by examining the understanding of ‘tragic’ across different cultures. However, this requires additional study and can serve as a topic for future research.

Roksandić 2006; Schulting and Fibiger 2012; Alt et al. 2020), there is a tendency to overlook the emotional aspect of human behaviour and consider the anger or hatred expressed in violent acts. Only Jackes (2004) hypothesizes that violence in Mesolithic Portugal was the result of anger in a domestic environment rather than aggression between groups.

Human sacrifice often evokes profound emotional responses as Bremmer (2007a) states in the introduction to the edited volume *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice*; however, there is no research on emotions accompanying those acts (Bremmer 2007b). In her PhD dissertation, Hansen (2017) explores human sacrifice in the sixteenth-century Aztec Empire, extensively recorded by Spanish chroniclers, from the sensory-emotive and physiological responses they elicited. These ritual acts were part of elaborate joyful festivals and provided physiological, psychological, and social rewards, such as a sense of security, anxiety management related to death, war and uncontrollable natural forces, and social bonding. Spectators and participants experienced excitement and suspense in preparatory rituals and fear during the sacrifice, followed by positive emotions and joyful euphoria during succeeding festive activities. On the other hand, the victim (a slave, an enemy) was terrified and sad in the face of death (Hansen 2017). In this context, we cannot but remember the Pre-Pottery Neolithic at the Çayönü Tepesi site in Anatolia where human blood residues were discovered on stone slabs as well as a stone knife related to the ritual buildings (Verhoeven 2002).

Corpse treatment:
Disposal or display

Ways of treating the corpse/body of the deceased – whether it was buried immediately after death or delayed, disposed or displayed – provide us with insight into the emotions of the community. As mentioned earlier, Nilsson Stutz (2016a) examined Mesolithic hunter-gatherer funerary rituals that involved burying the deceased shortly after death to preserve the body. The exposure of the body and the covering of its face with a mask could have had a deep emotional impact on community members. Psychological research has shown that the facial expressions of deceased individuals can evoke specific emotions in those mourning them (Eyette and Eggleston 2002). Viewing these expressions can elicit a range of emotional responses, from sadness and longing to comfort and peace, and thus significantly influence the mourning process, either providing solace or intensifying feelings of loss. The portrayal of emotions toward the deceased, whether in a positive or negative light, is tied to the gender, age, and educational background of the respondents (Eyette and Eggleston 2002).

Crossing those results with archaeological findings shows that the community practised conveying messages through masks to evoke similar (collective/group) emotions among viewers.¹⁴

Corpse treatment: Cremation or inhumation,
primary or secondary burials

Kuijt (1996) analysed the difference between ritual activities accompanying primary and secondary burials in the Aceramic Neolithic. Their relation to community gatherings and feasts suggests more profound social bonds created within secondary mortuary practices, which allows for further discussion in emotional terms for both contexts. Something similar can be said for cremation. The authors in the edited volume *Transformation by Fire: The Archaeology of Cremation in Cultural Context* (Kuijt, Quinn and Cooney 2014) present evidence that cremation was not a single event but a process, complex in technological, organizational, cultural, ritual, social, and emotional terms. However, there are no studies directly addressing the emotional experience of participants at one or another type of bodily treatment. Instead, studies explore the variety of reasons for exceptions from prevailing religious practice, questioning both individuals prior to death about their burial wishes and family members after their loved one passed away (Howarth and Jupp 1996; Bregman 2010; Applewhite 2022; Nordh et al. 2023; Paiva et al. 2023).¹⁵

Position of the buried deceased

In graves with multiple inhumations, which were prevalent throughout prehistory, the close proximity of the interred generally suggests a strong emotional bond during life. The most poignant examples of affection and care are found in burials where women are laid to rest with newborns and infants, or where individuals are positioned in intimate postures, such as hugging, touching, or facing each other (Borić and Stefanović 2004, Formicola and Holt 2015, Trinkaus and Buzhilova 2018, Teschler-Nicola et al. 2020). These interpretations are supported by contemporary emotional-behavioural research on the expression of emo-

¹⁴ Nilsson Stutz (2016) did not consider this research but saw the usage of masks as the retention of identity. Another study (Elliott, Nilsson Stutz and Conneller 2020) on masking the dead in the Neolithic of the Eastern Baltic, using a special material mixture of clay and amber ('clamber') focuses on the materiality of masks. The authors argue that these masks reflect an ontological anxiety about the changing world.

