




# 2024

## UrbNet Annual Report

A Centre of Excellence funded by the Danish National Research Foundation  
Hosted by Aarhus University





# UrbNet

## Mission Statement

Centre for Urban Network Evolutions (UrbNet) explores the archaeology and history of urban societies and their networks from the Ancient Mediterranean to medieval Northern Europe and to the Indian Ocean World.

We are an interdisciplinary research initiative, which integrates new methods from contextual cultural studies rooted in the humanities with the natural sciences.

Approaching urbanism as a network dynamic, we aim to develop a high-definition archaeology to determine how urban networks catalyzed societal and environmental expansions and crises in the past.

### Annual Report 2024

Cover illustration: View of the scenae frons building in the South Theatre in Gerasa/Jerash, Jordan, 1931. Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery.

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# Greetings from the Director

I am proud to present UrbNet's decadal report, which showcases the wide-ranging results produced within UrbNet and together with numerous of our collaborators in 2024, reaching the world far beyond UrbNet in an array of high-impact ways. In 2024, as in previous years, the centre's dedicated team of researchers and supporting staff has presented their groundbreaking results in high-impact journals and publications, but they have also engaged in a number of other ways, reaching far beyond the walls of academia into society. One brilliant example is the outreach programme in archaeology, which has been implemented nation-wide through UrbNet's collaboration with the NGO Science Club Denmark (Videnskabsklubben) and which you can read more about in the report. Our research results and their impacts as well as our thematic workshops and conferences, have once again cemented the enduring impact of our high-definition approach to urban archaeology, not only in a national context but also internationally – an impact which we are convinced will have repercussions far beyond the UrbNet's lifetime.

## Highlights in 2024

UrbNet kicked off 2024 with a strong start with the launch of the infrastructure project, *A Digital Archive Platform for Research on the Danish Inter-World War Archaeological Engagement in the Middle East*, funded by the Carlsberg Foundation. The project focuses on the Danish engagement in archaeology in the Middle East during the interworld war period. It builds on UrbNet's approach to understanding urban archaeology, but in this case, expands to do so in a historiographical framework. While 2024 saw the beginning of new projects, it also marked the conclusion of others, including the project, *Circular Economy and Urban Sustainability in Antiquity*, which centred on Palmyra in the Syrian Desert as a key case study. This project, along with UrbNet's other research initiatives on archive archaeology – an ever-expanding field of research –, has paved the way for a string of publications in 2024. Prominently among these stand *The Oxford Handbook of Palmyra*; the edited volume *Palmyra in Perspective*; the JEMAHS special issue *Between the Lines*; as well as the edited volume *Trends*

in *Archive*

*Archaeology*:

*Current Research*

*on Archival Material from Fieldwork and its Implications for Archaeological Practice*, all of which are also among the highlights in this report.

Another launch that I am extremely proud of is our nation-wide archaeology programme, which UrbNet has developed in collaboration with the Danish NGO Science Club, and which was rolled out across Denmark in the fall of 2024. It is not only the first interdisciplinary programme with a strong focus on humanities in Science Club Denmark's portfolio, but the archaeology programme also received a top evaluation among all Science Club's programmes in 2024. It has been and is a privilege to be involved in introducing archaeological research and the importance of past societies to the 10-12-year-old 'mini researchers' and, in doing so, strengthening the perception of the central role of the humanities among future generations. That UrbNetters are frontrunners also in this respect might come as no surprise, but it is wonderful to see our engaged researchers also taking time to lift the educational levels outside university and caring passionately about communicating the importance of deep cultural studies to the young generation.

Above all, I am extremely proud of how UrbNet's research *renommé* has been cemented even further within the international research community. For my part, I was in 2024 invited to deliver the prestigious Thomas Spencer Jerome Lectures at the University of Michigan and at the American Academy in Rome, as well as to serve as a keynote speaker at Academia Europaea's 35th Annual Building Bridges conference. Both invitations stand as a testament to UrbNet's high-quality research and international acknowledgement. I was also deeply honoured to receive the Carlsberg Foundation Research Prize 2024, a recognition of how UrbNet has been at the forefront of pioneering research that has and still is transforming urban archaeology globally. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the entire UrbNet team, whose commitment and hard





work have been crucial to these accomplishments. Each and every member of UrbNet's strong team is a part of making our joint successes possible.

Last but not least, as we approach the end of UrbNet's lifetime, I am incredibly pleased that UrbNetters, in 2024, secured funding for several projects that extend beyond the centre's duration while building upon the groundbreaking results and innovative approaches that UrbNet has pioneered. This includes the projects *Lost Cities Rediscovered* (LOCI) and *Locally Crafted Empires* (LoCiS), supported respectively by the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the Carlsberg Foundation with a Semper Ardens Advance grant; UrbNet's Deputy Director Søren M. Sindbæk's new Danish-Polish excavation project in Wolin's Viking Age harbour, supported by grants from the Salling Foundations and the Aarhus University Research Foundation; as well as Associate Professor Sarah Croix's new projects, *Samfundsbrud indførelsen af kristendommen i Danmarks senvikingetid*, supported by the Augustinus Foundation, and *Milestone: Change that Mattered in the Late Iron Age*, supported by the Carlsberg Foundation with a Semper Ardens Accelerate grant. These projects are marks of the excellent research undertaken within UrbNet and the ability to develop new frontrunner research ideas. These projects will stand as testament to UrbNet's legacy and to the innovative and collaborative research carried out within the field of global urban archaeology at the centre. I look forward to seeing the continued impact and growth of these initiatives in the years to come.

## People

In February 2024, Associate Professor Sarah Croix took up her role as UrbNet's second embedment position. We also welcomed several new employees to the centre, including an assistant professor, co-financed with the Department of Geoscience, two postdocs, and five research assistants. Additionally, among the administrative staff, we welcomed a new centre administrator and three student assistants. All of them smoothly integrated into the broader UrbNet community as engaged members of our dynamic and supportive research environment.

In the spring semester of 2024, we hosted Christopher H. Hallett (UC Berkeley) as a residential scholar and visiting professor, while Assistant Professor Elizabeth A. Murphy (Florida State University) joined us in the fall semester. Both scholars made invaluable contributions to UrbNet through their engaged participation in seminars, teaching, lectures, and, not least, by generously sharing their expert knowledge and engaging in daily collaboration and discussions with UrbNet colleagues at all levels.

In 2024, we also said farewell to a few individuals, all of whom moved on to new longer-term positions. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all former UrbNetters and wish them the very best in their future endeavours. It is truly rewarding to

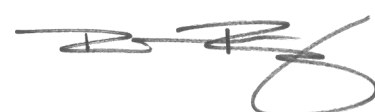
see how their research continues to build upon UrbNet's legacy, and we are grateful that many of them are now among our most valued collaborators in UrbNet's wide project portfolio. While the transition to longer-termed positions has generally been the case for our academic staff throughout the years, many of whom are now in permanent positions at universities across the world, it has also become evident in 2024 that UrbNet's focus on supporting long-term career development extends to our administrative staff. Both our former Centre Administrator and Assistant Centre Administrator have moved on to permanent and high-profile positions within the administrative sector, respectively outside and within the university. This is a further mark of UrbNet's excellence and the power that transparency, openness about job opportunities beyond a time limited centre contract and focus on career development hold.

## Acknowledgements

One of my favourite traditions in connection with our annual report is to express my gratitude to those who have contributed to UrbNet's success over the past year. I would like to extend a special thanks to the Danish National Research Foundation for its continued support, which enables us to pose research questions that would be impossible to answer without the support for long-term and large-scale research. I also wish to extend my thanks to the other funding bodies, both public and private, that have supported various projects and areas within UrbNet's orbit. I thank warmly UrbNet's affiliated researchers as well as the research institutions we collaborate with, which enable us to conduct research at an international top tier level. It is a privilege to pursue our research together with some of the most skilled experts world-wide.

Finally, I extend my deepest gratitude to all UrbNetters, who consistently and passionately dedicate themselves to their research and work and to that of their peers with enthusiasm, commitment and collegiality. Their insistence on being supportive colleagues and on creating an environment of inclusion and cohesion plays an invaluable part in shaping the atmosphere and daily framework at UrbNet and beyond – and this is above all crucial for the enabling of truly excellent research.

Rubina Raja  
Aarhus, March 2025



# Staff

## UrbNet Leadership



**Rubina Raja**

Professor, Centre Director  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Søren M. Sindbæk**

Professor, Deputy Director  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University

## Associate Professors (embedment positions)



**Tom Brughmans**

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**Sarah Croix**

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## Assistant Professors and Postdocs



**Olympia Bobou**

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School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Cristina Boschetti**

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**Ilaria Bucci**

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**María Coto-Sarmiento**

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**Eduardo Napoleon Herrera Malatesta**

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School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Matteo Mazzamurro**

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Postdoc (Past Social Networks Project, funded by the Carlsberg Foundation)  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Michael Reiß**

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Visiting Postdoc (HAbIT, funded by the Swedish Research Council)  
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## PhD students



**Rowan Stanley English**

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PhD Student  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Rhiannon Garth Jones**

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School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Mette Lang**

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PhD Student  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Derek James Parrott**

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## Research Assistants



**Cristina Boschetti**

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School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Lilian Dibbern**

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**Peter H. Mikkelsen**

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**Jesper Olsen**

Associate Professor  
Department of Physics and Astronomy, Aarhus University



**Stephanie Wynne-Jones**

Professor  
Department of Archaeology, University of York

## Administration



**Christina Song Levisen**

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School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Sine Grove Saxkjær**

Centre Administrator  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Mie Egelund Lind**

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School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



**Julia Steding**

Administrative Officer (Videnskabsklubben)  
School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University



## Student assistants



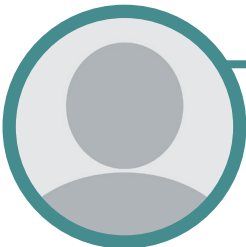
**Sofie Skipper Lauritzen**

*The Aarhus-Yale Digital Archive Platform for  
the Danish Inter-World War Archaeological Engagement in the Middle East*



**Thomas Greve Rasmussen**

*The Aarhus-Yale Digital Archive Platform for  
the Danish Inter-World War Archaeological Engagement in the Middle East*



**Amanda Leighton Schjødt**

*MINERVA*



**Johan Trap-Godau**

*UrbNet &  
Pasform*

## Visiting Scholars



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University of California, Berkeley



**Elizabeth A. Murphy**

Florida State University

## Research Affiliates

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Trine A. Hass  
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Emanuele E. Intagliata  
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Augusta McMahon  
Professor, University of Chicago

Jörg Rüpke  
Professor, Max-Weber-Kolleg, University of Erfurt

Eivind Heldaas Seland  
Professor, University of Bergen

Christopher Smith  
Professor, University of St Andrews

Mike E. Smith  
Professor, Arizona State University

Jean-Baptiste Yon  
Director, Laboratoire HISOMA







# Urb Highl





# Net lights

# High-definition study of space usage in a Viking-age house in Ribe

**Project** Northern Emporium Project  
**Director** Søren M. Sindbæk  
**Funding** The Carlsberg Foundation

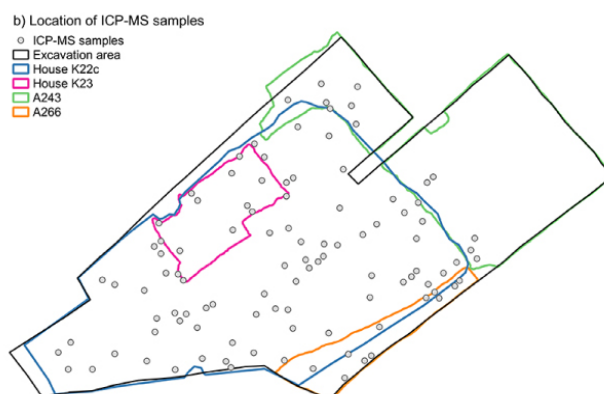
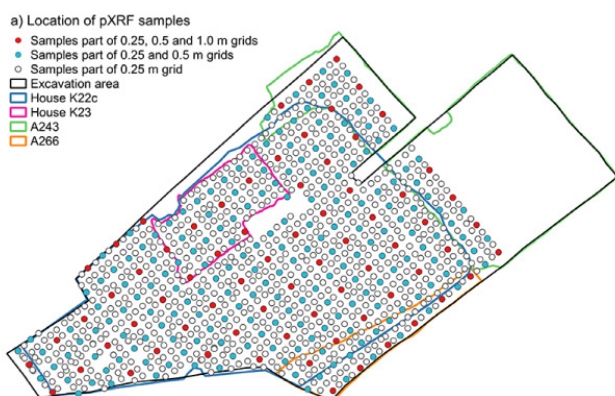
Trant, P.L.K., Wouters, B., Croix, S., Sindbæk, S.M., Deckers, P. & Kristiansen, S. Munch. (2024). A multi-proxy geochemical and micromorphological study of the use of space and stratigraphy of a Viking-age house in Ribe, Denmark, *Archaeological and Anthropological Science* 16, 59.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-024-01962-1>

High-definition approaches are transforming our understanding of urban archaeology while multi-proxy studies can reveal more than ever the potential of soil and sedimentary contexts. To test this frontier in Viking-age Ribe, Denmark, this study examines floor layers from AD 790–830 in unprecedented high resolution. The aim was to understand stratigraphy and indoor space using soil geochemistry mapping (pXRF) on a 0.25 x 0.25 m grid was combined with soil micromorphology and artefact distribution sampling. The occupation phase was largely formed by stratigraphic unit A263, which belonged to the upper phase (phase c) of house K22.



