Digging into the Dark Ages

Early Medieval Public Archaeologies

edited by

Howard Williams and Pauline Clarke

Access Archaeology

ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD
Summertown Pavilion
18-24 Middle Way
Summertown
Oxford OX2 7LG

www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978-1-78969-527-4
ISBN 978-1-78969-528-1 (e-Pdf)

© The individual authors and Archaeopress 2020

Cover images:

Top-left: Donaeld the Unready's Casket (posted to Twitter on 15 September 2018), based on the Franks Casket (Wulgar the Bard, 2018)

Top-right: 'Gallos' sculpture by Rubin Eynon on the cliffs at Tintagel (Photograph: Susan Greaney)

Bottom-left: View of the 2012 third season of excavations on the western side of the mound beneath the Pillar of Eliseg (Photograph: Howard Williams, 2012)

Bottom-right: Viðarr and Fenrir scanned from the Gosforth Cross, east side (C) (Scan by D. Powlesland with overlay by R.Lang from Parker and Collingwood 1917: 101)

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.

This book is available direct from Archaeopress or from our website www.archaeopress.com

Contents

Contributors iii

Acknowledgements vi

Foreword vii
Chiara Bonacchi

Public Archaeology for the Dark Ages 1
Howard Williams
with Pauline Clarke, Victoria Bounds, Sarah Bratton, Amy Dunn, James Fish, Ioan Griffiths, Megan Hall, Joseph Keelan, Matthew Kelly, David Jackson, Stephanie Matthews, Max Moran, Niamh Moreton, Robert Neeson, Victoria Nicholls, Sacha O'Connor, Jessica Penaluna, Peter Rose, Abigail Salt, Amelia Studholme and Matthew Thomas

Part 1: Dark Age Debates

Keep the Dark Ages Weird: Engaging the Many Publics of Early Medieval Archaeology 20
An Interview with Adrián Maldonado

Colouring the Dark Ages: Perceptions of Early Medieval Colour in Popular Culture 31
Anne Sassin

Why do Horned Helmets still Matter? 53
Sacha O'Connor

Public Archaeology of Early Medieval Assembly Places and Practices: Þingvellir 59
Matthew Kelly

Dressing for Ragnarök? Commodifying, Appropriating and Fetishising the Vikings 65
Madeline Walsh

Part 2: The Public Dark Ages

The Vikings of JORVIK: 40 Years of Reconstruction and Re-enactment 76
Chris Tuckley

Displaying the Dark Ages in Museums 101
Howard Williams, Pauline Clarke and Sarah Bratton

Where History Meets Legend: Presenting the Early Medieval Archaeology of Tintagel Castle, Cornwall 114
Susan Greaney

Digging up the Dark Ages in Cornwall: The Tintagel Challenge and St Piran's Oratory Experience 139
Jacqueline A Nowakowski and James Gossip

Death and Memory in Fragments: Project Eliseg's Public Archaeology 172
Howard Williams and Suzanne Evans

Reading the Gosforth Cross: Enriching Learning through Film and Photogrammetry.............193
Roger Lang and Dominic Powlesland

Crafting the Early Middle Ages: Creating Synergies between Re-enactors and Archaeologists 215
An interview with Adam Parsons and Stuart Strong

Part 3: Dark Age Media

Archaeology in *Alfred the Great* (1969) and *The Last Kingdom* (2015-) 246
Victoria Nicholls and Howard Williams

'It's the End of the World as we Know it …': Reforging Ragnarök through Popular Culture 252
Mark A. Hall

The #GreatHeathenHunt: Repton's Public Early Medieval Archaeology 268
An interview with Cat Jarman

Vikings and Virality...286
Matthew Thomas

Old Norse in the Wild West: Digital Public Engagement on YouTube..300
An interview with Jackson Crawford

The Image Hoard: Using the Past as a Palette in Discussing the Politics of the Present...........320
Wulfgar the Bard

Afterword: Whose 'Dark Ages'? 347
Bonnie Effros

Contributors

Dr Chiara Bonacchi is Lecturer in Heritage at the University of Stirling, Division of History, Heritage and Politics. She is an archaeologist with expertise in digital heritage, heritage and identity politics and post-classical archaeology. At Stirling, she leads on research and teaching in these areas. She is CI of the AHRC-funded Ancient Identities in Modern Britain project and the PI of the JPICH Curating Sustainable Urban Transformation Through Heritage. Email: chiara.bonacchi@stir.ac.uk

Sarah Bratton presented at the Digging into the Dark Ages conference in 2017 as a final-year student and subsequently completed her BA (Hons) Archaeology degree at the University of Chester in 2018.