¹⁵ Religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, traditionally prefer burial due to beliefs in bodily resurrection, while some Eastern religions like Hinduism and Buddhism favour cremation as it is seen as a means to liberate the soul from the physical body.

tions, suggesting that burial practices were designed to reflect or evoke real-life relationships and situations. However, since the living community conducted these practices, they also presented their own attitudes on how those relationships should be materialised.

Anthropophagic practice

Extensive research has been conducted on human bones with modifications indicating cannibalism in various human species (Fernandez-Jalvo et al. 1999, Defleur et al. 1999, Deacon and Wurz 2005, Bello et al. 2015, Morales-Pérez et al. 2017). Although cannibalism is generally considered taboo and ‘disgusting’ in the modern world, some ethnographic and anthropological research indicates that various communities had positive emotions during its ritual practice. Conklin (1995) described the anthropophagic practice of the Wari in Brazil. They mourned when they consumed the bodies of deceased community members, while the enemy’s flesh was eaten with indifference. Consumption began reluctantly; participants ate slowly and cried to honour the dead. The amount of eaten meat depended on the degree of the body’s decay: more respected individuals’ bodies were roasted later to allow for mourning. After cremation, the bones were either mixed with honey and eaten or buried (Conklin 1995). According to a recent study, the South Fore people from Papua New Guinea had a cultural practice of consuming the bodies of their beloved deceased individuals as a form of showing love and respect (Whitfield, Pako and Alpers 2024).

Burial location: Proximity to the residential area,
or the world of the living

Burials within houses and the retention of anthropological remains of the deceased indicate emotional proximity and affective bonds, as well as expressions of grief and respect (Hill 2013a; Croucher 2019). In contemporary society, formal disposal areas such as cemeteries typically dictate the location of the deceased’s remains. There are, however, exceptions. For instance, the practice of cremation allows individuals to keep ashes within their homes and manipulate them (McCormick 2015). Additionally, in rural areas of contemporary Serbia, graves are sometimes found on personal property rather than on designated cemetery grounds. This practice aims to prevent heirs from selling and alienating the land.¹⁶ Such behaviours can be discussed within the context of attachment to

¹⁶ This is the author’s personal fieldwork observation in villages surrounding Suvor Mountain and in the Mionica municipality (in Western Serbia). Although sociological and ethno-anthropological research on the topic is scarce, the practice is well-doc-

personal belongings and the landscape evoking positive emotions together with fear/anxiety of losing them.

Intimate/private vs. public funerals:
Number of funeral attendants

A recent study suggested that larger funerals enhance emotional support for the grieving and minimise future feelings of regret (Becker et al. 2022). Bearing in mind that funerals foster a sense of community and shared mourning, which can be crucial for emotional healing, we could assume that secondary burial rituals and gatherings helped individuals overcome traumatic events more effectively. However, the research of Birrell and his colleagues (2020) did not find a significant association between the type or elaborateness of the funeral (cremation service was observed) and the experience of grief over time. As Hill (2013a) suggested, intimate and public ceremonies are distinct in emotional experience, which is in accordance with Burrell and Selman's (2022) findings that the significance of after-death rites, including funerals, depends on how well the bereaved can shape these rituals and say their farewells in a manner that is meaningful to them. Additional explorations on particular emotions within psychology, sociology, and anthropology are needed to detect them.

Elaboration and complexity of burial

If the elaboration of the funerary ritual performance is not associated with levels of grief (Birrell et al. 2020), what can we conclude about the relatedness between the elaboration of the burial area and grief and other emotions? The complexity of the burial practice is usually regarded as an indicator of the deceased's social status and wealth, which is in turn related to the number of funerary attendants and those emotionally affected by the loss. Elaborated burials could indicate, but not necessarily imply, dramatic funerals and rites (e.g. animal or human sacrifice). If much effort and labour were invested in creating a death context, we could imagine what emotions people underwent during this process: pride for voluntarily contributing their own resources to build a monumental tomb, or anger and frustration for being obliged to contribute.

umented, as evident in the article at <https://www.republika.rs/vesti/srbija/442512/covek-u-cacku-sahranjen-u-dvoristu-deca>. Even though the law prohibits burial outside of the cemetery, the practice has become common in many places due to the distance from the cemetery, the lack of burial places in local cemeteries, the cost of funeral services, or the wishes of the deceased. In eastern Serbia, it is related to local beliefs and customs (<https://www.rts.rs/lat/vesti/srbija-danas/3116101/sahranjivanje-u-dvoristu-uobicajeno-u-istocnoj-srbiji.html>).