Interpretation of the use of space associated to the two Viking Age house K22c

Results show the occupation phase included short-lived floor phases from two consecutive houses with complex stratigraphy. The older house had domestic functions with ten well-defined areas for activities, like food preparation and weaving. The younger house included a metal workshop. New elements from the soil mapping like arsenic, manganese, and sulfur were identified, enhancing the archaeological interpretations. This multi-proxy approach refines our understanding of complex stratigraphy and urban life dynamics in Viking-age Ribe.



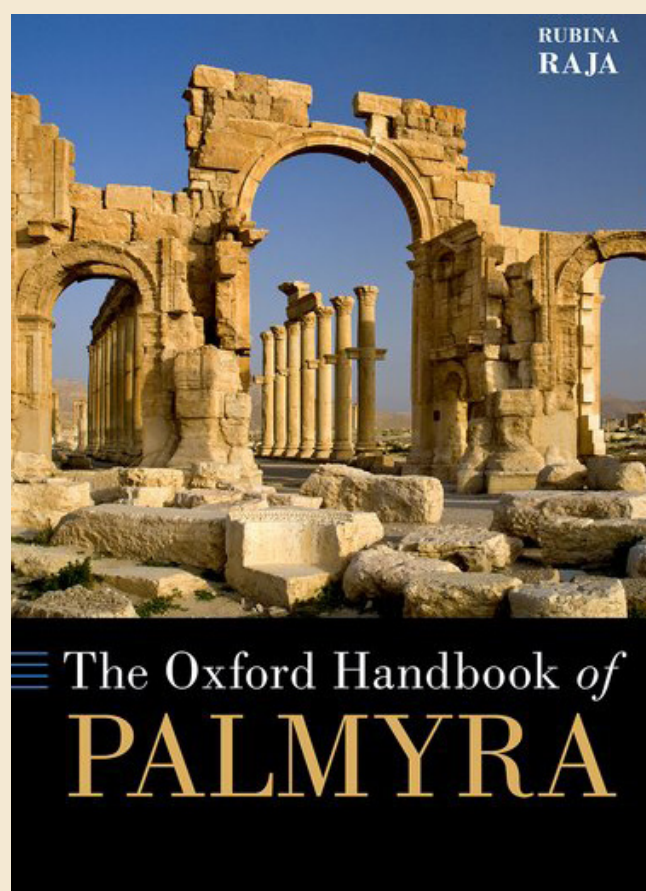


# The Oxford Handbook of Palmyra

<b>Projects</b>	Circular economy and urban sustainability in Antiquity & A Digital Archive Platform for Research on the Danish Inter-World War Archaeological Engagement in the Middle East
<b>Director</b>	Rubina Raja
<b>Funding</b>	The Augustinus Foundation, the Carlsberg Foundation, and UrbNet

UrbNet focuses on delivering high-impact research on urban societies of the past and their networks. Palmyra, the famous oasis city in the Syrian desert, is an urban site in an anomalous but central location, making it a pivotal test case in the exploration of the evolution of urbanism and ancient urban networks in the Near Eastern region. In 2024, *The Oxford Handbook of Palmyra*, edited by Rubina Raja, was published. This comprehensive and in-depth work addresses the archaeology and history of Palmyra, spanning from its pre-Roman phases through to the destruction and looting that ensued following the outbreak of the conflict in Syria in 2011. The volume consists of 37 chapters authored by leading experts, including ancient and global historians, archaeologists, epigraphers, and philologists, each with a particular research interest in Palmyra, the ancient city of Tadmor. Several contributors have conducted fieldwork in Palmyra prior to the onset of the conflict in 2011, while others bring expertise in diverse aspects of the ancient oasis city, its interactions with the wider world, and its role within regional and international trade networks. In addition to an introductory chapter, the handbook is structured into five sections, concluding with a postludium chapter that focuses on the period following the outbreak of the 2011 conflict.

While the impressive monumental remains of Palmyra have captivated travelers and scholars throughout history, the Handbook further emphasizes the city's central role in the understanding of urbanism and networks in antiquity. With UrbNet's groundbreaking research in this field as a catalyst, it is no coincidence that Palmyra has become the first ancient urban site to have its own Oxford Handbook.



## Contributors

Nathanael Andrade, Nicole Blanc, Olympia Bobou, Eleonora Cussini, Lucinda Dirven, Peter Edwell, Eugenia Equini Schneider, Hélène Eristov, Michal Gawlikowski, Udo Hartmann, John Healey, Agnes Henning, Maura Heyn, Emanuele Intagliata, Karol Juchniewicz, Slawomir Kowalski, Nathalia Kristensen, Robyn Le Blanc, Christian Meyer, Rubina Raja, Annie Sartre-Fauriat, Andreas Schmidt-Colinet, Katia Schörle, Eivind Heldaas Seland, Andrew Smith, Julia Steding, Claude Vibert-Guigue, Dagmara Wielgosz-Rondolino, Jean-Baptiste Yon, Gioia Zenoni

*"The Oxford Handbook of Palmyra is an ambitious, well-crafted, and thoroughly researched introduction to one of the ancient world's most famous and iconic sites."*

- Marco Ferrario, Bryn Mawr Classical Review

# Elephant ivory rings in early medieval graves reconsidered

**Project** The North Sea, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean  
**PhD student** Rowan Stanley English  
**Funding** UrbNet

Elephant ivory in the past conjures up ideas of beautiful objects and skilled craftspeople. This was not the case in early medieval England, the area with the largest concentration of ivory objects in pre-modern times. The article details the 752 pieces of elephant ivory found in furnished cremation and inhumation graves in early medieval England between the 5th and 7th centuries AD. These pieces of ivory come in one form; solid rings cut from the root end of the elephant tusk that were used to form the opening of bags that hung at the waist. The study carried out here fully considers these objects, detailing their use, and distribution while also providing a new temporal model for their date. Rather than dating these objects broadly dated to the 5th-8th centuries, because of this study, it can be said all ivory ring bags were deposited before 560 AD.



An ivory bag ring from the cemetery at Barrington (B), Cambridgeshire, from Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge 1934.802. Image used under Creative Commons license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

A reconstruction drawing of an individual wearing an ivory ring bag. Image drawn by G. Furlan.



A study such as this is extremely important, as cremation graves in which these ivory rings mostly come from, cannot yield little biomolecular information due to their treatment with fire. This means that careful archaeological considerations have never been more important, when there is little hope of carrying out scientific analysis. These findings are new; this article is the first complete survey of these objects in lowland Britain and the first substantial study of them for almost a quarter of a century.

The publication is the basis for part of Rowan's PhD dissertation, *The North Sea, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean*, that details the ivory trade from the exploitation of elephants in on the Indian sub-continent and eastern Africa, through the urban centres of the Mediterranean like Rome and Alexandria, and across the alps to furnished graves north of the Alps, like those in Rowan's article from early medieval lowland Britain. Some of the work for this article was carried out at the University of Cambridge and refined and expanded in the author's time as a PhD student at UrbNet.

English, R. S. (2024). Elephant ivory rings in early medieval graves reconsidered, *Early Medieval Europe*, 32: 306–336. <https://doi.org/10.1111/emed.12715>



# The arrival of the emperor's glass in Ribe

**Project** Northern Emporium Project  
**Director** Søren M. Sindbæk  
**Funding** The Carlsberg Foundation

During the early Middle Ages, glass played an essential role in the construction of the palaces, cathedrals and monasteries that laid the foundation for the newly established Carolingian empire in Northwestern Europe. At the same time, at the northern edge of this empire, the Vikings were likewise major consumers of glass, but here it was used for ornamentation (beads) and funnel vessels for drinking their precious mead.

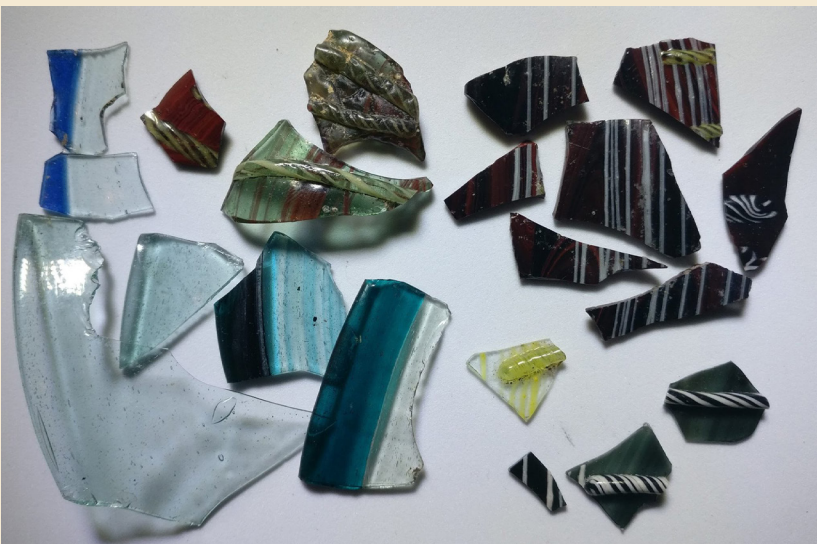
Although most of the glass that sustained both of these societies was transported from the eastern Mediterranean where it had been stripped from abandoned Roman buildings, the reign of the emperor Charlemagne (768-814 CE) brought with it for the first time the innovation of glass making in Northern Europe. This so-called 'wood-ash' glass was produced from ashes of burned beach trees mixed with quartz (sand) pebbles and is believed to have been first produced near the palace of Paderborn. However, the timing of the earliest production is uncertain as the estimates are based on indirect evidence and written records reporting the destruction of the palace.

Barfod, G.H., Feveile, L. Lund & Sindbæk, S.M. (2024). The emperor's new glass: The introduction of Carolingian wood ash glass in North Sea trade, *Archaeometry*, 66.3: 543-551. <https://doi.org/10.1111/arcm.12968>

Now, however, an UrbNet research team led by Professor Søren M. Sindbæk can date the first production of wood ash glass – and thereby set a date for the beginning of Europe's medieval glass industry. The results are presented in the article 'The emperor's new glass: The introduction of Carolingian wood ash glass in North Sea trade' published in the journal *Archaeometry*.

The Viking trading site at Ribe, excavated 2017–2018, revealed workshops with thousands of artefacts including nearly 20,000 pieces of glass. Using new high-definition approaches in these excavations allowed for the first time for a resolution down to a few decades within the extremely well-preserved stratigraphy. This gave the idea to use the chronological framework to date the first arrival of Emperor's Charlemagne's new glass – and thus for the first precisely date its appearance in the historical record.

By screening nearly 250 glass sherds selected throughout entire stratigraphy of the trading site, the researchers were able to pinpoint the first arrival to 790 AD. This data matches well the estimated date of destruction of the Palace of Paderborn. They furthermore found wood-ash glass to feature prominently from that point forward. Thus, very close trade ties existed between the Vikings in Ribe and the Charlemagne's kingdom to the South.