Pauline Magdalene Clarke graduated with a BA (Hons) degree in Archaeology with History in 2018, and an MA Past Landscapes and Environments in 2019, both from the University of Chester. Her MA dissertation focussed on the taphonomy of plant macrofossils. Email: 1514346@chester.ac.uk

Dr Jackson Crawford is Instructor of Nordic Studies and Coordinator of the Nordic Program, University of Colorado Boulder. He has published translations of several important Norse mythical texts with Hackett Publishing Company, including *The Poetic Edda* (2015), *The Saga of the Volsungs* (2017), and a dual-language edition with commentary, *The Wanderer's Hávamál* (2019). A pioneer in the use of digital technology as a platform for educational outreach, he shares his expertise on Old Norse mythology and language at jacksonwcrawford.com

Professor Bonnie Effros has held the Chaddock Chair of Economic and Social History at the University of Liverpool since 2017. She publishes on late antique and early medieval burial in Gaul and the history of archaeology in modern France and its colonial possessions. Her most recent monograph, *Incidental Archaeologists: French Officers and the Rediscovery of Roman North Africa* (Cornell), was awarded the French Colonial Historical Society's 2018 Alf Andrew Heggoy Book Prize. Email: bonnie.effros@liverpool.ac.uk

Suzanne Evans graduated from Bangor University before starting on a career as the History and Archaeology lecturer at Llandrillo college. After 8 years in this role she recently left teaching to embark on doctoral research in Archaeology at the University of Chester. Her main focus is on the later medieval funerary monuments in Flintshire and is in the process of learning about how digital technologies can further our understanding of archaeological monuments. Email: 1917558@chester.ac.uk

James Gossip is a Senior Archaeologist with Cornwall Archaeological Unit and has been working on a wide variety of excavation and survey projects in Cornwall for the past 20 years. James has considerable experience working with volunteers and is Project director of the St Piran's Oratory project for the St Piran's Trust. James won a commendation for a Community Archaeologist Award from the Council of British Archaeology in 2014 for his work on the Carwynnen Quoit project for The Sustainable Trust. He is co-excavation director on TCARP. The work at St Piran's Oratory continues. Email: james.gossip@cornwall.gov.uk

Susan Greaney is a Senior Properties Historian with English Heritage, with specific research interests in heritage interpretation and the Neolithic of Britain and Ireland. She is currently a PhD candidate at Cardiff University and was a BBC/AHRC New Generation Thinker in 2019. Email: greaneyse@cardiff.ac.uk

Dr Mark A. Hall is an archaeologist and museum curator based at Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Perth & Kinross, Scotland, currently focused on the new museum redevelopment project for Perth. He is an active member on several professional bodies and policy initiatives and has long-standing research

interests in medieval material culture including board games and play, the cult of saints and supernatural interactions, Pictish sculpture, cultural biography and cinematic re-imaginings of the past, on which he has published internationally. Email: marcus.antonius@virgin.net

Dr Cat Jarman recently completed her PhD in Archaeology at the University of Bristol, specialising in isotope analysis, the Viking Age, and Rapa Nui. She directs ongoing excavations of Viking camps at Repton and Foremark in Derbyshire and a Rus site in Ukraine. Alongside her academic research, Cat actively pursued numerous public engagement roles including consultancy and contributions to TV documentaries. E-mail: catjarman@gmail.com

Roger Lang is a freelance creator of 3d modelling and film-based online learning resources. His current work is primarily for the CultureStreet.org website, supporting their delivery of a Heritage Lottery-funded commission from ArtUk. He graduated in 1978 with a B Ed (Hons) degree from the University of Lancaster and has recently completed an MRes in Archaeology at the University of Chester. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Email: rwlang7@gmail.com