Consequently, spectators might have felt either positive or negative emotions, such as admiration, respect, or reluctance. Chesson (2016), for example, relates complex burials to anxiety.

Funeral offerings and the status of the deceased

Much as the burial elaboration, burial offerings are also commonly used in archaeological studies as a proxy for estimating the prestige and social position of the deceased. The attachment approach reveals tender feelings related to the affective roles of objects that people can experience and commemorate when using them (Bell and Spikins 2018). We could also consider the purposive breaking of objects as destructive behaviour related to anger. In that sense, broken items would indicate a means to control for intense negative feelings. However, these reflections should not be taken for granted; rather, they serve as directions for further elaboration and detailed multidisciplinary analyses.

Animal sacrifice and burials

Ritual killings of animals as part of the mortuary and feasting prehistoric practice have been well documented (Pluskowski 2011). Moreover, research is increasingly focusing on seeing animals as companions possessing personhood and treating them accordingly (Hill 2013b; Živaljević 2015). The relationship between human and non-human companions (animals living close to humans, with humans, or raised/cared for by humans) is made even stronger by acknowledging that some animals can differentiate various emotional expressions (Albuquerque et al. 2016; Quaranta et al. 2020; Wilson et al. 2022). In modern times, attention is paid to human mourning and grief upon the pet's death (Cleary et al. 2022). Together, these studies enable us to consider human emotional engagement in the context of dead animals.¹⁷ Argent (2016) went a step further by reconstructing human burial contexts with sacrificed horses in the Iron Age Pazyryk culture (5th-3rd century BCE). She portrayed human-horse bonds in a detailed and touching manner, providing an intense account of the sacrificial moments as seen from the animals' perspective, highlighting their emotions and behaviour.

We have briefly covered various questions related to death and dying; however, each of these necessitates a separate, in-depth analysis. These should not

¹⁷ The mentioned references together with Panksepp's and Biven's (2012) work enables us to revert our perspective to consider the emotions of animals in the context of dead human companions. Such reflection is supported by modern examples of pets behaviour experiencing the loss (King 2014).

be regarded as final conclusions but as initial ideas and hypotheses, highlighting the opportunities for future research.

Common emotional responses to death

Are emotional responses to death and dying universal? The sensory impact of death and the processes surrounding it, though often universal in their physicality (for example, vomiting reactions to the decomposing cadaver¹⁸), are experienced through a cultural lens, with specific cultural practices and mortuary rites (Nilsson Stutz 2019). As one would expect, the death of a dear person, an acquaintance, or an animal companion causes regret and emotions related to grieving. Care and support centre websites provide guidance and advice for patients (whose prognosis is uncertain or unfavourable) and especially their family members about what physical, psychological, and emotional changes they may experience and how to cope with them during treatment and after death. In addition to grief, emotions such as anger, guilt, fear, and anxiety are also expected. The emotions of sadness, fear, and anger are recognised as basic in psychological works (Plutchik 2001; Ekman 1999; while Sroufe 1996 recognised fear and anger as the earliest emotions in an individual's development). At the same time, neuropsychological research confirms the existence of emotional systems for grief, fear, and anger (Panksepp and Biven 2012). Case studies in cultures around the world also describe similar emotions. Papers in the volume *The World of Bereavement: Cultural Perspectives on Death in Families* (Cacciatore and DeFrain, 2015) provide detailed insights into customs related to the death of close family members with the central theme of the emotion of grief. In the broader socio-cultural and historical contexts, the authors provided insights from their own cultures into the personal stories of individuals about loss, death, grieving, and struggling in very detailed and emotional ways.