# Archiving urban excavations

Archive Archaeology has grown as a field of research over the last years and UrbNet has taken the lead on a series of initiatives concerning archival material from urban excavations – both in Scandinavia and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In that context the series *Archive Archaeology* founded by Rubina raja and published with Brepols Publisher has gained much international attention and several volumes have been published already.

## Volumes in the series

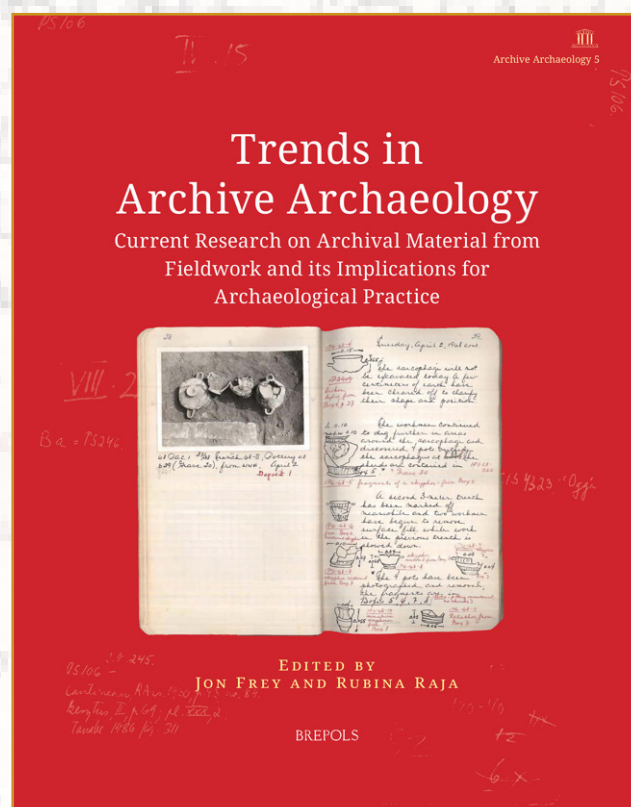
**Trends in Archive Archaeology: Current Research on Archival Material from Fieldwork and its Implications for Archaeological Practice**  
Jon Frey, Rubina Raja (eds)

**Shaping Archaeological Archives: Dialogues between Fieldwork, Museum Collections, and Private Archives**  
Rubina Raja (ed)

**The Ingholt Archive: The Palmyrene Material, Transcribed with Commentary and Bibliography**  
Olympia Bobou, Amy C. Miranda, Rubina Raja, Jean-Baptiste Yon

**Archival Historiographies: The Impact of Twentieth-Century Legacy Data on Archaeological Investigations**  
Olympia Bobou, Amy C. Miranda, Rubina Raja (eds)

**Shifting Horizons: Observations from a Ride Through the Syrian Desert and Asia Minor. A Translation of Johannes Elith Østrup's 'Skiftende horisonter'**  
Cisca Spencer

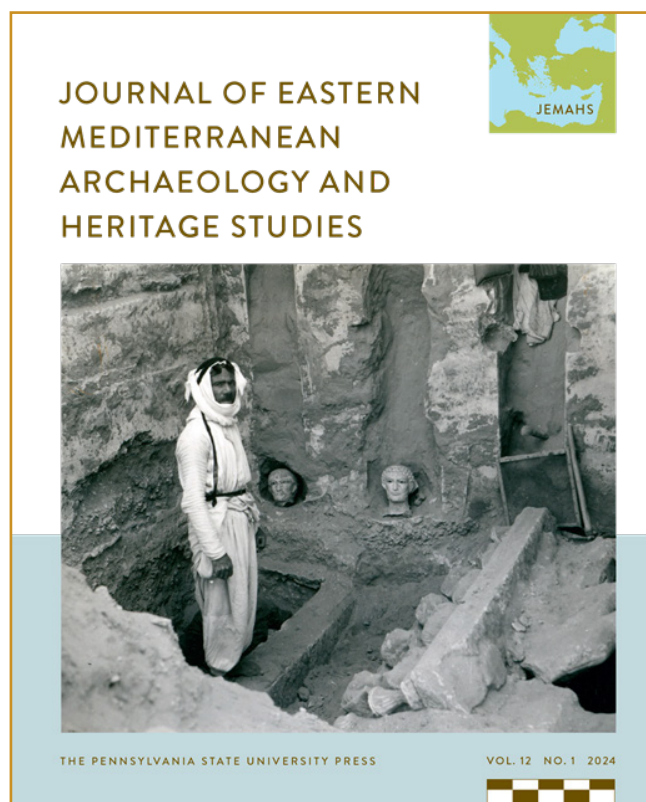


In 2024 volume 5, *Trends in Archive Archaeology: Current Research on Archival Material from Fieldwork and its Implications for Archaeological Practice*, edited by Jon Frey and Rubina Raja was published.

The volume contains nine contributions by scholars who all both conduct fieldwork and archival work connected to their fieldwork in some shape. In the volume, they came together to share their insights with other scholars by outlining which trends and possibilities they see for further contextualized work on archaeological archives.

Earlier in 2024 Rubina Raja also edited a special issue of *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies*, Special Issue (12.1): *Between the Lines*, in which a number of contributions addressed the connections between fieldwork practice and archival material from excavations of the early 20th century in the eastern Mediterranean.

In her agenda contribution to the issue "BETWEEN THE LINES. Toward a Recontextualized Archaeological Practice through Dialogues between Fieldwork and Archival Research", Rubina Raja situated the field as it has developed over the last years and also positioned UrbNet's role in advocating a better integration of old and new material from the field and the value in reevaluating archival material and the unleashed knowledge locked in such archives.





# Circular economy and urban sustainability in Antiquity

**Director**  
**Funding**

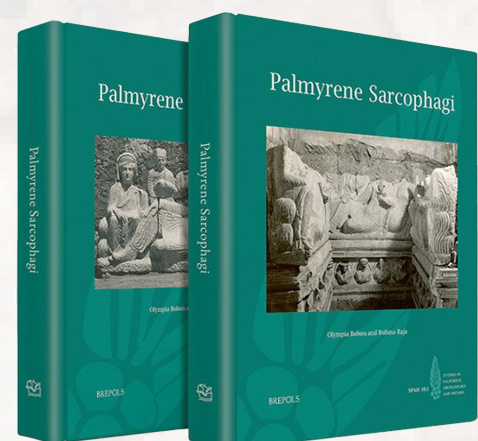
Rubina Raja

The Carlsberg Foundation, the Augustinus Foundation, and UrbNet

The focus area of research *Circular economy and urban sustainability in Antiquity: Comparative perspectives from the ancient world with a point of departure in Roman Palmyra* was brought to completion in 2024 after five successful and highly productive years.

The research undertaken aimed to provide new insights into economic structures—broadly speaking—in the ancient world with a point of departure in Palmyra in the Syrian Desert. By examining Palmyra with a point of departure in models of circular as well as alternative economies – both on macro and micro-scales, the project challenged the notion that ancient cities were merely "consumer cities". Instead, it explored how urban centres like Palmyra – located in remote or untypical places – managed resources through local and regional self-sufficiency over centuries, and looked at them as models of sustainable living on a variety of levels over time.

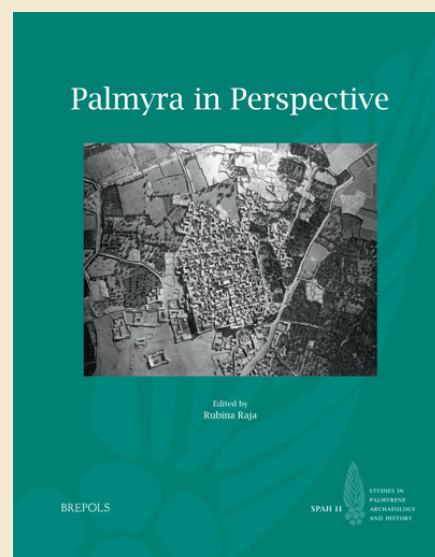
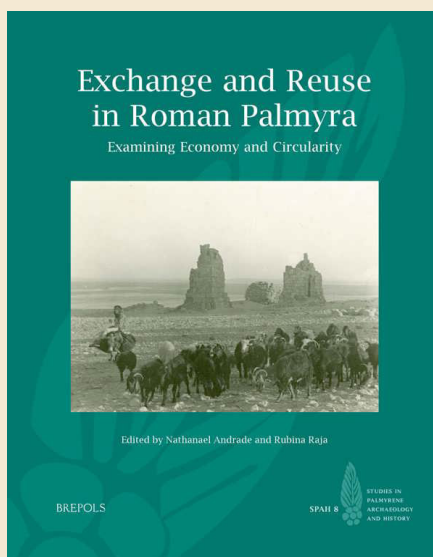
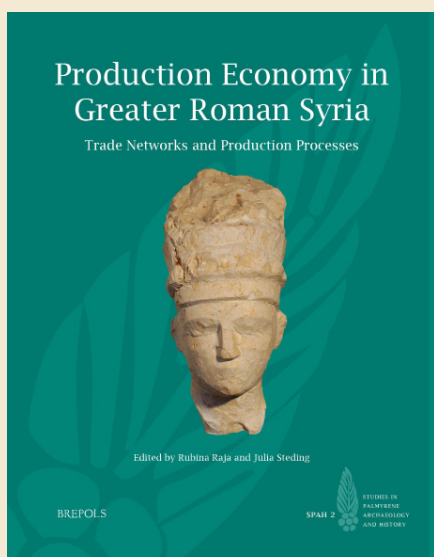
Through a full-quantification approach to data collection and based also partly on data collected already in the *Palmyra Portrait Project* (funded by the Carlsberg Foundation and directed by Professor Rubina Raja) but expanded majorly to other realms in the new project, the project utilized proxies to indicate the economic, social, and cultural evolution of Palmyra, addressing sustainability and resource management. Changes and continuities in material culture helped identify challenges, threats, and opportunities as patterns over time within a diverse economic framework that was investigated using multi-causal formal simulation models among other approaches. The analyses used archaeological and literary data, primary sources, as a point of departure, including coins, sculptures, monuments, inscriptions, and other material groups such as like pottery and glass. These sources revealed economic patterns and fluctuations in Palmyrene society over three hundred years, highlighting extensive resource reuse and recycling and the changing approaches to resource use and implementation as well as exploitation. By combining methods from the humanities and natural sciences, the project contextualized its findings within cultural historical frameworks, shedding light on broader mechanisms driving circular economic systems also in current socio-political situations.





The project has played a key role in shaping the agenda for studies of alternative economies in antiquity through a series of international conferences and workshops, including *Exchange and Reuse: Economy and Circularity at Roman Palmyra*, 11-12 October 2021; *Palmyra in Perspective*, 8-9 December 2022; *Invisible Economies in the Ancient World*, 18-19 December 2023; and *Palmyra, the Roman Empire, and the Third-Century Crisis*, 7-8 March 2024.

These events have led to the publication of conference proceedings and articles, with the latest ones currently in press. Among the project's publications were, in addition to numerous book chapters and articles in both proceedings and high-impact journals, two monographs and a total of 11 edited volumes.





# Semper Ardens Advance Locally Crafted Empires (LoCiS)

<b>Project</b>	Locally Crafted Empires: Intersecting identities under Imperial rule in Western Asia as expressed in local portrait cultures (1st c. BCE–5th c. CE)
<b>Director</b>	Rubina Raja
<b>Funding</b>	The Carlsberg Foundation

In December 2024, the Carlsberg Foundation granted 24 million DKK to Professor Rubina Raja for the project *Locally Crafted Empires: Intersecting identities under Imperial rule in Western Asia as expressed in local portrait cultures (1st c. BCE–5th c. CE)*. This Semper Ardens Advance Grant idea could not have been developed without the possibilities for long-term research within UrbNet and the *Palmyra Portrait Project*, showing in which ways synergies can be created in the intersection between urban archaeology and collaborative cross-disciplinary research. These combined efforts have opened new avenues for understanding the complexities of ancient cultures, their urban networks, and the influence of imperial powers in shaping local identities.

The LoCiS project will investigate the rich but understudied local portrait cultures of ancient Western Asia with the aim of determining how they reflect local and regional entanglements with and responses to different imperial hegemonies. The project aims to reveal new knowledge about intersecting identities on an individual, local and regional level through a *long durée* perspective with a global historical outlook. The thousands of surviving portraits have not been studied comprehensively neither diachronically, nor in contexts or in cross-regional perspectives.