Dr Adrián Maldonado is Glenmorangie Research Fellow at National Museums Scotland. He previously lectured in archaeology at the University of Glasgow and the University of Chester, where he specialised in early Christianity in Scotland and the archaeology of death and burial. He is currently working on the fourth phase of the Glenmorangie Research Project, entitled: Creating Scotland: Making a Nation 800-1200 AD. Email: a.maldonado@nms.ac.uk

Jacqueline A Nowakowski is a freelance archaeologist and Project Director of the Tintagel Castle Archaeological Research Project (TCARP). Formerly Principal Archaeologist at Cornwall Archaeological Unit with over 40 years field experience on sites of all periods across the UK and abroad, Jacky has lectured and published widely on the Bronze and Iron Ages particularly in south-west Britain. Jacky is a passionate advocate for community archaeology and has directed many successful community archaeology projects in Cornwall. She has a longstanding association with Tintagel and directed excavations with the late Professor Charles Thomas in Tintagel churchyard in the 1990s. Currently, Jacky is working with James Gossip on writing up the TCARP results for publication. Email: jackynowak@aol.com

Matthew Kelly graduated with BA (Hons) Archaeology degree in 2018 from the University of Chester having contributed to the Digging into the Dark Ages conference in December 2017. He is competing in the 2020 Mongol Ralley equipped with a 1989 Fiat Panda @Pandabarians Email: matthewkelly96@icloud.com

Victoria Nicholls participated in the Digging into the Dark Ages conference and subsequently completed her single honours BA (Hons) Archaeology degree at the University of Chester in 2018.

Sacha O'Connor graduated with a BA (Hons) Archaeology degree from the University of Chester in 2018 having presented at the Digging into the Dark Ages conference as a final-year student.

Adam Parsons is an experienced professional archaeologist who has worked at Oxford Archaeology North since 2002. He was a main author of two academic monographs: *Shadows in the Sand: Excavation of a Viking-Age Cemetery at Cumwhitton* and *St Michael's Church, Workington: Excavation of an Early Medieval Cemetery.* He is a keen living-historian and runs his own small business – Blueaxe Productions – making historical reproductions for museums, individuals, and television productions. Email: blueaxereproductions@gmail.com

Professor Dominic Powlesland is a landscape archaeologist who has been engaged in pioneering fieldwork and landscape research in the Vale of Pickering for more than 40 years. In 2019, he was

awarded the British Academy Landscape Archaeology medal for his contributions to landscape research and digital techniques to field archaeology. He introduced the use of hand-held computers in the field for excavation recording in 1984, has pioneered the use of large scale geophysical surveys and continues to engage with new techniques such as digital photogrammetry for excavation and object recording. He holds a number of honorary chairs and continues to lecture widely to audiences ranging from primary school children to international academic conferences. Email: d.powlesland@btinternet.com

Dr Anne Sassin completed her PhD at the University of Nottingham and currently continues to lecture in medieval archaeology, including for Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education. Her research interests span the Roman to later medieval periods, with a particular focus on public archaeology and heritage outreach. She currently works as a community archaeologist and has led on several fieldwork projects in the South East of England, including the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme in Kent. Email: asassinallen@gmail.com

Stuart Strong is a founding member of Cumbraland Living History. After working in Management and Training for many years he decided to turn his passion for the early medieval period into a full-time occupation. His business, Gear & Graith, specialises in reproducing the material culture of Northern Britain and bringing the Viking Age alive for school children across Scotland. For more on Cumbraland, visit www.cumbraland.com, or email cumbraland@gmail.com, for Gear & Graith visit www.gearandgraith.com, or email gearandgraith@gmail.com

Matthew Thomas graduated at the University of Chester in 2018 with a BA (Hons) Archaeology degree. He has co-authored two of an ongoing series of papers relating to the lost medieval castles of Cheshire, as well as co-authoring the forthcoming publication of the excavations of the Iron Age settlement at Poulton, Cheshire. His current interests include the use of emergent AI technology within archaeological research. Through his company Archaeology3D he provides photogrammetric recording services to the commercial archaeology and heritage sector. Email: matt.thomas@archaeology3d.com

