people that reached present-day Denmark during the Middle Mesolithic, or whether the latter came through the Baltic countries, remains open to debate.

So, where does this leave us? The books are certainly an important contribution to the settlement of northern Europe, but were three books really necessary? With such a high price tag for each book, it seems to be a very narrow audience that will read them. That being said, I certainly learned a lot from these works, which do represent the current knowledge of most of this large area, albeit perhaps with too much emphasis on the north-western part of the Scandinavian peninsula.

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Hingley, R. *Londinium: A Biography. Roman London from Its Origins to the Fifth Century*. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018, 381pp, 75 illustr., pbk, ISBN 978-1-3500-4729-7)

In dedicating this book to Ralph Merrifield, Richard Hingley acknowledges the contribution Merrifield made to the study of Roman London, writing detailed works of synthesis which drew together many disparate strands of evidence to form a complex but accessible narrative (1983). As Hingley notes in his introduction, this approach to publication has ceased to be a common undertaking, with

the most recent multi-phase example now more than two decades old (Perring, 1991). Wholescale revisions of commercially-excavated data (whether previously published or not) are increasingly unlikely, with Lacey Wallace's volume on the pre-Boudican phases (2014) being a rare example. Hingley readily acknowledges that the data available comes solely from rescue (i.e. development-control) excavations across London. The company structures and funding streams of the commercial sector are rarely flexible enough to incorporate thematic or synthetic work on a large scale; as a result, the task has been taken up by the academic sector. The occasionally 'patchy' nature of the evidence due to the strict nature of development-control excavation may result in a lack of understanding (as noted by Hingley on p. 79) but London remains one of the most thoroughly excavated Roman towns anywhere in the Empire, and certainly in Britain (Wallace, 2014: 1), so perhaps this should be viewed as a glass half-full issue rather than the opposite.

This accessible volume takes the topography of London as its focus for outlining and analysing human occupation within the landscape dominated by the Thames, its tributaries, and floodwaters. The chronology begins with the late Iron Age and situates the Roman settlement within the context of a ritualised riparian landscape. The inclusion of this prehistoric evidence is both relevant and useful, serving to remind us how much of it there is. The waterways of London become boundaries (another recurring theme), as well as providing means of connectivity. There is a vast amount of data relating to the Walbrook tributary, running below the modern City, due to constant redevelopment. The dearth of evidence relating to the Fleet river to the west is not only due to the lesser extent of development and construction but also lack of post-excavation on the major project along the Fleet Valley (VAL88), which was shelved during a cycle of recession in the early nineties. Hingley provides a hint of what lurks in archives (p. 244) which should reinvigorate studies of this part of Londinium.

The book is organised chronologically, with eight chapters providing both narrative outline and interpretation. Structured discussion of central themes is repeated through most chapters (occupation, people and status, the waterfront, boundaries). The chapters follow the traditional structure for studies of Londinium; using major events such as the Boudiccan Revolt and phases of greatest expansion (AD 70–100) to form the chronology. Chapter 6 provides a commentary on the 'Hadrianic Fires', now acknowledged to have been several conflagrations which occurred during the decade of AD 120–130. The evidence for these fires is extensive in volume but patchy spatially, with no evidence of major monuments and buildings burning. I suspect that the possibility for clarifying this and other chronological details of London could be partly solved by a wholescale reinvestigation of ceramic chronologies to refine dating sequences. Elsewhere in Chapter 3 Hingley refers to the difficulty of relying on ceramic series which have been largely unchanged for decades (e.g. Davies et al, 1993), and in particular Highgate Ware C, which was probably in circulation earlier than its accepted date of AD 60.

There is a useful emphasis on evidence from Southwark; which is at once both separate and different, yet closely bound to the town across the water. To have both areas in the same volume is less common than the average reader might expect and the discussion of human remains and possible exposure after death on both sides of the Thames is new. I particularly enjoyed

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the discussion of the exposure and burial in watery locations relating to Iron Age burial tradition across Europe (Chapter 1). The concept of Iron Age traditions continuing through the Roman period recurs throughout the volume, with the location of major monuments such as the amphitheatre drawn into this theme. Continuity into the Saxon period is also highlighted, and Hingley rightly draws attention to the problem of studying archaeology via the strict periodization structure which dominates archaeological publishing. The methodological approaches during both excavation and analysis do not lend themselves easily to considering the past as a continuum, requiring as they do a processual reduction in complexity through the process to produce structured chronological narratives. The requirement for a beginning and an end, or the 'decline and fall' narrative highlighted by Hingley (Chapter 9) result in simplistic interpretations of reduced density of buildings (for example) when the nuances of population migration and adaption can be overlooked. Hingley's discussion of the later Roman period, in particular, shows the useful work produced by Gerrard (2011), using vast assemblages to refine knowledge of specific aspects of the later town. The changing nature of land use throughout later phases may not be as final as previously thought; Hingley (p. 223) uses the example of a dumped horse carcass at 1 Poultry, taken to represent the last activity. This could be reconsidered when the ongoing dumping of horse carcasses in the Upper Walbrook Valley is considered; with changing modes of activity across an evolving town might come different ways of viewing the archaeology.

