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Editorial

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This is the fourth and final issue of the *European Journal of Archaeology* (*EJA*) for 2020. Like the previous, it was assembled in the shadow of Covid-19. While lockdowns eased in many parts of Europe—and infection rates rose concomitantly—here in Australia we're still largely immobile. The borders are closed, not just nationally but between states; and I'm not alone in feeling the sudden dissonance of living thousands of uncrossable miles from friends, family, and colleagues. Nevertheless, I enjoyed "seeing" many of you at the first ever EAA digital annual meeting. Indeed, it is striking to me how in some ways the distances have shrunk over the last few months as we all grappled with ways to stay connected (or build new connections) in a suddenly disconnected world. I hope that as we find our way out of this crisis that at least stays around.

The five articles included in this issue are diverse in period, region and approach. We continue the trend noted last issue of publishing a number of extremely exciting articles on post-Roman/medieval topics. To them we add two further articles examining aspects of later prehistory. This issue also includes eight book reviews covering a range of archaeological periods and methodological topics from birth to death and ceramic analysis to digital methods.

Samantha Neil and colleagues bring together new biomolecular data from Early Neolithic Britain with previously published data to discuss patterns of mobility at the start of the Neolithic. In their data, they identify quite variable patterns: at one site, all individuals sampled could be local, at another most individuals could be local, while one is likely from quite far away, while at a third the majority look to be from at least 300 km distant, if not further abroad. Based on oxygen composition and biosphere strontium values, they suggest that one potential place of origin for these people could be northern France—a region frequently discussed as important to the start of the British Neolithic. While Neil and colleagues are careful not to over-interpret their data, it is clear they feel that these analyses indicate at least some level of point-to-point migration from northern France to Britain in the early 4th millennium and that this migration might be connected to the emergence of Neolithic lifeways in the British Isles.

Andreas Hennius investigates the practice of hunting with pit traps in prehistoric Scandinavia. Through a major dating campaign and careful statistical modelling of these dates, he is able to delineate the rise and fall of pitfall hunting, which seems to have gained and lost popularity as a hunting strategy several times before finally being abandoned in the Medieval period. Based on these results, he argues that, in contrast to established narratives, pitfall hunting decreased during the Viking period and instead peaks in the mid first millennium AD, probably as part of a host of practices developed at this time for exploiting outland resources. As an aside, included in this article is (in my opinion) probably the best reconstruction drawing that *EJA* has ever published.

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I highly encourage all subscribers to check out Figure 1, even if Viking pitfall traps are not of immediate interest.

Jumping from prehistory to the post-Roman world, Andy Seaman and Leo Sucharyna Thomas take us to Wales to explore how the (re)occupation of hillforts in the fifth to seventh centuries AD formed part of social and geographical landscapes of power. They use a range of GIS modelling techniques—perhaps more commonly associated with prehistoric ritual landscapes—to explore the ways hillforts articulated with emerging power structures as well as geographical features and other occupied sites. Although their data are certainly interesting, it is not immediately clear to me whether this approach offers a new understanding of post-Roman society and power flows in Wales or simply further substantiation of established models.

Shifting back to Scandinavia (and Iceland), Elin Ahlin Sundman and Anna Kjellström investigate the evidence for weapons-related trauma on skeletal assemblages associated with two religious houses. They explore the link between violence and masculinity in the Medieval period and use it as a window to explore the differences between clerical masculinity and other forms of masculinity (i.e. that of male warriors). Through a careful analysis of human remains they suggest that it is possible to distinguish layman from cleric based on the prevalence and type of weapons-related trauma. While the latter showed quite low rates of violent injury, amongst the former it was quite common, a pattern they link to the habitual engagement of men in violent activities other than battles, such as games, fights and training, all of which were central to the public performance of lay masculinity.

Remaining in the Medieval era, Helena Hamerow and colleagues present a complex and interdisciplinary methodological framework for the study of shifting agricultural practices between AD 800 and 1200. This framework brings together and works across biochemical studies of plant grains, macrobotanical analysis, pollen analysis and studies of associated material, such as the bones of possible draft animals. To demonstrate their approach, they draw out a case study from material excavated at Stafford (West Midlands, England) and dated from the late ninth to the thirteenth centuries. Through their various analyses, they are able to track the species of grains cultivated and a variety of cultivation practices, many of which change over time. This sort of multi-disciplinary and fine-grained analysis—particularly when written and illustrated as well as Hamerow and colleagues do—is very satisfying to read; but, I was left wondering how adaptable their methodology would be for sites with worse preservation and less recent histories of high quality excavation than Stafford.

Our reviews section this issue is characteristically diverse, and many of the books reviewed are more synthetic or thematic overviews than specific to a period or place. Opitz reviews a new collection on critical cartography in archaeology and, while broadly positive about the various contributor's individual papers, she sees a missed opportunity to push disciplinary boundaries and consider broader audiences. Similarly, Bison's review of a new volume about forgery (ancient and modern) highlights the many strengths of the diverse essays collected by the editors but laments a lack of detail around scientific methods for assessing and identifying forgeries. Two books address the increasingly important areas of the archaeology of motherhood and children. The latter, being aimed as much at a popular as well as scholarly audience, is very well received, though its reliance on Eurasian material is noted; while the latter, a much more specialist scholarly volume, is described in broadly positive terms even if there is some variation between

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chapters. Thomas writes a strongly positive review of a new monographs on Neolithic British and Irish art—not just for the quality of its archaeological findings, but for its mobilization of digital archaeological techniques. Sharples is a little more qualified in his praise for a monograph concerning the human body in the Early Iron Age. Edited collections on Aegean cooking ceramics and trade and civilization are both praised for their comprehensive coverage of complex topics and diverse methodologies.

If you are interested in submitting an article on any aspect of European archaeology, or have recently published a book that you would like us to review, do please get in touch with a member of our editorial team or visit us on https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-journal-of-archaeology

The Reviews team is also actively to increase the pool of potential book reviewers. If you would like to be considered to review for *EJA*, please e-mail Marta and Maria at ejareviews@e-a-a.org and ejaassistreviews@e-a-a.org with a brief list of your topics of interest and a short CV attached. Advanced postgraduate students as well as those who have completed their PhD are able to review for *EJA*. Proposals to review specific books are considered, provided that they are relevant to the *EJA*'s mission.

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