The project is planned to kick off in 2025 and will run for five years involving a substantial group of international scholars, postdoctoral fellows and PhD students.

The grant underlines Rubina Raja's standing as an internationally leading capacity within classical archaeology and the cultures of the Greek and Roman worlds and their extensive networks. It also cements Aarhus University as a powerhouse for core humanities projects, underlining that research taking empirical data as a point of departure allows for deep insights into the human past, while drawing threads all the way up to today's modern societies.

While this project diverges somewhat from the specific agendas of UrbNet and the *Palmyra Portrait Project*, it demonstrates that long-term research initiatives in the humanities can foster the development of new high-impact research ideas over time and within interdisciplinary frameworks. Through such collaborative and sustained efforts, the project will not only offer unprecedented insights into the multilayered narratives of the varied individual experiences in antiquity but also push the boundaries of traditional scholarship and contribute to a paradigm shift through a materially grounded decolonization debate in the Classics.



Mummy Portrait of a Youth, A.D. 150–200,  
Digital image courtesy of Getty's Open Content Program.

# Danish-Polish research project to shed light on shared Viking past

<b>Project</b>	The Wolin project
<b>Director</b>	Søren M. Sindbæk
<b>Funding</b>	The Salling Foundations and Aarhus University Research Foundation

A new major Danish-Polish archaeological collaboration shall introduce UrbNet's high-definition approach to urban excavations to the town of Wolin, Poland's most famous Viking Age site.

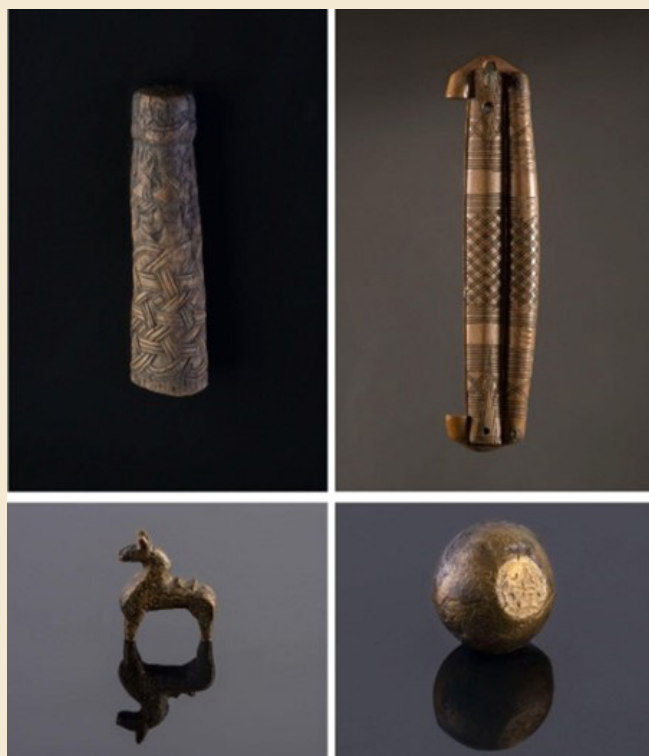
Researchers from Aarhus and Wolin will carry out a major excavation in 2025-2027 in Wolin's Viking Age harbour, exploring the shared heritage of Denmark and Poland's Viking Age history. The Salling Foundations and Aarhus University Research Foundation have joined forces to support the newly established collaboration.

At the centre of the project are the exciting new excavations, but it will also form the basis for museum exhibitions, among other things. The work will also involve students from Denmark and Poland.

In connection with King Frederik X's visit to Poland in January 2024, Aarhus University and Moesgaard Museum entered into an agreement with the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology at the Polish Academy of Sciences (IAE PAS), Wolin Municipality and the Association of the Slavic and Viking Center "Wolin-Jomsborg-Vineta" to collaborate on archaeological research focused on Wolin.

Project partner Dr Wojciech Filipowiak, Polish Academy of Sciences, will lead the excavations in Wolin. The excavation will be a key to new finds and information that can unlock Wolin's Slavic-Scandinavian heritage. Today Wolin is one of the largest archaeological sites in the Baltic Sea region, much of which has yet to be explored.

The town of Wolin in Poland was a legendary place in the Viking Age world. According to legend, the town was home to the fortress of Jomsborg and the Danish King Harald Bluetooth is said to have died here around 987.



Examples of Viking Age artefacts found in Wolin during the excavations (Photo: A. Kaube, Regional Museum in Wolin)

The Salling Foundations and Aarhus University Research Foundation are supporting a major Danish-Polish archaeological collaboration in the Viking Age town of Wolin - the Jomsborg of the sagas.

The Salling Foundations have donated DKK 2,18 million to the project. Aarhus University Research Foundation has donated DKK 3 million to the project.



# Two new projects will investigate the societal impact of major transformations in Denmark in the 1st millennium CE

<b>Projects</b>	Samfundsbrud indførelsen af kristendommen i Danmarks senvikingetid & Milestone: Change that mattered in the Late Iron Age
<b>Director</b>	Sarah Croix
<b>Funding</b>	The Augustinus Foundation and the Carlsberg Foundation

The Augustinus Foundation and the Carlsberg Foundation have generously decided to support two major research projects, *Samfundsbrud indførelsen af kristendommen i Danmarks senvikingetid* and *Milestone: Change that mattered in the Late Iron Age*, with a grant from the 'Kulturarv' scheme and a Semper Ardens Accelerate grant respectively. Both projects will start in 2025 and will be headed by Associate Professor Sarah Croix, who received tenure as the second embedded position at UrbNet in February 2024.

The projects will address a common challenge: how do we assess significant change in archaeology and its impact on the lived life of past communities and individuals? Following the principles of high-definition archaeology developed at UrbNet, with a focus on high-precision chronologies, both projects will define archaeological markers for social and cultural change and anchor them in time in order to weave local experiences into grander narratives.



One of the more than 700 burials at Lindholm Høje, marked by a ship-shaped stone setting. Photo: Nordjyske Museer.



Silver cross-pendant from Munksjørup, mid-11th century. Photo: Bjarne H. Nielsen, Vesthimmerlands Museum.

The two projects are, however, distinct in their organization, objectives and materials. *Samfundsbrud* is designed as a collaborative project aiming at promoting research in Danish cultural heritage and involves several partner institutions: Vesthimmerlands Museum, Nordjyske Museer, Museum Østjylland and Moesgaard. It will focus on the process of Christianization which impacted religious practices, burial customs and use of the landscape in the late Viking Age and discuss how and when the new faith transformed the life and afterlife of local communities in North and East Jutland.

In contrast, *Milestone* is centred around a strong research team of junior scholars based at Aarhus University and supported by collaborations with the Free University Brussels, the Aarhus AMS Center and the Nordjyske Museer. It will use the exceptional archaeological site of Lindholm Høje and its cemetery of more than 700 burials spanning more than six centuries to track down change affecting a single community over time and on multiple scales.

# Lost Cities Rediscovered

<b>Project</b>	Lost Cities Rediscovered (LOCI): Reexamining Excavation Histories in Late Ottoman and Mandate Western Asia
<b>Director</b>	Rubina Raja
<b>Funding</b>	The Gerda Henkel Foundation

In November 2024, Rubina Raja received a major grant from the Gerda Henkel Foundation under the auspices of their Lost Cities programme. The project *Lost Cities Rediscovered: Reexamining Excavation Histories in Late Ottoman and Mandate Western Asia* (LOCI) aims to shed light on the archaeological activities and practices from 1869 to 1946 by re-examining archival and photographic materials along with archaeological and historical publications. Such an investigation seeks to uncover how current urban archaeological approaches and methodologies have been, often unknowingly, shaped by the paradigms established during this earlier period. LOCI takes two intertwined views on the meaning of "lost cities": a) lost ancient cities rediscovered in the late 19th and 20th centuries and b) lost knowledge about these cities lost through the way in which they were explored.

Through three synergetic work packages (WPs), the project will (1) investigate how now lost ancient cities were explored, but not comprehensively documented or published, (2) re-examine archaeological and historical publications from the period and examine unpublished archives to trace the development of urban archaeology; and (3) develop a new framework for understanding and documenting the loss and subsequent 're-excavation' of knowledge about these urban sites (places: "loci") – a loss driven by past agendas, methodologies, and practices. This collaborative project's findings will be disseminated through peer-reviewed articles and monographs, while a series of international workshops and conferences will foster dialogue and the sharing of knowledge among scholars from various disciplines creating a new international network focused on Lost Cities of Western Asia. Proceedings from these events will be published as edited volumes.



Excavations by St. Theodore's Church. Gerasa/Jerash. 1931.  
Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery.

The project is highly collaborative and international. The cPIs are UrbNet's assistant professor Olympia Bobou and curator Miriam Kühn from the Museum für Islamisches Kunst in Berlin. Together the PIs will head the project over the coming four years. Three post docs will be employed in the project. The project, which is based at Aarhus University, partners with the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin and the Pergamonmuseum in Berlin as main partners and also has a string of international collaboration partners in museums and at research institutions across Europe, Türkiye, the Middle East and USA.





Photo: Martin Juul

# The Carlsberg Foundation Research Prize 2024

In 2024, Professor Rubina Raja was awarded the Carlsberg Foundation Research Prize in the field of humanities and social sciences for her extensive archaeological studies spanning from urban communities and networks in the ancient world to iconography in the oasis city of Palmyra, with her research not only leading to new insights into key events in world history, but also paving the way for a new high-definition approach to excavations which has taken international archaeology onto important new paths.

Such breakthroughs require both long-term and large-scale research, which has been made possible by the Danish National Research Foundation with Centre for Urban Network Evolutions, providing the basis for Rubina Raja, together with the UrbNet team, to establish entirely new frameworks for understanding urban archaeology.

The prize committee specifically highlighted Rubina Raja's international recognition for research into the dynamics that shaped past urban societies. At the same time, they emphasized how her research broadens the traditional focus of classical archaeology by expanding the view from Greece and Rome to a wider geographical and cultural horizon, by moving beyond a focus on materiality to a comprehensive view of human interactions, and by leaving a linear, power-centred approach to urban cultures in favour of a focus on dynamic human networks

of commercial, cultural and communicative exchange. The awarding of the Carlsberg Foundation Research Prize to Rubina Raja underscores how UrbNet, under her leadership, has pioneered groundbreaking research that redefines urban archaeology through its innovative focus on a high-definition approach to the dynamic urban networks of the past.

Each year, the Carlsberg Foundation awards two major prizes to researchers who have made a crucial contribution to research: one in the field of natural sciences and one in the field of either humanities or social sciences. Each prize of DKK 2 million is awarded on the recommendation of a Prize Committee of Danish and international researchers appointed jointly by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and the Carlsberg Foundation.

In 2024, the prizes were presented by Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark and Danish Minister for Education and Research Christina Egelund in a ceremony at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.

# The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lectures



In 2024, Rubina Raja gave the Thomas Spencer Jerome Lectures at University of Michigan and at the American Academy in Rome. This lecture series is among the most prestigious ones within classical studies world-wide and it is a testament to UrbNet's high quality of research that its centre director was invited to give them. The aim with the series is to turn to new topics in classical studies and turn these into a monograph, which is formulated based on the lectures in the years thereafter.

Rubina Raja's series was entitled "Contextualising Roman Ruins. Urban Cultures of Antiquity and the long late Antiquity in the Near East". The lectures tackled urban archaeology in the Near East from the Greek and Hellenistic periods onwards taking the audience all the way into the early Islamic period. The series wrapped up with a lecture that turned to the historiography of urban archaeology in the region and looked at in which ways archaeological practices from the early 20th century has shaped and sometimes still shape the way in which we engage with urban sites.

The impressive remaining ruins of the cities of the ancient Near East — cities such as Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem), Apamea, Baalbek (Heliopolis), Bostra, Caesarea Maritima, Jerash, and Palmyra — almost all date to the Roman period. This is no accident. The Roman empire was an 'empire of cities'. In the western Mediterranean, where there were relatively few, the Romans planted an enormous number of new ones. The East, on the other

hand, was already densely populated with cities. Here the ancient settlements of the Levant flourished under Roman rule, growing steadily in size and prosperity. These cities gradually took on a new appearance too, as they each acquired a selection of the grand appurtenances and amenities of a Roman metropolis or model city: aqueducts, vaulted bath buildings, stone theatres, covered markets, colonnaded streets, monumental frontal temple buildings. In recent years these cities have attracted a fair amount of attention from archaeologists and historians; but they generally remain outside our accepted narratives of the evolving urban cultures of the Roman world.