There has clearly been a significant amount of intensive research and thorough reading for this book, including reference to many unpublished reports and short articles for popular publications. The detailed descriptions of the form, location, and chronology of the buildings of Londinium during the period AD 70–120 is particularly notable (Chapter 5). References and additional discussion, counter-arguments, and conflicting evidence are provided in extensive Endnotes with a lengthy Bibliography. A full list of sites mentioned is provided with their codes, enabling further research via the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) online catalogue (http://archive.museumoflondon.org.uk/laarc/catalogue/?_ga=2.132813902.1179640963.1552144002-1787415624.1552144002). As an archaeologist familiar with many of the projects mentioned, I spotted only one error (Juxon House misnamed as Juxton House). The plans label site names and their major features; a quibble would be that the plans are a little too pale in colour and the shading of the Thames in Southwark (for example) could have been clearer but generally the illustrations are appropriate and informative. In relation to the data I would have been warier of using antiquarian evidence for ritual deposition of artefacts into the Thames from Roman London Bridge (p. 85), even if illustrating the importance of watery shrines to the Roman population is vital to the book.

The reasons for a possible contraction of the town during the mid-late second century AD are likely to be complex and further detailed study of the 'dark earth' found across Roman towns Europe-wide would help to elucidate whether there were open areas subject to accumulated deposition or whether the buildings of this phase were constructed differently and therefore harder for archaeologists to identify during excavation, as suggested by Hingley (p. 143). My own view is that they are unlikely to be more difficult to identify than the Saxon and early medieval buildings seen in the City, which are barely visible and challenging to excavate

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under typically pressurised conditions. While there may be Roman construction techniques yet undiscovered it is true that on the higher ground of the gravel hills of Ludgate and Cornhill the level at which the later Roman horizontal stratigraphy would be encountered coincides with the depth of Victorian (and later) basements, which will have removed all evidence beyond cut features such as masonry foundations.

There is a potential for tension when academic writers suggest that synthetic studies of both artefacts and stratigraphy should be more common amongst archaeological publications, the vast majority of which (for London at least) are produced by contracting archaeologists. Hingley is careful not to criticise my corner of the sector for our publication record and clearly understands the challenges we face, but we should be moving towards more synthesis and ensuring developers' funding streams be allocated. The waterfront is an aspect of London that has not seen synthesis since the 1990s (Brigham, 1990), and with new dendrochronology sequences from recently excavated sites there is a valuable opportunity to pull old and new information together. Hingley indirectly calls for improved and targeted research in development-control projects, using the example of large scale dumping of material to aid construction including deliberate 'enculturalisation' through ritual deposition (p. 244). If we assume artefacts within these deposits to be residual we may miss their contextual significance, although to study this effectively would require specific sampling strategies and excavation methodologies that the current contracting approach would find challenging; however it is a valuable reminder of the need to constantly update our research focus.

In focussing on the landscape of Roman London and the influence it had upon later activity, Hingley turns away from discussing specifics of the population themselves. A bold claim on the back cover states 'power, status, gender, and identity' are discussed with reference to the materiality of the terrain, but the success of this is arguable, with no specific mentions of the female members of the population beyond a brief acknowledgement of the total lack of their voices in the Bloomberg writing tablets (p. 246). There are no index entries for women, gender, or children (beyond skeletal remains), and the overall approach involves considering the landscape and structural remains as the focus for narrative while discussion of the population themselves remains largely absent.

In his review of a Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) publication, Paul Bidwell called for 'a new Merrifield' (Bidwell, 2018: 467) to produce a new account of Roman London. This volume represents a significant step in the right direction, by considering the ritualised nature of activity and occupation Hingley moves our attention towards the more ephemeral past, echoing Merrifield's interest (1988; 1997).

Despite this detailed piece of work which has clearly involved much study, it is pleasing and invigorating to our practice to acknowledge that some mysteries remain: the prehistoric presence, the lack of evidence of Christianity, the function of the large building under Colchester House (p. 216), and the common occurrence of disarticulated human remains in the Walbrook. The work continues.

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Manuel Fernández-Götz and Dirk Krausse, eds. *Eurasia at the Dawn of History: Urbanization and Social Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, xviii and 420pp., numerous b/w illustr., hbk, ISBN 978-1-107-14740-9)

This book is an invitation to participate in the ongoing conversation among leading scholars about prehistoric processes of urbanization and social change. Equipped with the book, a pencil, and a tablet, you can work towards your personal 'Dawn of History' (title) and your 'Axial Age' (Ch. 1, p. 5; Ch. 12; Ch. 24, pp. 353 and 366) in understanding the transformations of non-literate complex societies (p. 7) around the middle of the first millennium BC from a multidisciplinary perspective. The pencil will allow you not only to highlight expressions, but also to add comments as well as illustrate your own ideas. It will also help identify and connect concepts between the eight parts and twenty-seven (!) chapters even better than through the index and cross-referencing. The tablet or any other means of geographical orientation will act as a guide on this tour, to the many sites and situations in and beyond Eurasia that serve as evidence and testing ground for questions emanating from, revolving around, and repeatedly returning to the renowned Heuneburg. This Early Iron Age settlement in south-western Germany—often called the 'first city north of the Alps' (p. 320)—is the co-editors' archaeological 'home' and many authors refer to this site in their contributions. Knowledge and views held by archaeologists on the Heuneburg have exploded over the last decades (p. 4 and Ch. 22). This can be taken as a symbol of the mind-changing power and intention of this book. The global perspective hidden in it, both geographically and in terms of the discipline, is the invitation to an intellectual treasure hunt for everyone interested.

Back in 2013, it was an exhilarating experience to attend the conference on *Individualization, Urbanization, and Social Differentiation* in Stuttgart that was at the origin of this book (p. 6 and Hüglin, 2013). The meeting was organized alongside the exhibition *Die Welt der Kelten*; the speakers were from all over the globe, and their presentations linked