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# Editorial

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Welcome to the third issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* (*EJA*) for 2018. In this issue, we present six articles: five contributing to our developing understanding of later prehistory in northern Europe and one offering a necessary critique of the field of historical archaeology. These are followed by eight book reviews. Below, we summarize and comment on these contributions.

Kerri Cleary's article focuses on the deposition of fragmented human remains and quern stones within Irish Bronze Age houses. She investigates a rich corpus of grey literature to present a compelling case that both human bone and stone objects were intentionally deposited in fragments in domestic contexts, particularly around phases of house abandonment. In line with much current research on the Irish and British Middle and Late Bronze Age, she argues convincingly that the boundaries between the domestic and funerary spheres became blurred, resulting in a concomitant blurring of boundaries between human remains and more quotidian material culture, from querns to cooking vessels. How these various materials relate specifically to the house and acts of dwelling within it was not fully elucidated, but could prove an avenue of research for future studies.

The capacity of new technology to unpick the phasing of Scandinavian Bronze Age rock art is the subject of Christian Horn and Rich Potter's article. Horn and Potter argue that the enhanced visualisations available via Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) demonstrate that many motifs are actually composites, with their various parts being carved by separate artists in a series of art making episodes extended over an unknown amount of time. They focussed their research on several human figures from a single rock art panel to demonstrate that in all three examples the final form was the product of at least five episodes of carving. Of particular interest is that in no case was the human figure the first part of the carved motif: two began with abstract images—circles or cup marks—and one with an isolated axe. We are used to thinking of panels of rock art as assemblages in which artists engaged in dialogue between older and new motifs, but it seems we will also have to start thinking this way about individual motifs and their sequences of development.

Similar themes run through Nina Helt Nielsen and colleagues' complex reanalysis of the internal chronology of Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Danish field systems. Nielsen and her co-authors apply a stochastic optimizing algorithm to the patterns of intersection angles and types of three field systems in order to develop a model of their specific sequence of construction and alteration. They suggest that the field systems share a

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relatively similar construction trajectory: first, primary boundaries were laid out; next these were subdivided into major parcels of more or less regular size which, over time, were increasingly subdivided; finally new fields were added which deviated from the original layout. They argue that this pattern indicates that, while field systems were likely initially laid out communally, major parcels were administered by individual farmsteads and were divided and subdivided in connection with inheritance patterns. This article demonstrates the value of new methodological applications to traditional fields of research, particularly when technical data such as algorithmic modelling are combined with discussions of social practices, like inheritance patterns and farming.

With Piotr Jacobsson and colleagues' article, we move from internal chronologies to absolute chronologies to assess the construction of two of the four crannogs in the Firth of Clyde through wiggle-match radiocarbon dating. The results of wiggle match dating were able to demonstrate that, in contradiction of earlier studies based on limited numbers of radiocarbon dates, the two crannogs were built centuries apart. These results also call into question earlier narratives about the four Clyde crannogs, which suggested they were built contemporaneously in response to a specific event and likely served similar functions, perhaps relating to the Roman invasion and construction of the Antonine Wall. Instead, the authors suggest that more attention must be paid to the local and specific chronological contexts in which each crannog was constructed; and, though they likely all developed out of a long-term tradition of building structures on water, they were very unlikely to have been used in the same ways by the same sorts of people. Crannogs have long been of interest to British and Irish archaeologists, and this latest re-analysis is a valuable reminder that, though archaeologists may group specific sites together within typologies, those typologies themselves are artificial and do not necessarily reflect the practices and perspectives of the prehistoric people who constructed and occupied those sites.

Shifting our attention to Iron Age Finland, Anna Wessman and her colleagues have returned to the well-known but still poorly understood Levänluhta site, a first millennium AD burial site in a lake. The authors present the results of a series of analyses related to this site, including environmental sampling, field walking and test pitting, pXRF and typological studies of the metal artefacts and radiocarbon dating of a number of animal bones, in order to develop a better understanding of Levänluhta's use and significance. The site itself is shown to have been isolated within a marshy wetland; and the burials, being wholly unlike the cremation rite which dominated Finland at this time, appear to represent a novel rite—either one not yet widely recognised archaeologically or a form of deviant burial unique to this site.

The final paper in this issue is Sandra Montón-Subías and Almudena Hernando's important post-colonial and feminist critique of the practice of historical archaeology. They argue that our approach to the recent past is frequently, if unintentionally, Eurocentric as it is premised on the idea that history means change over time. Basing their work in feminist theory and archaeology, they suggest that archaeologists need to better value and account for social continuity, particularly in the face of hegemonic colonialism. Echoing the voices of indigenous archaeologists and historians from Australia, North America and elsewhere, they issue a call to arms to Europe-based historical archaeologists to promote greater ontological heterogeneity in our archaeological narratives about the past.

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In our reviews section, we begin with the critical evaluation of a popular book on the 'story' of archaeological discoveries and advances. There follows praise for two edited volumes on broad subjects: one on the work of mortuary archaeologists, the other on archaeomalacology. Next, Pierre Pétrequin and colleagues' latest two volumes on Alpine jade in the European Neolithic are welcomed. We then turn to two valuable regional contributions to European later prehistory: the first synthesizing current knowledge on the Late Neolithic, Early Bronze Age and Middle Bronze Age A in the Netherlands in the light of new data generated by development-led archaeology; the second surveying cultural and population change between the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age in the Middle Elbe-Salle area of central eastern German in the light of new mitochondrial DNA data. Praise is also given for an interdisciplinary study of Viking Age staffs, and for a timely book on the history of silk production and trade which establishes some new understandings—for example, that silk production began in India at almost the same time as in China.

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