The Jerome Thomas Spencer Lecture series revisited these long-established centres of the Roman Near East, and the various ancient peoples who inhabited them. The lectures sought to trace, through the archaeology and historical sources, the transformation of these cities, from the late first century BCE until Late Antiquity and even into the Early Islamic period; and to describe the ways in which there emerged—here in the monumental spaces of these Levantine communities—a range of new and distinctive kinds of 'urbanity'. Urban development in the Roman period prompted a welter of political, social, and religious changes — all of which resulted in a number of different 'regimes of urban living', distinctive to the region. The lectures took the audience through a series of extremely varied — but recognizable — urban landscapes: the Decapolis, the Limestone Massif and the Tetrapolis; the settlements along the Mediterranean coast; and places deep inland such as Palmyra in the Syrian Desert and the Hauran. But by the end of the journey, the lectures had situated these cities as physical manifestations of a local or regional experiment in 'urban self-fashioning' — as the peoples of the region, collectively and individually, availed themselves of the alluring opportunities of the Roman peace.

Rubina Raja's Jerome Lectures will be published as a monograph by Michigan University Press.



Folkeuniversitetet

# Lost cities of the past

During the winter of 2024, a lecture series at Folkeuniversitetet featured current and former UrbNet employees, who shared their cutting-edge research on ancient cities and the civilizations that shaped them. The lectures series *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, held at both the Aarhus and Emdrup campuses, was a resounding success, drawing 70 participants and contributing to one of the UrbNet's key outreach efforts this year. This engagement not only highlighted the ongoing importance of archaeological research but also fostered a deeper public appreciation for the cultural legacies of ancient urban life.

Cities of the ancient world and the Middle Ages serve as windows into vanished civilizations, offering us a glimpse of how people lived, worked, and interacted centuries ago. These cities are where the physical traces of past societies come to life – from monumental temples and grand colonnaded streets to the remnants of everyday life, such as artisans' workshops and bustling markets that traded goods from across the ancient world. The great cities of classical antiquity, the vibrant harbour cities of the Viking Age, and the medieval market towns were not only centres of commerce but also hubs of cultural exchange, where people came together from far and wide, whether in close-knit communities or as part of more distant networks. These cities were also the stage for significant

events that shaped the course of history and influenced the world around them for centuries to come. Through archaeological research, we can better understand the complex, interconnected nature of these ancient urban centres.

The lecture series provided a unique opportunity for the public to engage directly with the researchers' leading studies and excavations in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe. Attendees were able to hear firsthand accounts of the histories, rich cultures, and expansive networks of ancient cities, offering insights into how these early urban societies functioned and evolved. Major Danish research projects at UrbNet and partnering institutions have been pivotal in uncovering the archaeology of cities worldwide, and their ongoing work continues to expand our understanding of these fascinating civilizations.

The lecture series was organised by Rubina Raja and Julia Steding.





## Science Club

# Archaeology in a classroom

The core mission of the Danish-based NGO Science Club (Videnskabsklubben) is to allow children to "go to science in your free time." Archaeology, a field that sits at the intersection of the natural sciences and the humanities, is tailor-made to inspire and educate future generations. This is why Centre Director Rubina Raja initiated the development of an archaeological outreach programme. Aiming to broaden its focus beyond the natural sciences, Science Club partnered with UrbNet to create an innovative archaeology programme for 4th and 5th-grade students. The process was led and coordinated by UrbNet's Julia Steding, and the programme successfully concluded its first run in the winter of 2024, receiving an average evaluation score of 4.7/5, making it the most successful programme in Science Club 2024.

As a leading force in interdisciplinary research at the intersection of the natural sciences and the humanities, UrbNet proved to be the ideal partner for this initiative. Over the past decade, UrbNet's groundbreaking research has transformed our understanding of past societies, their connections to each other and to the present, and how they navigated challenges. These complex topics have now been shaped into accessible classroom content, enriched with hands-on activities designed for 10–12-year-olds.

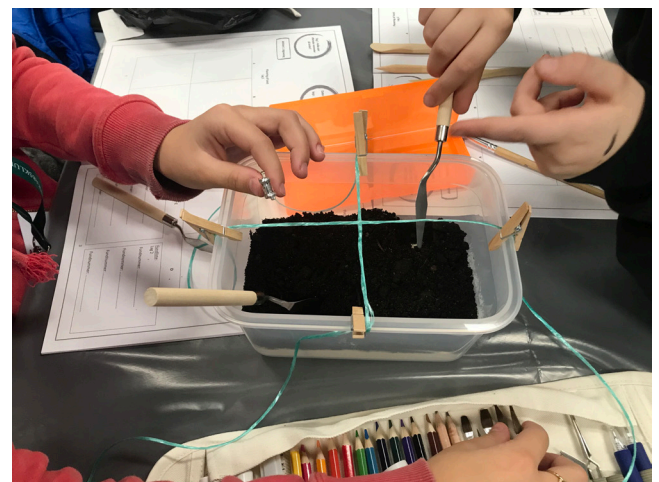
At 10 Danish schools, young "mini researchers" delved into the diverse world of archaeology. The programme is structured around seven case studies that take students on a journey through different countries and cultures from the past. They learned about the significance of stratigraphy in archaeological excavations, how food remains help us reconstruct human-environment relationships, and the crucial role of radiocarbon dating in shaping our understanding of historical timelines.

A central feature of the programme is the hands-on activities, which bring archaeological research to life for young minds. For example, on the first day, the mini researchers conduct their own excavation, uncovering objects from different time periods buried in distinct

layers—introducing them to the principle of stratigraphy. They also analyse the function and origins of items that range from local to imported, learning more about the networks of the past. Each day is filled with thought-provoking discussions, emphasizing the relevance of archaeology in understanding contemporary issues, based on the activities of the days.

Instead of teachers, a group of high school students leads the programme, guiding the younger participants through each day's activities. This peer-to-peer model not only sparks interest in archaeology and the natural sciences but also provides the mentors with valuable skills in communicating scientific concepts. Additionally, the high school students and mini researchers gain insights into how archaeology can address present-day challenges, such as climate change and the defiance coming with the rapidly evolving world around us.

By integrating the humanities into the classroom through experiential learning projects like this, we are fostering critical thinking and igniting curiosity about the human past in the next generation. These experiences help shape young minds, encouraging them to engage with and appreciate the complexity of archaeology and make its relevance explicit.



Excavation in a box – the mini reserachers learn about stratigraphy and documenting their finds (Photo: Julia Steding)

PhD dissertation

# References to Rome in the early Abbasids' visual language of power, 762-861 CE

Rhiannon Garth Jones

Rhiannon Garth Jones' PhD dissertation, *References to Rome in the early Abbasids' visual language of power, 762-861 CE*, re-examined the literary and material evidence for the early Abbasid visual language of power in the public spaces of the three capital cities, Baghdad, Rafiqa, and Samarra. This period is generally presented as a 'golden age' of Islam, when the practical power of the caliphs was at its peak, and they asserted themselves by building new palaces and cities on an extraordinary scale. It is also often considered to be the period when 'classical' Islamic art, architecture, and culture formed. However, the traditional scholarship has primarily focused on the role of Persian audiences and influences in the Abbasid visual style, when contemporary poetry makes it clear that the Abbasid caliphs themselves understood both Rome and Persia to be key imperial references points. Moreover, recent scholarship has shown that the Abbasid elite understood the literary record of their monumental buildings to be a core part of the legacy of material projections of power. This study developed a methodological approach to address both concerns, using contemporary literature to consider intention and reception and analyse the material remains of this important period. Three case studies were analysed, the imperial capital cities of Baghdad, Rafiqa, and Samarra, before the reception of each by the relevant contemporary audiences was discussed.

Overall, this approach demonstrated that the caliphs adapted familiar Roman traditions and references to speak to their many audiences and project a universal claim to power. It also revealed new elements to the relationship between the early Abbasids and Rome (referred to as Rum, the Abbasids' major imperial rival in Constantinople), beyond their military engagements and intellectual competition over the Translation Movement. This relationship was rooted in their late antique shared traditions, particularly legends about Alexander and Solomon, the use of monumental building projects and urban foundations, and the role of the late antique visual *koiné* and craftsmanship to project power.

Rhiannon Garth Jones successfully defended her PhD on 27 May 2024.





# The North Sea, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean: Using ivory to reveal long-distance trade networks in the early medieval period

Rowan Stanley English

Urban spaces were essential to the ivory trade in Late Antiquity. These places performed multiple roles in the movement, transshipment, and crafting of ivory objects, both luxury and every day. Urban spaces were at the intersection of skill, material and connectivity, creating value and meaning in elephant ivory as a commodity. This urban nature of comes into focus most frequently through workshops. These diverse spaces record not only how ivory objects were being fabricated but how this happened, along with the sensibilities of elephant tusk processing. This exploration of ivory workshops is part of PhD student Rowan Stanley English's PhD dissertation, entitled: *The North Sea, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean: Using ivory to reveal long-distance trade networks in the early medieval period*. The work on the Mediterranean workshops is key to the PhD project, providing the link between the raw material from the shores of the Indian Ocean, and the huge amount of ivory deposited in northwest Europe in the period of study.

To explore ivory working in the Mediterranean, Rome and Alexandria were selected for their unique character, having workshop evidence of ivory processing and production. Contexts in Rome showed little evidence of the processing of whole ivory tusks, whereas those in Alexandria did. This processing of tusks was a very skilled task and likely added much value to ivory as a material. This evidence can suggest that ivory raw material was prepared in one urban centre (Alexandria) before being passed on to another (Rome) for further finishing. This allows the one of the main conclusions of the thesis to come to light: ivory was not always the valuable material as we think of it today. Its value was highly contextual, at the nexus of context and the material nature of the tusk itself.

The study not only focuses on the Mediterranean, but on the North Sea and the Indian Ocean – the other bodies of water involved in the ivory trade. The work on the North Sea involves data collection of ivory objects in furnished graves of the early medieval tradition. These ivory objects are almost exclusively ring-shaped pieces cut from the proximal end of the tusk and were used to form the ridged frames for bags that hung from the waist. The discussion of the Indian Ocean focuses on a diverse range of evidence, ranging from urban trading settlements that ivory passed through, to the local material culture that was produced in these areas, and historical shipping documents that detail the scale and value of the late antique ivory trade. The synthesis of this evidence provides a completely new picture of ivory and its trade in this period, along with wider inferences on what interacting with ivory means for communities around these three seas, and what it tells us about their connections, knowledge and outlook.

Rowan Stanley English handed in this PhD dissertation on 30 November 2024.



Part of a carved ivory pyxis, showing the multiplication of loaves and fishes. Egypt - 6th century. Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Bequest of Nanette B. Kelekian, 2020. 2021.37.24a, b. CCO 1.0 Universal.

## Visiting Scholar

# Christopher H. Hallett

Professor Emeritus of Roman Art  
University of California, Berkeley

During my time as a guest professor at UrbNet in the spring of 2024, I was involved in both teaching and research. I co-taught a seminar with Rubina Raja on the history of Classical Archaeology, titled “From Winckelmann to Woke”. It addressed the special concerns and methods that have shaped and defined the modern field: e.g. “Great art as a cultural achievement”, “The cult of genius”, “Connoisseurship”, “Marxism and Feminism”, “Problematic provenances”, and “Post-colonialism”. The regular meetings of the seminar took place in Aarhus University’s Museum of Ancient Art; and each week the assigned readings were brought to bear on carefully selected works from the museum’s extensive cast collection.



As part of my long-standing collaboration with Rubina Raja on the Caesar’s Forum Project, I organized a special research workshop, including three invited expert consultants—Michael Koortbojian (Princeton University), Jo Quinn (Oxford University), and Robert Morstein-Marx (UC Santa Barbara). I then subsequently spoke about Caesar’s Forum at two conferences. I delivered a (jointly written) paper at the conference Caesar’s Visions and Impact on the Roman Empire, held in Flensburg in May; while a second joint presentation formed part of the session, “Ordering Space: Strategies of Boundary Making on Fora and Agorai” at The 20th International Congress of Classical Archaeology, held in Paris in June. The paper given in Flensburg is to be published as part of the conference proceedings.