Although mortuary rituals, patterns of behaviour, evaluation, and expression of emotions are culturally specific, studies from various disciplines and methodological approaches allow us to assume that emotions of sadness, fear, and anger were meaningful in constituting prehistoric contexts of death.

¹⁸ This assertion could also be further investigated, in search of the period of human history when the reflex occurred, since early humans (our australopithecine ancestors) were scavengers and might not have had such a reaction to decomposing corpses (Moleón et al. 2014). Moreover, we could also question the universality of physical and sensory experiences: senses in our ancestor and cousin species could exist in other numbers, forms, and with different sensitivity thresholds from today.

Collective and group emotions related to death

According to the definitions of group and collective emotions (Parkinson, Fischer, and Manstead 2005, Smith and Mackie 2015, von Scheve and Ismer 2013), collective emotions are shared by attendants at the events accompanying the death of an individual, such as a funeral, remembrance, and commemoration. In contrast, group emotions are experienced by members of the deceased's closest environment. For collective emotions to occur, it is necessary to attend the same event and participate in the situation.¹⁹ On the other hand, the feeling of togetherness and belonging to the group is crucial for group emotions. As Mitima-Verloop, Mooren, and Boelen (2019) highlight, funerals serve as mechanisms to facilitate grief, providing structure and social support for the bereaved.²⁰ Funerals and rituals help individuals acknowledge the reality of death, express emotions, and begin the process of adjusting to life without the deceased. They also foster a sense of community and shared mourning, which can be crucial for emotional healing (Mitima-Verloop, Mooren and Boelen 2019). In this sense, support centres advise seeking help within spiritual communities in cases of excessive grief, which is in line with psychological research that confirms that loss is easier to bear with the support of loved ones. All of the stated allow for the consideration of emotions in archaeological reconstructions of ritual and religious practices related to the death of a community member. We can differentiate between collective emotions that are shared by attendees at the funeral and similar gatherings and group emotions shared by the family of the deceased. This approach, if applied to Hill's (2013a) research, indicates that in some instances valuation of group emotions prevailed over collective ones. For example, in the Late Moche period, the regulation of emotions related to the death of an individual occurred at the group level of close relatives and family, rather than at the community level as was practised in earlier times. We can also apply it to Pre Pottery Neolithic practices of communal secondary burials (e.g. Skull Building in Çayönü Tepesi) and the preservation of modified skulls within homes (Verhoeven 2002; Croucher 2019).

Departing from death contexts

We can never be sure of the emotions of people in the past, just as we cannot be sure of the emotions of our contemporaries, even if they communicate or express them to us. This uncertainty necessitates diverse approaches to un-

¹⁹ Moreover, collective emotions can be elicited by mass media if people are not physically co-present (Goldenberg et al. 2020, von Scheve and Salmela 2014b)

²⁰ A qualitative study on funerals of Walter and Bailey (2020) revealed that attendees at the funeral recognize the (bereaved) status of the family.

derstanding emotions in the reconstruction of the past. Examined and critical insights into the past surpass merely mentioning these emotions as implicit and taken for granted (Tarlow 2000).

Studying emotions in the context of death and funerals spans multiple disciplines like archaeology, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. These fields collectively reveal the integral role emotions play in shaping rituals and societal dynamics. Archaeological findings, for instance, indicate past mortuary customs and societal behaviours in thanatological studies, shedding light on emotional experiences and expressions. While common physical reactions, such as nausea to decomposition, exist, cultural rituals and practices surrounding death vary widely (Nilsson Stutz 2019). There is even a debate over whether emotions are a valid cross-cultural category, with some arguing they are Western constructs (Beatty 2014).²¹ Despite cultural variations, emotions like sadness, fear, and anger remain universally significant. The concepts of universality and the existence of basic emotions have been incorporated into archaeological questions based on results from psychological and neurological studies (Sroufe 1996; Ekman 1999; Plutchik 2001; Panksepp and Biven 2012). Cultural, individual, and situational specificity of emotions was observed in research from different disciplines. However, the variations are not endless, and we can still find similarities to compare in different contexts (Harris 2016). The collective emotions experienced during funerals and memorials unify attendees in acknowledging loss and supporting grieving individuals (Mitima-Verloop, Mooren, and Boelen, 2019). These rituals foster community cohesion and aid in emotional processing, reflecting a shared cultural response to mortality. To discuss emotions within an archaeological context, it is necessary to begin with the assumption of some general human nature, as suggested by Tarlow (2000). Otherwise, if everything is considered unique and unrepeatable, 'nothing significant can be said about universal characteristics of humans' (Argent 2016, 21). Similarly, Broderick (2016) argues that the purpose of analogy is not to suggest identical behaviour but rather a possibility. He states that 'generalizations and models are not meant to be universally applicable, infallible laws... they are tools with which we can begin to explore differences' (Broderick 2016, 4). In this context, emotional systems are understood as inherent to mammals (Panksepp and Biven 2012). We might deny the universality of the care system, for example, because of cases such as when a female human commits infanticide if there is not enough food for the older siblings, or a lioness kills her cubs if she thinks she cannot raise the whole litter (Dagg and Harding 2012, 207-208). However, this is not common behaviour, and each case could be studied separately to find differences. Accordingly, we can also accept that

