



## Editorial

Denmark has a long tradition of urban archaeology, and in particular since the 1970s, excavations have been conducted regularly in the around 70 Danish medieval towns. Much new knowledge has been acquired from rescue excavations, ambitious research projects and large-scale infrastructural development projects. This Special Issue includes papers that present the most recent research on the upcoming and changing roles of two important Danish towns, Odense and Copenhagen. The first paper on Odense suggests that a permanent urban character gradually emerged in Odense from the late 8<sup>th</sup> until the late 10<sup>th</sup> century, when Odense developed into a town under royal influence, and it furthermore discusses general urbanisation processes in the southern part of Scandinavia. The second paper on Copenhagen presents a new interpretation of the earliest town formation and development from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the early 13<sup>th</sup> century using data from recent major excavations combined with Bayesian modelling of new radiocarbon dates and revisiting older archaeological information and written records. Both papers remind us of the importance of reevaluating the very fragmented archaeological and written records, and they demonstrate how recent years' enormous building and construction activities as well as extensive metal-detector surveys can provide completely new perspectives on town formation and the development of urbanism.

In 2016, we decided to expand the portfolio of the journal by introducing Special Issues. The first Special Issue was *Law and Order in Early and High Middle Ages, AD 400–1200* (volume 6, issue 2, 2017). The background for that issue was an international, cross-disciplinary conference that brought together archaeologists and legal historians, organised as a collaboration between the National Museum, Moesgaard Museum and the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen. The second Special Issue

is the present issue on *Early Towns and Urbanisation* (issue 1, 2018). We are very pleased to offer DJA as an opportunity to present research thematically to an international audience. There are no plans to make Special Issues a recurring feature in every volume, but we certainly invite readers to suggest themes for future special issues, as well as to participate as guest editors.

We have experimented with different formats in DJA's Special Issues, the first being a collection of conference papers. The current issue presents research based on many years of rescue excavations and archive studies. For this issue, we have exceptionally allowed long papers, but we do not intend to make this a permanent option at present. We have noticed a demand for longer papers in general and have raised the word count to 8000 for research papers. However, we would also like to encourage brief presentations of new discoveries from excavations, laboratories, museum collections and archives from all periods. Similarly, methodological and theoretical debates that reflect the archaeological research agenda and discoveries in Scandinavia are topics which will be looked upon favourably. To facilitate fruitful debates, we also encourage comments and reflections on as well as responses to already published papers.

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