During my stay I was deeply impressed by the collaborative creativity of the UrbNet team, and the constellation of resources available at the Centre—both for teaching and research. The Aarhus Museum of Ancient Art provided an extremely stimulating environment for instruction and for student discussions; and the assistance I received from UrbNet faculty and staff was absolutely exceptional—especially from Olympia Bobou and Mette Lang in the seminar. This is a group that works extremely well together. Their team-spirit and their professionalism is exemplary!



Christopher Hallet, Cyzicus, Turkey, June 2024



## Visiting Scholar

# Elizabeth A. Murphy

Assistant Professor of Roman Archaeology  
Florida State University

In Fall 2024, I returned to UrbNet to participate in the intellectual life of the Centre and to present a lecture series on work and labour in the Roman world to its research community. The central objective of the 2024 lectures and the consequent monograph, which is in development, is to more closely examine socio-economic disparities among working populations of the Roman and Late Antique worlds. In doing so, it better appreciates the internal diversity of worker experience in the Roman Imperial period and Late Antiquity. By moving away from single industry analysis and descriptive reporting on individual workplace contexts, the project adopts a new approach to the study of workshops that instead examines community networks of urban craftspeople.

My 2024 talks build on a lecture series that I gave at UrbNet in 2020, which first considered the role of craft and trade communities in cities of the eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity. Since that time, the project has expanded its temporal focus to include archaeological evidence of earlier periods and to more specifically investigate wellbeing metrics through the archaeological record of labour. This project, which employs detailed contextual analyses of workplaces, closely intersects with the mission of UrbNet and its emphasis on high-definition archaeology, as it draws together small-scale pieces of evidence to address large-scale questions about ancient society and economy.

I would like to thank the UrbNet community of researchers and students for their warm hospitality. Over the years, I have had the privilege to visit the Centre for Urban Network Evolutions on several occasions, and in each instance, I have always been greatly impressed with the range of innovative, cutting-edge projects that are supported at the Centre. I have much benefitted from collaborative endeavours with its researchers, and the conferences and talks held at UrbNet have provided new and stimulating ideas for my own work.





UrbNet Annual Retreat at Hindsgavl Slot (Photo: Julia Steding)

# Events

## Organization of Conferences and Workshops

Some of these events were co-organized with external partners, but for the purpose of this report, only the relevant UrbNet employee(s) is/are listed.

Conference: *Palmyra, the Roman Empire, and the Third-Century Crisis*, Copenhagen, Denmark, 7-8 March 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

Workshop: *The Future of Ethics in Caribbean Archaeology*, Copenhagen University, Copenhagen, Denmark, 11-14 March 2024, organized by Eduardo Herrera Malatesta.

Seminar: *Classical Studies Graduate Student Seminar*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States, 23 March 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

Session: "Point Process Models in Archaeology and Heritage: State of the Field and New Directions", conference: *51st Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology Annual Conference*, Auckland, New Zealand, 11 April 2024, organized by Eduardo Herrera Malatesta.

Session: "Enfoques Computacionales en la Arqueología Latinoamericana", conference: *Congreso Colombiano de Arqueología*, Santa Marta, Colombia, 3 May 2024, organized by Eduardo Herrera Malatesta.

Workshop: *The Archaeology of the Ivory and the Ivory Trade: Current Approaches and Future Directions*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 16 May 2024, organized by Rowan English.

Workshop: *Special Research Workshop on Caesar's Forum*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 28 May 2024, organized by Christopher Hallett & Rubina Raja.

Conference: *Caesar's Visions and Impact on the Roman Empire: Revisiting the Archaeological and Historical Record for the 40s BC*, University of Flensburg, Flensburg, Germany, 30-31 May 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

Session: "Urban Religion through the Lens of Urban Archaeology", conference: *XXe Congrès international d'archéologie classique*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

Session: "Lived spaces in Palmyra", conference: *XXe Congrès international d'archéologie classique*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024, organized by Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja.

Conference: *Objects as a Lens on Groups Formations in the Cities of the Roman Empire (1st to 4th Century CE)*, Erfurt Universität, Germany, 18-21 June 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

Session: "Personal Objects: Subjectification and Propriety", conference: *Objects as a Lens on Groups Formations in the Cities of the Roman Empire (1st to 4th Century CE)*, Erfurt Universität, Germany, 18-21 June 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

Conference: *The New Viking Ship Museum*, Viking Ship Museum, Roskilde, Denmark, 22-23 August 2024, organized by Søren Sindbæk.

Session: "Metals and Metalworking II: Production and Technology", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, Rome, Italy, 29 August 2024, organized by Michael Neiß.

Session: "Modelling Connections: New Methodologies to Understand Human Mobility, Route Networks and Land Use", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, Rome, Italy, 29 August 2024, organized by María Coto-Sarmiento.



Session: "Computational Landscapes: Debating Fundamental Assues of Archaeological Narratives", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, Rome, Italy, 31 August 2024, organized by Eduardo Herrera-Malatesta.

Session: "The Roman Economic Mosaic: Exploring the Complexity of Economic Dynamics During the Roman Empire", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, Rome, Italy, 31 August 2024, organized by María Coto-Sarmiento.

Session: "Session 36: The Military and Long-Distance Trade along the Eastern Roman Frontier", conference: *26th Limes Congress*, Batumi, Georgia, 13 September 2024, organized by Emanuele Intagliata & Rubina Raja.

Workshop: *Bondens Markeder*, Aarhus University, Denmark, 24 September 2024, organized by Sarah Croix.

Workshop: *Roman Transport Infrastructure: Revisiting the Via Nova Traiana*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 10 October 2024, organized by Mette Lang & Rubina Raja.

Seminar: *Roman Transport Infrastructure: Roads, Forts, Caravanserais, and Harbours*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 11 October 2024, organized by Mette Lang & Rubina Raja.

Workshop: *MINERVA and Viabundus Workshop: Digital Approaches to Historical Road Studies*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 24-25 October 2024, organized by Tom Brughmans.

Workshop: *Forgotten Cities and Towns: Rediscovering Past Urban Societies through Legacy Data*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 10 December 2024, organized by Sarah Croix, Rowan English, Rubina Raja & Charlotte Marie Brühe Jensen.

Conference: *Portraying the Individual in the Roman East Local-Imperial Entanglements in Sculpture, Mosaics and Paintings (1st–4th Centuries CE)*, The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, Copenhagen, Denmark, 12-13 December 2024, organized by Rubina Raja.

## Invited Talks

Some of these papers were co-authored/-presented with external partners, but for the purpose of this report, only the relevant UrbNet employee(s) is/are listed.

Rubina Raja, "Integrating Archaeology and Historiography in Resonant Self-World Relations: Palmyra and its Priests", University of Erfurt, Erfurt, Germany, 6 February 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "The Riddle of the Rings: Harald Bluetooth's Ring Fortresses and the Viking Age", symposium: *Nordic Spirit symposium-Vikings: New Technologies, New Discoveries*, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, California, US, 9 February 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Northern Emporium: Excavating Viking Age Ribe and its Networks", symposium: *Nordic Spirit symposium-Vikings: New Technologies, New Discoveries*, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, California, US, 10 February 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Investigating the Past as Palimpsests of Knowledge: The Case of Archaeological Research at Gerasa (Jerash, Jordan)", University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy, 20 February 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Bykultur i den Syriske Ørken: Ny Forskning Omkring Oasebyen Palmyra", *Nestor*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 27 February 2024.

Rowan English, "Exploring Form and Function: Elephant Ivory in Early Medieval England", School of History, Classics and Archaeology Postgraduate Forum, Newcastle University, Newcastle, United Kingdom, 3 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Palmyra and the Third-Century 'Crisis' at Home", conference: *Palmyra, the Roman Empire, and the Third-Century Crisis*, Copenhagen, Denmark, 7 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Julius Caesar and his Forum Iulium: A Formative Space in the Heart of Rome", The Getty Villa Museum, Malibu, USA, 10 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Urban Culture in the Syrian Desert: New Research on Palmyra", University of California (UCLA), Los Angeles, USA, 11 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "The Emergence of an Urban Archaeology: Entanglements Between Archaeological Fieldwork and Geopolitical Developments in the 19th and 20th Centuries", Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) San Francisco Society Lecture, University of California, Berkeley, California, USA, 12 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Palmyre, Cité Grecque in a Roman World? Tracing and Understanding Greek Influences in Roman Palmyra through Imports, Iconography and Architectural Traditions", *The Rumpakis Family Lecture*, Willamette University, Oregon, USA, 14 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Greek and Local Heritages in Urban Landscapes of the Near East. Cultural Amnesia versus the Longue Durée", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualising Roman Ruins. Urban Cultures of Antiquity and the Long Late Antiquity in the Near East*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, 18 March 2024.

Adam Pažout & Tom Brughmans, "Itinere: The Gazetteer of Ancient Roads", seminar: *Digital Humanities seminar*, University of Western Bohemia, Pilsen, Czech Republic, 19 March 2024.

Adam Pažout & Tom Brughmans, "All the Roads of the Roman Empire and What it Can Tell us About the Roman World", lecture series: *Current Issues in Archaeology*, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, 20 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "A World of Local Cultures in a Roman Sea. The Rise of Urban Landscapes in the Near East", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualising Roman Ruins. Urban Cultures of Antiquity and the Long Late Antiquity in the Near East*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, 20 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "The Long Late Antiquity. From Cities to Villages and Back Again", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualising Roman Ruins. Urban Cultures of Antiquity and the Long Late Antiquity in the Near East*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, 22 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Digging Caesar's Forum: Rome's urban culture in a longue durée Perspective", seminar: *Classical Studies Graduate Student Seminar*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, 23 March 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Appropriating the Roman Cities of the East. The Historiography of Archaeology", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualising Roman Ruins. Urban Cultures of Antiquity and the Long Late Antiquity*

*in the Near East*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, 25 March 2024.

Olympia Bobou, Rubina Raja & Julia Steding, "Working Through the Harald Ingholt Archives", conference: *Writing History in the 21st Century: WritHist NOS-Workshop*, Online, 4 April 2024.

Eduardo Herrera Malatesta, "Uncertainties and Robustness in Archaeological Spatial Analysis", session: *Point Process Models in Archaeology and Heritage: State of the Field and New Directions*, conference: *51st Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology Annual Conference*, Auckland, New Zealand, 11 April 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Imperiets Udørk eller Toppen af Poppen", seminar: *Forårsseminar 2024: "Barbarerne kommer!"*, Copenhagen University, Copenhagen, Denmark, 20 April 2024.

Derek Parrott, "Shining a Blue Light: Metalcasting Waste and 3D Modelling", Department of Archaeology, Oslo University, Oslo, Norway, 22 April 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Epigraphy in Context: 300 Years of Epigraphic Habit and Material Culture in the Desert of Palmyra", Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Sommersemester 2024, AEK, DAI München, Germany, 26 April 2024.

Rubina Raja, "A Conversation About Gerasa", Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA, 29 April 2024.

Eduardo Herrera Malatesta, "Incertidumbres y Robustez en el Análisis Espacial Arqueológico", session: *Enfoques Computacionales en la Arqueología Latinoamericana*, conference: *Congreso Colombiano de Arqueología*, Santa Marta, Colombia, 3 May 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Vikingetidens Ringborge: en Dansk Verdensarv", Syddjurs Folkeuniversitet, Ebeltøft, Denmark, 13 May 2024.

Tom Brughmans, "Network Science in Archaeology: Illustrated through Case Studies on the Roads of the Roman Empire", University of the Balearic Islands, Mallorca, Spain, 23 May 2024.

Maria Coto-Sarmiento, "Modeling the Role of Cooperation in Response to Adverse Environmental Conditions in the Inner Asian Mountain Corridor", workshop: *Advances in Modelling Past Human Ecosystems*, University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany, 22-24 May 2024.



Rubina Raja, "Images in Context: Contextualising Palmyrene Portraits", *ARWA – The International Association for Archaeological Research in Western & Central Asia: 2024 AAA online lecture of the Art History & Visual Studies series 'How to Interpret Images'*, online, 24 May 2024.