²¹ Compare to the Western concept of nature-culture dichotomy, Descola 2013.

there are asexual individuals, people with extremely sensitive senses, individuals with synesthesia, or those who exhibit a weak emotional response (just as we do not deny ‘upright walking on two legs’ as a human characteristic due to people born without legs, those who are paralyzed, or those who lose their legs due to injury²²). This paper attempts to bridge current research and knowledge with material evidence from the past through various archaeological contexts related to death. These can be examined from an emotional perspective during life, or during and after funeral rituals, with a proposal to explore the possibilities of analogies with contemporary knowledge from various disciplines about the contexts and parameters under consideration. Death and the handling of corpses present various opportunities to engage emotionally through material artefacts. The key lies in focusing on the sensory aspects of death, mourning, and memory as reflected in recovered objects and their spatial contexts (Hill 2013a). The archaeological study of emotions contributes to their historical contextualization, as societal emotional values have the potential to change over time, leading to emotions being forgotten or overlooked (Tarlow 2000). However, archaeological materials allow for various interpretations, often conflicting (Spikins 2015; Petru 2018). It is assumed that mass funerals would indicate strong emotions related to the individuals who had passed away (as Gebel, Benz and Bauer 2022 wrote for the Late Pre-Pottery Neolithic B²³ communities: burial groups likely gathered many people, not all peers, with high emotional contagion at funerals leading to strong but temporary effects on emotions, identity, and empathy), but they could also reflect an obligation and thus evoke repulsive emotions.

The lack of archaeological literature on the emotions accompanying death is highlighted in the introduction, with the hope that this will change in the future and that this text will encourage researchers to explore this uncharted field by raising new questions. Beatty (2014) criticised anthropological research on emotions thus far, identifying two key issues in early ethnographic studies: failure to recognize emotions and failure to report them with sufficient detail. He suggests that emotions are best understood through narrative, which captures their complexity and links them to personal and social histories.

²² See more in Hayden (2020, 433) on polythetic definitions which... ‘involve a series of distinctive traits in which no one trait is critical for membership in a class or taxon; rather a majority of traits is sufficient to be included in a taxon’.

²³ The Pre-Pottery Neolithic (PPN) marks the beginning of the Neolithic era in the Levant, southern Anatolia, and the upper Mesopotamian regions of the Fertile Crescent. Its timeline varies across different areas, generally covering the period from around 10,000 to 6,500 BCE. The Late Pre-Pottery Neolithic B phase in the Southern Transjordan region, which is the focus of the cited study, spans from approximately 7,500 to 7,000 cal BC.

Researchers need to immerse themselves in emotions in order to study and write about them effectively. Paxton (2018) demonstrated that grief is beneficial and involves maintaining ongoing connections with the deceased. The practice of continued bonds with the deceased is described by Hill (2013a) and Croucher (2019). *Archaeology of Loss* by Tarlow (2023) is a brilliant and effective memoir that intertwines her professional expertise as an archaeologist with her personal experiences of grief and loss following her husband's death. The book explores how the material remnants of the past influence our understanding of loss and memory.

