

Editorial

Rune Iversen, Helene Agerskov Rose, Sarah Croix, Xenia Pauli Jensen, Thomas Grane and Lasse Vilien Sørensen

This year's editorial discussions have both included specific issues related to the individual articles and more general considerations. Regarding the latter: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Large Language Models (LLM) are being widely adopted in both the public and private sectors. Significant perspectives can undoubtedly be achieved by using AI and LLMs, but there are also major concerns regarding intellectual property infringement, loss of academic integrity, lack of transparency, questions about the validity of AI-generated data etc. At the *Danish Journal of Archaeology*, we acknowledge the value of responsibly applied AI tools in archaeological research and scholarly writing. However, we believe that AI cannot replace human critical thinking or expertise, and that authors should remain fully responsible and accountable for all content presented in their work.

To stay on top of the developments and to ensure transparency in the work that we publish, we introduce an AI policy for the journal, which can be accessed on our webpage [About the Journal | Danish Journal of Archaeology](#). The policy means that for all articles submitted after 1 January 2026, authors must declare and fully describe any use of AI. We are aware that technology develops fast and we will therefore continuously review and update our policy, as compliant AI tools and best practices continue to evolve.

This year's volume of the *Danish Journal of Archaeology* offers 11 exciting contributions by a number of Scandinavian and international scholars. The published articles are widely distributed across time and space: spanning the whole of prehistory, from the Mesolithic to the Viking Age, and include studies focused on northern Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. At the *Danish Journal of Archaeology*, we appreciate this diversity and are happy to publish more studies from our neighbouring countries, as these place the archaeological record of southern Scandinavia in a regional context, which is one of our main goals. Another goal that we

pursue is diversity of applied methods and theory, and also in this respect, the present volume offers a range of interesting approaches. These include paleoenvironmental reconstruction, experimental archaeology, use wear analysis, theoretical discussions and analysis of legacy data.

Out and Kuijper present a paleoenvironmental reconstruction of the Magleholm site at Vedbæk, northeastern Denmark, based on analysis of molluscs and botanical macroremains. Apart from providing information about the vegetation and landscape, the study also shows which resources were available to the people living in the Vedbæk fjord area during the Mesolithic Ertebølle period and the succeeding Early Neolithic.

The article by Stenak focuses on the lithic technology of the Neolithic Pitted Ware culture, applying an experimental archaeology-based perspective to the characteristic tanged flint arrowheads made from retouched blades. By working through the production sequence, Stenak is able to correlate the different arrowhead types with specific production stages. He thereby contributes with new technological and craft-based perspectives to the ongoing debate on the Pitted Ware arrowhead typology.

In the article 'The potential of overlooked material in museum repositories' Blank et al. revisit grave materials from the Falbygden area in western Sweden by combining archaeological, osteological, biochemical and geochemical methods. Through a multifaceted approach to the skeletal remains, the authors obtain new knowledge of burial practices, subsistence, health and mobility in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age.

Walsh et al. present new insights into the evolution of burial practices based on legacy data from a tumulus at Karlstrup, Denmark. Here, there is a long and complex history of re-use, and by analysing cultural traits within a cultural evolution framework, the authors trace the degree of change, continuity and coherence in burial traditions across the Late Neolithic 'Dagger Period' and Early Nordic Bronze Age.



Another example of new analyses of legacy data is Solberg and Schäfler's study of Early Bronze Age swordsmanship, based on museum artefacts mainly recovered during the 19th century and with only very limited contextual information. By applying a combination of use wear analysis and experimental archaeology, they demonstrate differences in wear mark distribution and clustering and suggest that these represent two contemporary local variations in fencing styles.

Sørgaard's article, which deals with the Late Neolithic transition from nomadic hunter-gatherers to sedentary farmers in southwestern Norway, goes beyond the traditional socioeconomic approaches and argues for a novel reshaping of human perceptions and their role in the world. The shift involved inter-human perspectivism and a growing focus on ancestral rituals, from simple commemorations to elaborate hero cults, with comparative insights from the Late Bronze Age supplementing the limited local archaeological record.

Schaefer-Di Maida's article on the Pre-Roman Iron Age burial ground at Mang de Bergen in northern Germany combines a traditional presentation of layout, burial rites and grave goods with environmental data. This enables a broader, regional contextualisation and a new approach to the process of transformation at the specific site and in the region in general.

The increasing use of metal detectors in Denmark has led to the discovery of numerous new artefact types, including Roman folding knives. Søndergård et al. present a small group of recent finds of figural handles of Roman folding knives from southern Scandinavia. They propose a Roman provincial origin for these, based on their examination of iconographic features, archaeological context and supplementary use of metallurgical analyses.

The research potential of metal-detecting finds has also been utilised by Jens Ulriksen in an extensive review of stray finds relating to warrior equipment from eastern Denmark in the Late Germanic Iron Age. By considering the distribution of these finds in the landscape and comparing the different types of objects represented to the known weapon burials from Bornholm, Ulriksen addresses previous interpretations of warrior organisation in this period as being based on a system of conscripts. His differing interpretation instead emphasises the importance of social bonds and mutual obligations.

Also focusing on metal objects, in his article Mats Skare revisits the question of the evolution of animal styles in the period *c.* AD 600-800 in the historical context of the beginning of the Viking Age. Through a re-evaluation of the definition of the Gripping Beast Style, Style III/E, Style 2.5/D, and Style II and their interrelationships, Skare returns to the iconography of the styles and proposes an animistic reading of their content. Their evolution thus reflects changing and opposing world views, clearly distinguishing between the Christian and non-Christian spheres of western and northern Europe.

Through digitisation and GIS mapping of unpublished lists of finds and constructions, Søren Sindbæk and Mogens Larsen revisit the excavation of the Viking Age fortress of Trelleborg during the 1940s. This allows them to study the recovery strategy of the excavation and examine the spatial distribution of the finds. They identify different work areas that were unrelated to the buildings of the fortress, contradicting the theory that the finds were left behind in a hurry when the fortress was unexpectedly destroyed.

We hope you will enjoy this volume!
The editorial team