Eduardo Herrera Malatesta, "Uso de Análisis Estadísticos Espaciales para Estudiar los Patrones de Asentamiento Indígena en el Noroeste de República Dominicana", seminar series: *Arqueologia Mundial, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico* (Online), 30 May 2024.

Christopher Hallett & Rubina Raja, "Probing the Boundaries of the First Imperial Forum in Rome: Caesar and His Visions for the World Seen through the Forum Iulium", conference: *Caesar's Visions and Impact on the Roman Empire*, University of Flensburg, Flensburg, Germany, 31 May 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Lived spaces in the Urban Desert: Urban Priests, Urban Religion, Urban Space in Palmyra, Syria", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Urban Religion through the Lens of Urban Archaeology*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja, "Lived Spaces in Palmyra: Between Legacy data and Archeological Reports – position paper", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Lived Spaces in Palmyra*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Christopher Hallett & Rubina Raja, "Missing Entrances and Conjectural Connections: Probing the Boundaries of the First Imperial Forum in Rome", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Ordering Space: Strategies of Boundary Making on Fora and Agorai - Introduction*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja, "Palmyra's Sacred Spaces", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Urban Religion through the Lens of Urban Archaeology*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Urban Religion through the Lens of Urban Archaeology", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Urban Religion through the Lens of Urban Archaeology*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja, "The Lived Experience of Funerary Spaces", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Lived Spaces in Palmyra*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja, "Re-evaluating the Senate House and Its Sculptures", conference: *XXe Congrès International D'archéologie Classique*, session: *Lived Spaces in Palmyra*, Paris, France, 5 June 2024.

Sarah Croix, "Kvindens Rolle, Status og Betydning i Trosskiftet", seminar: *Ansgar-Antologi - Forfatterseminar*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 7 June 2024.

Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja, "The Danish Trade in Palmyrene Objects", workshop: *Digging up the Past: Aspects of a Multi-Layered Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire from the Late 19th to the Early 20th Century*, Online, 7 June 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Podium Discussion-Verführerische Gegenstände (Tempting Objects)", conference: *Objects as a Lens on Groups Formations in the Cities of the Roman Empire (1st to 4th Century CE)*, Erfurt Universität, Germany, 18 June 2024.

Olympia Bobou, "Cult Agents and Cult Statues", conference: *Objects as a Lens on Groups Formations in the Cities of the Roman Empire (1st to 4th Century CE)*, session: *Urban Rivalries and Religious Group Formations: Coins*, Erfurt Universität, Germany, 19 June 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "The Storehouse of the Heavenly Kingdom: Trading Religion in Early Medieval Emporia", conference: *The Baptism of Pomerania: 7th Wolin Medieval Meeting*, Wolin, Poland, 19 June 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Coining Religious Urban Rivalry in the Decapolis: The Case of Gerasa", conference: *Objects as a Lens on Groups Formations in the Cities of the Roman Empire (1st to 4th Century CE)*, session: *Urban Rivalries and Religious Group Formations: Coins*, Erfurt Universität, Germany, 21 June 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Palimpsests of Knowledge: The Many Lives of St. Theodore's Church in Gerasa (Jerash, Jordan)", seminar: *The Many Lives of Ancient Monuments: Getty Traveling Seminar Symposium*, Koc University, Istanbul, Turkey, 27 June 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "The Power of Hosting", seminar: *The Earls of Lade and the Power Relations in Trøndelag until 1030*, Trondheim, Norway, 14 August 2024.

Eduardo Herrera Malatesta, "Coalition for Caribbean Archaeological Heritage (CoCAH): An Informal Network for Ethically Engaged Researchers in Caribbean Archaeology", conference: *30th International Association for Caribbean Archaeology (IACA) Congress*, St. Kitts & Nevis, 17 August 2024.

Rubina Raja, "From Pencils to Drone. A Multi-Scalar Approach to the Study of Khirbet al-Khalde (Aqaba Governorate, Southern Jordan)", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, Rome, Italy, 28 August 2024.

Maria Coto-Sarmiento, "As the Water Flows: a Method for Assessing River Navigability in the Past", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, session: *Modelling Connections: New Methodologies to Understand Human Mobility, Route Networks and Land Use*, Rome, Italy, 29 August 2024.

Olympia Bobou & Rubina Raja, "Hadriana Palmyra", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, session: *Rome's place in an eponymous empire*, Rome, Italy, 29 August 2024.

Michael Neiß, "Handicraft Archaeology Based on Intelligent Technology HABIT", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, session: *Metals and Metalworking II: Production and Technology*, Rome, Italy, 30 August 2024.

Sarah Croix, "Palaeofaeces from a Viking-Age Urban Settlement at Ribe, Denmark: Metagenomics, Multi-Omics, and High-Definition Archaeology", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, session: *Building Bridges: an Open Forum for Archaeology and Metagenomics*, Rome, Italy, 30 August 2024.

Eduardo Herrera Malatesta, "Unshattered Landscapes: a Framework for Dealing with Uncertainties and Bias in Archaeology", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, session: *Computational Landscapes: Debating Fundamental Assues of Archaeological Narratives*, Rome, Italy, 31 August 2024.

Maria Coto-Sarmiento & Tom Brughmans, "Market Competition in War Times? The Impact of Olive Oil Production on the Roman economy", conference: *Persisting with Change. 30th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA)*, session: *Modelling Connections: The Roman Economic Mosaic: Exploring the Complexity of Economic Dynamics During the Roman Empire*, Rome, Italy, 31 August 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Nurture Trust: The Promotion of Novelty in Research", seminar: *The Danish National Research Foundation's Annual Meeting 2024*, Copenhagen,

Denmark, 5 September 2024.

Elizabeth Murphy, "Crafting Community: Potters in the Roman East", Centre for Urban Network Evolutions (UrbNet), Aarhus, Denmark, 11 September 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Past Geopolitics in the Borderlands: New Research on Military and Trade Presence at Khirbet al-Khalde – Wadi al-Yutm, Aqaba Governorate", conference: *26th Limes Congress*, Batumi, Georgia, 13 September 2024, session: *Session 36: The Military and Long-Distance Trade along the Eastern Roman Frontier*.

Mette Lang, "Via Nova Traiana: Facilitating Movement", conference: *26th Limes Congress*, Batumi, Georgia, 13 September 2024.

Cristina Broschetti, "Perle di Vetro in Italia Durante l'età delle Migrazioni: Dinamiche Sociali ed Economiche – Glass Beads in Italy During the Migration Period: Social and Economic Dynamics", conference: *PERLE 4.0. Le Perle di Vetro: Evoluzione Tecnologica e Scambi Commerciali Attraverso i Secoli*, Correr Museum, Venice, Italy, 16 September 2024.

Michael Neiß, "Transforming Crafts – a Bottom-Up Perspective on Religious Change", symposia: 75. *Sachsensymposium*, The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen, Denmark, 18 September 2024.

Sarah Croix, "The Talk of the Town: Ribe Anno 730", *Jubilæumsfest: 75 år afdeling for Arkæologi og Kulturarvsstudier*, Aarhus Universitet, Aarhus, Denmark, 20 September 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Ta' Dog en Lasercanner", *Jubilæumsfest: 75 år afdeling for Arkæologi og Kulturarvsstudier*, Aarhus Universitet, Aarhus, Denmark, 20 September 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Palmyra and the Roman Military: New Research from the Palmyra Portrait Project", conference: *The Army as a Connecting Factor in the Roman World, Split*, Croatia, 24 September 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Northern Emporium: Excavating Viking Age Ribe and its Networks", Hið íslenska fornleifafélag, Reykjavík, Iceland, 3 October 2024.

Rubina Raja, "The Palmyrene 'Problem': Considerations on Methods and Material Evidence in the Investigation of Palmyra's Position in Discussions about Parthian Art and the Graeco-Roman World", conference: *Parthian Art & the Graeco-Roman World*, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom, 4 October 2024.

Elizabeth Murphy, "Between "Middling Classes" and "Urban Masses": Implications of Current Research on Labor Status in the Roman World", Centre for Urban Network Evolutions (UrbNet), Aarhus, Denmark, 9 October 2024.

María Coto-Sarmiento, "Modelling the Impact of the Olive Oil Market Competition in Roman Germania", workshop: *Roman Transport Infrastructure: Revisiting the Via Nova Traiana*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 10 October 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Big Thoughts on Small Sites: Chronology and Overlooked Evidence at Forts and Fortlets Along the Via Nova Traiana", workshop: *Roman Transport Infrastructure: Revisiting the Via Nova Traiana*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 10 October 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Trelleborg: en Arkæologisk Verdensarv", Trelleborg Museum, Slagelse, Denmark, 19 October 2024.

Rubina Raja & Julia Steding, "Fortidens Forsvundne Byer: Baggrund, Kontekst og Betydning for Nutiden", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Aarhus, Denmark, 22 October 2024.

Elizabeth Murphy, "Reconstructing Early Road Systems in the Sulcis: The Landscape Archaeology of Southwest Sardinia Project", seminar: *Incontri Sulcitani: Storia, Archeologia, e Paesaggio*, Santadi, Sardinia, Italy, 23 October 2024.

Mette Lang, "Via Nova Traiana: Connecting Global Networks of Exchange", *Roman Discussion Forum*, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom, 23 October 2024.

Rubina Raja & Julia Steding, "Fortidens Forsvundne Byer: Baggrund, Kontekst og Betydning for Nutiden", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Emdrup, Denmark, 24 October 2024.

Michael Neiß, "Transforming Crafts – a Bottom-Up Perspective on Religious Change", *The Anders Althin Award Lecture*, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, 25 October 2024.

Olympia Bobou, "Palmyra, an Urban Island in the Desert", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Aarhus, Denmark, 28 October 2024.

Olympia Bobou, "Palmyra, an Urban Island in the Desert", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Emdrup, Denmark, 30 October 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Excavating Gerasa: In the Field and in the Archives", *Roman Discussion Forum*, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, 30 October 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Reflections on Local Economies and Socio-Religious Patterns: The Palmyrene Banqueting Tesserae", Numismatic Society, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, 30 October 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Banquet Tokens as Signifiers of Local Economies and Socio-Religious Patterns in Roman Palmyra", University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom, 31 October 2024.

Rubina Raja, "In Search of Artemis: Revisiting the Archaeology and History of the Sanctuary/ies of Artemis in Gerasa", *Ancient Architecture Discussion Group*, Lincoln College, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, 1 November 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Ribe: Byen hvor Vikingetiden Begyndte", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Aarhus, Denmark, 5 November 2024.

Mette Lang, "The Via Nova Traiana: Connecting Global Networks of Exchange", online, 11 November 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Laserblik på Keopspyramiden: Med AERA og danske arkæologer i The Giza Plateau Mapping Project 2024", *Vin og Videnskab*, Statens Naturhistoriske Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark, 11 November 2024.

Julia Steding, "Xanten ved Limes: Romerriget i Nord", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Aarhus, Denmark, 12 November 2024.

Julia Steding, "Xanten ved Limes: Romerriget i Nord", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Emdrup, Denmark, 14 November 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Vikingetidens Ringborge: en Arkæologisk Verdensarv", Kongernes Jelling, Jelling, Denmark, 19 November 2024.

Elizabeth Murphy, "Roman Military Craft Production: Contextualizing the Jerusalem Legio X Fretensis Kilnworks", Centre for Urban Network Evolutions (UrbNet), Aarhus, Denmark, 20 November 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Forging the Future: Caesar's Forum Iulium, Augustus' Legacy, and the Shaping of Early Imperial Rome", workshop: *To Embrace and to Reject: Cultural*



*Memories in Roman Macedonia (ca. 1st Century BC – 3rd Century AD)*, session: *Rome and Macedonia: Living and Remembering in a Common Present*, Swedish Institute at Athens, Athens, Greece, 21 November 2024.

Sarah Croix, "An Archaeology of Relationships: a "More-Than-Oneself" Approach to the Viking Age", seminar: *Research Programme Materials, Culture and Heritage Seminar Series*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 22 November 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Vikingetidens Ringborge: en Arkæologisk Verdensarv", Vesthimmerlands Museum, Aars, Denmark, 22 November 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Vikingetidens Ringborge: en Arkæologisk Verdensarv", Kulturhusets Venner, Vemb, Denmark, 26 November 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Making and Breaking Cities: the Historiography of Urban Archaeology in the MENA Region", conference: *Building Bridges- 35th Annual Conference of Academia Europaea and Conference of the Young Academy of Europe*, University of Wrocław, Wrocław, Poland, 28 November 2024.