Dr Chris Tuckley received his PhD at the Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds, in 2009. He has worked for York Archaeological Trust since 2004, and is currently YAT's Head of Interpretation and Engagement, based at the JORVIK Viking Centre. Email: ctuckley@yorkat.co.uk

Madeline Walsh graduated with a BA (Hons) Archaeoogy degree in 2016 from the University of Chester and completed a MA in Medieval Archaeology from the University of York in 2017, focusing on portable art and gaming pieces within Medieval Northern Europe. She has also carried out fieldwork on various multi-period sites as a commercial archaeologist and previously worked on research project Sicily in Transition and excavations at Star Carr. Email: maddy.walsh07@gmail.com

Wulfgar the Bard of University of Grantebrycge, Vinland was born in Dumnonia and was stolen away as a small child to the islands of Insi Catt. Taken to Bryggen, in the lands of the Northmen, in his early teens he returned to the mouth of the river Don, in Pictland, to finish his formative education. As a young scribe he continued his studies near the mission of Saint Mungo, on the banks of the river Clut, and then travelled, as a bard for hire, briefly in the lands of the East Angles and then, for many years, in the Kingdom of the Franks. He has now returned to Pictland and lives in a small hovel in the Kingdom of Fif, not far from the chapel of Saint Andrew with his wīf and four apprentices. Twitter: @wulfgarthebard

Professor Howard Williams is Professor of Archaeology at the University of Chester and researches mortuary archaeology, archaeology and memory, the history of archaeology and public archaeology. He regularly writes an academic blog: *Archaeodeath*. Email: howard.williams@chester.ac.uk

Acknowledgements

The 2020s are set to be a testing yet crucial juncture for the study of early medieval archaeology. Never before has the field which investigates the material cultures, monuments and landscapes of the 'Dark Ages' been more integral and pivotal in contemporary popular culture and political discourse. Likewise, the field's intersections and dialogues with a range of other disciplines, from genomic research to literary studies, are more complex and conflicted than ever. Spanning from the decline and fall of the Western Roman Empire in Late Antiquity to the closing of the Viking Age (the 5th to the 11th centuries AD), the Early Middle Ages has been long perceived as central to understanding the origins of the peoples, religions and nations of Europe today and their emerging global context. Moreover, the origins, history and current state of both archaeology as a whole, and the broader interdisciplinary study of early medieval societies, owe far more to the theories, methods and discoveries of early medieval archaeologists than is commonly admitted.

Yet, the critical investigation of early medieval archaeology's public engagements and interactions has rarely received sustained and serious investigation. Therefore, having previously tackled the public archaeology of death (Williams *et al.* 2019a) and art/archaeology intersections in public engagement (Williams *et al.* 2019b), the public archaeology of the 'Dark Ages' seemed an essential topic for the 3rd University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference. This public event was organised by final-year Archaeology students and was open to all, free of charge. Aimed at tackling a key dimension of public archaeology in the contemporary world, the conference was hosted by Cheshire West and Cheshire's Grosvenor Museum on 13 December 2017.

Titled 'Digging into the Dark Ages', the conference comprised of two guest speakers and 20 student contributions. It served as an academic and public engagement event for the Department of History and Archaeology and the University. It also operated as a formative exercise for students who subsequently produced summative written assignments based on their findings. The conference equally afforded students with transferable skills in public speaking and event organisation. Furthermore, the research conducted on topics of the students' own choosing gave an opportunity for those willing and able to pursue their investigations further towards publication. Contributions from, and interviews with, heritage professionals and academics were commissioned, peer-reviewed, collated and edited during 2018 and 2019, creating a book which combines the work of experts and student voices, tackling early medieval public archaeologies from varied and fresh perspectives.

The editors wish to extend thanks to colleagues in the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Chester, especially, Dr Caroline Pudney, Dr Kara Critchell and Professor Meggen Gondek. The conference was only possible because of its hosts, and we extend heartfelt thanks to all the staff of Cheshire West and Cheshire's Grosvenor Museum, notably the late Dr Peter Boughton. Thanks also to then-University of Chester postgraduate researcher Ben Wills-Eve for guiding the students in preparing for the event. We also thank the guest speakers, Dr Chiara Bonacchi and Dr Adrián Maldonado, who enhanced the conference by exploring key dimensions of the issues at play, drawing on their respective expertise. We are grateful to Chiara for agreeing to compose the Foreword and to Professor Bonnie Effros for crafting a broad-ranging Afterword. Finally, we appreciate the unflinching support of our publishers: Archaeopress.