Private and public funeral service agencies offer additional insights into emotions related to both humans and animals. Their observations should be considered relevant, as they collect firsthand information through direct contact with both the deceased and the bereaved. Scientific research on emotions in the past suffers from many gaps, but there are possibilities for future work on this topic. In this intricate tapestry of human emotion, archaeology provides a window into how our ancestors experienced and expressed their deepest feelings, reminding us that the emotional landscapes of the past are as complex and varied as our own.

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Иза костiju:
Емоционални наративи у археолошком истраживању смрти

Доживљавање и обрада емоција, нарочито дубоке туге због великог губитка као што је смрт родитеља, пружа дубоке личне увиде и разумевање које може допринети проучавању емоционалних пракси и обичаја у вези са смрћу и туговањем. Овај чланак се бави начинима на које се емоције испитују из различитих перспектива, укључујући праисторијске артефакте, еволуциону психологију и неуронауку, и културне контексте. Наглашава се међусобна повезаност емоција са когницијом, понашањем и материјалном културом. Истакнуте су биолошке основе емоција укорењене у možданом развоју и њихове појаве као индивидуалне и колективне унутар друштвених и интерперсоналних оквира.

Еволуциона перспектива пружа увид у биолошке емоционалне основе заједничке свим људима. Културни контекст емоција је још један кључни аспект ове студије. Различита друштва развила су јединствене праксе и обичаје око смрти и жаљења, у специфичним историјским, друштвеним и еколошким условима. Етнографска и антрополошка истраживања нуде драгоцене увиде у ове културне варијације. Испитујући археолошке остатке, истраживачи могу закључити посмртне ритуале и обичаје прошлих култура, откривајући емоционалне животе наших предака. У раду се такође испитују емоције као индивидуална искуства и колективни феномени. У контексту смрти и погребних обичаја, емоције често превазилазе личне границе и постају заједничка искуства која могу ујединити или разделити заједнице. Социолошке и психолошке студије доказују како групна динамика и друштвене норме обликују емоционалне изразе и понашања током жалости.

Интеграција емотивних наратива у праисторијска истраживања представља посебан изазов, и размотрена је са становишта археолошких остатака. Налази у вези са смрћу, када су контекстуализовани, пружају увид у емоције које се доживљавају у заједницама пре и након што неко умре. Размотрена археолошка сведочанства укључују остеоолошке остатке, који указују на повреде, инвалидитет, насиље, жртвовање, стресан живот, третман тела након смрти, као што су излагање, украшавање, разноврсне погребне праксе и антропофагија. Артефакти и архитектура указују на преовлађујућу атмосферу у заједници, погребно окружење, обичаје и ритуале. Испитана је и могућност реконструкције емотивног живота у

прошлости на основу животињских остатака. Разматрањем закључака из психолошких, етнографских, антрополошких, социолошких, историјских и медицинских студија, заједно са интроспективним личним искуством, истраживачи могу конструисати свеобухватнију слику о томе како су народи из прошлости могли да доживљавају и регулишу емоције у контексту смрти и туговања.

Кључне речи: емоције, смрт, праисторија, жалост, сахрана, погребни ритуали

*Derrière les os: récits émotionnels
dans la recherche archéologique sur la mort*

Des expériences personnelles émouvantes des vécus émotionnels, en particulier de la tristesse profonde, permettent d'analyser les pratiques et les coutumes associés à la mort et au deuil. Cet article examine comment les émotions, des plus fondamentales aux plus complexes, sont étudiées à travers des artefacts du passé, de la biologie évolutive et des contextes culturels. On souligne le lien entre les émotions, la cognition et le comportement ce qui se manifeste dans la culture matérielle, ainsi que les bases biologiques des émotions dans le développement cérébral et l'apparition des émotions au niveau de groupe ou au niveau collectif dans les contextes sociaux et interpersonnels. Les contextes de la mort et des inhumations offrent la possibilité d'étudier les émotions avant et après la mort. Les restes archéologiques indiquent des rites funéraires, des coutumes et des comportements humains ce qui nous permet de considérer l'inclusion de récits émotionnels dans l'étude de la préhistoire à travers l'étude de conclusions issues d'études psychologiques, ethnographiques, anthropologiques, sociologiques, historiques et médicales.

Mots-clés: émotions du passé, anxiété face à la mort, contextes préhistoriques de la mort, tristesse, coutumes funéraires, rites funéraires

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