Søren Sindbæk, "Ribe: Byen hvor Vikingetiden Begyndte", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Emdrup, Denmark, 28 November 2024.

Michael Neiß, "Transforming Crafts: a Bottom-Up Perspective on Religious change", seminar: *The Higher Seminar*, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, 2 December 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Greek and Local Heritages in Urban Landscapes of the Near East: Cultural Amnesia versus the Longue Durée", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualizing Roman Ruins in the Near East*, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy, 2 December 2024.

Sine Grove Saxkjær, "Rom: Den Evige Stad", lecture series: *Fortidens Forsvundne Byer*, Folkeuniversitetet, Aarhus, Denmark, 3 December 2024.

Rubina Raja, "A World of Local Cultures in a Roman Sea: The Rise of Urban Landscapes in the Near East", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualizing Roman Ruins in the Near East*, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy, 4 December 2024.

Elizabeth Murphy, "Ceramic Industries in the Roman East", Vor- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie, University

of Bonn, Germany, 6 December 2024.

Ilaria Bucci, "RAC/TRAC 2026: Aarhus – Roman Archaeology Beyond the Fringes of the Empire", seminar: *Klassiske Studier: Faglig Dag*, Antikmuseet, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 9 December 2024.

Eleanor Neil, "Collaborating across time and space: historiography of urban archaeology in the Near East", seminar: *Klassiske Studier: Faglig Dag*, Antikmuseet, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 9 December 2024.

Julia Steding, "UrbNet Meets Videnskabsklubben: an Archaeological Outreach Program", seminar: *Klassiske Studier: Faglig Dag*, Antikmuseet, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 9 December 2024.

Olympia Bobou, "Palmyra Portrait Project: an update", seminar: *Klassiske Studier: Faglig Dag*, Antikmuseet, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 9 December 2024.

Rubina Raja, "The Long Late Antiquity: From Cities to Villages and Back Again", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualizing Roman Ruins in the Near East*, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy, 9 December 2024.

Rubina Raja, "The Historiography of Urban Archaeology in the Near East", *The Thomas Spencer Jerome Lecture Series: Contextualizing Roman Ruins in the Near East*, American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy, 10 December 2024.

Mette Lang, "Via Nova Traiana in Early 20th Century Travel Accounts", PhD course: *Legacy Data in Urban Archaeology: Unleashing Past Excavation Records in Current Research*, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 11 December 2024.

Olympia Bobou, "The Statues from the Artemision at Messene", conference: *Portraying the Individual in the Roman East Local-Imperial Entanglements in Sculpture, Mosaics and Paintings (1st–4th Centuries CE)*, The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, Copenhagen, Denmark, 12 December 2024.

Rubina Raja, "Local Portrait Habit in an Imperial World: The Portraiture from Palmyra", conference: *Portraying the Individual in the Roman East Local-Imperial Entanglements in Sculpture, Mosaics and Paintings (1st–4th Centuries CE)*, The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, Copenhagen, Denmark, 12 December 2024.

## PhD Courses

*Legacy data in urban archaeology – Unleashing past excavation records in current research*, Aarhus University, 11 December 2024, organized by Sarah Croix & Rowan Stanley English

## PhD Defence

Rhiannon Garth Jones

*References to Rome in the early Abbasids' visual language of power, 762-861 CE*, PhD defence, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark, 27 May 2024

## Public Outreach

Rubina Raja, *Shaping Archaeological Archives: Dialogues Between Fieldwork, Museum Collections, and Private Archives*, *New Books Network: Library Science Podcast*, 19 May 2024.

Søren M. Sindbæk, *A jam session with a Viking Lyre*, *Sunday Feature: BBC Sounds*, 16 July 2024.

Søren M. Sindbæk, *Motorcykelklub var tæt på at berøve os Danmarks »mærkeligste monument«*, *Videnskab.dk*, 21 August 2024.

Søren M. Sindbæk, *Trelleborgs mystiske historie*, *Kulturen P1*, 26 August 2024.

Søren M. Sindbæk, *Trelleborg*, *Fagbøger, der giver genlyd: Aarhus Universitetsforlag*, 26 August 2024.

Rubina Raja, *The Caravan City of Palmyra*, *Ancient History Magazine: Ancient History Podcast*, 4 October 2024.

Sarah Croix, *Forsker og forfatter: Ideen om vikingetiden er overraskende ny*, *Politiken*, 20 November 2024.

Raja, R., & Sindbæk, S. M. (2024). "Machine Learning", *Current World Archaeology* 123, 58-59.

Raja, R., & Sindbæk, S. M. (2024). "The Energy of Crowds", *Current World Archaeology* 124, 58-59.

Raja, R. & Sindbæk, S. M. (2024). "Against the Flow", *Current World Archaeology* 125, 58-59.

Raja, R. & Sindbæk, S. M. (2024). "Lost Cities: the Unpublished Words", *Current World Archaeology* 126, 58-59.

Raja, R. & Sindbæk, S. M. (2024). "Counting Cities", *Current World Archaeology* 127, 58-59.

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7-8 March 2024

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16 May 2024

Gary M. Feinman  
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Ian Riddler  
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Current World Archaeology  
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Independent scholar  
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7 March 2024

Nathanael Andrade  
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7-8 March 2024

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Andrew Wilson  
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7-8 March 2024

Tomas Høisæter  
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7-8 March 2024

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30-31 May 2024

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7-8 March 2024

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7-8 March 2024

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30-31 May 2024

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12-13 December 2024

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9-12 December 2024

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12-13 December 2024

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30-31 May 2024

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9-12 December 2024

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30-31 May 2024

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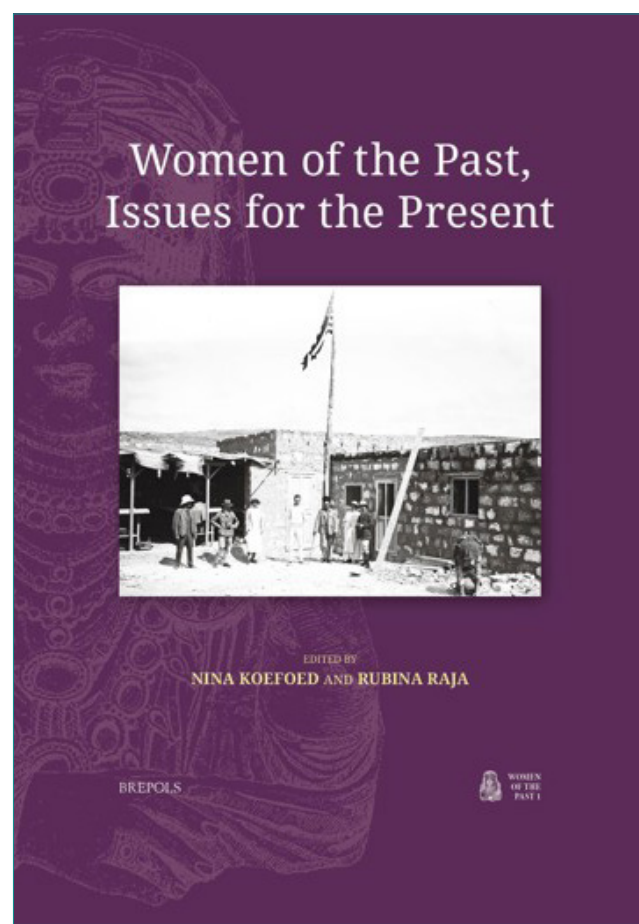
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Herrera Malatesta, E. (2024). "Review of: Arqueología Histórica Venezolana. Perspectivas Actuales Sobre el Contacto, el Colonialismo y la Independencia. Sidestone Press. Leiden, 2024. 581 págs., ISBN: 978 9464270969", *Ciencia y Sociedad* 49(3), 79-83.

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# Miscellaneous Objects

Final Publications from the Danish-German  
Jerash Northwest Quarter Project VI



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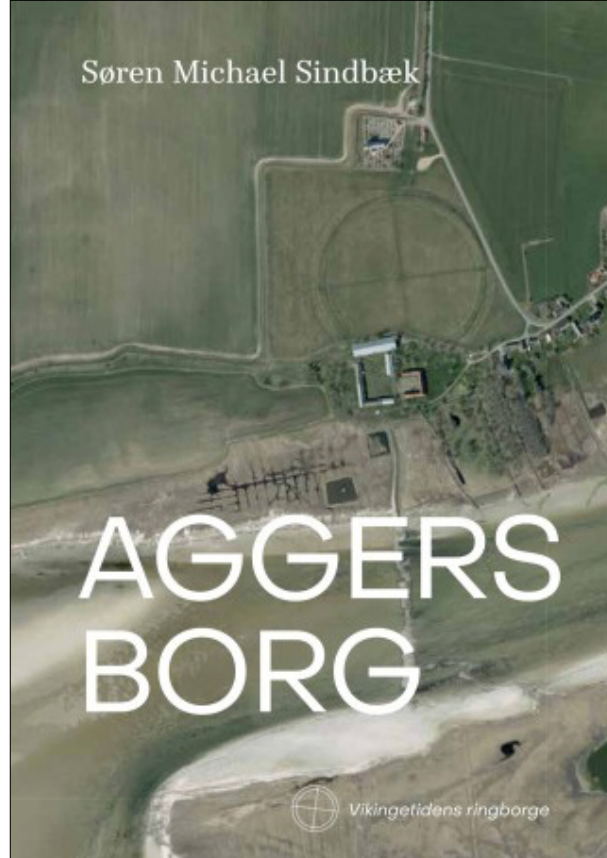
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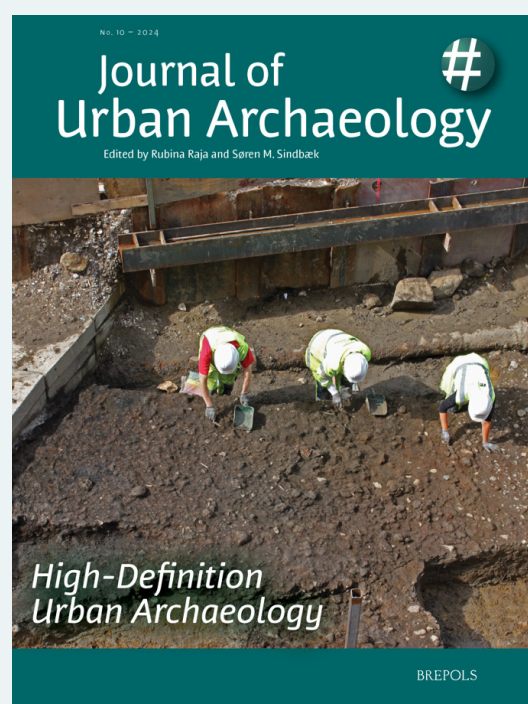
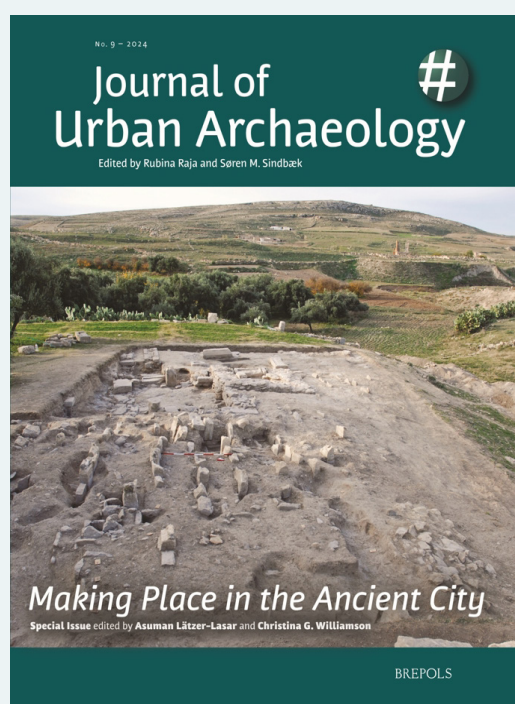
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The UrbNet Team,  
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Glass and glassworking finds from the excavation in Ribe (Photo: Søren Sindbæk)

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