Williams, H., B. Wills-Eve, J. Osborne (eds) 2019a. *The Public Archaeology of Death*. Sheffield: Equinox.

Williams, H., C. Pudney and A. Ezzeldin (eds) 2019b. *Public Archaeology: Arts of Engagement*. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Foreword

Chiara Bonacchi

From early engagements with history in the classroom to family visits of the JORVIK Viking Centre, from teenager discoveries of Tolkien's epic novels to TV viewings of *The Last Kingdom* in later adulthood, our everyday experiences have impressed upon our minds and hearts powerful but personalised images of what Nick Merriman called the 'official' past (Merriman 1991). These realms are constructions of knowing and feeling that may be more or less persistent. These images not only shape our understanding of the world as we see it, but stay attached to some of our deepest emotions; they are intermingled with our fears, hopes and dreams of safety, self-worth and acceptance. Endeavouring to understand the processes through which the past is presenced is one of the most important facets of our profession as archaeologists and historians (Bonacchi 2014, 2018; Brophy 2018).

This volume reveals a range of 'images' of the early medieval past in contemporary society. It comprises an anthology of essays and interview-based chapters authored by researchers working in an array of different institutions as well contributions by former student who participated in the 2017 conference. Together, they provide a rich variety of perspectives into the contemporary framing of the 'Dark Ages'. 'Darkness' still remains, within British and European society, one of the properties that are most frequently associated with the mid–late first millennium AD. I remember reading through substantive reports of evaluations made by large London-based museums on the public perceptions of the medieval period for my doctoral research. They were filled with focus group participants' descriptions of this epoch as a 'foreign country' (Lowenthal 1985) that is poorly lit, and mostly dull, cold, dump and technologically retrograde. Several years have passed since then and, building on previous studies, my latest investigations into the present-day use of the Iron Age, Roman and post-Roman periods[1] have showed how these ideas can be tied to exclusive narratives of 'self' and 'otherness' that bear dire social and political implications.

This book is, however, particularly effective in complicating the picture I have just portrayed and in bringing to light counter-narratives that reflect on the 'dark' sides of the Dark Ages in ways that go beyond the shadow cast in the early modern period and crystallised via the transformational writings of Edward Gibbon (1776). The idea of the 'Fall' of the Roman Empire and its intermittent and variously contested fortune in historiography (e.g. Brown 1971; Ward-Perkins 2005;) is alive in – amongst others – TV series, videos shared on YouTube, Twitter and Facebook conversations about the 'destiny' of polities such as the United States or supra-national ones like the European Union (Bonacchi *et al.* 2018). Yet, being 'dark' can also carry elements of fascination, and those elements, whether accurate or inaccurate, may serve as compelling forces leading visitors to sites like Tintagel, or to participate in Viking re-enactment, to name just two of the examples provided in the chapters that follow.

Navigating issues relating to authority, interpretation, accuracy, appeal and value, this collection is the first focused attempt to shed light on the public lives of the 'Dark Ages' as both 'retrotopias' (Bauman 2017) and 'retrophobias', and as personally appropriated histories that are performed across online and offline fields of human activity and heritage crafting.

---

[1] This has been undertaken in the context of the AHRC-funded project Ancient Identities in Modern Britain, which is a collaboration between Durham University and the University of Stirling (grant n. AH/N006151/1; https://www.dur.ac.uk/research/directory/view/?mode=project&id=944).

Bibliography

Bauman, Z. 2017. *Retrotopia*. Malden: Polity.

Bonacchi, C. 2014. Understanding the public experience of archaeology in the UK and Italy: a call for a 'sociological' movement in public archaeology. *European Journal of Post-Classical Archaeologies* 4: 377–440, http://www.postclassical.it/PCA_vol.4_files/PCA%204_Bonacchi.pdf.

Bonacchi, C. 2018. Public archaeology cannot just 'fly at dusk': the reality and complexities of generating public impact. *Antiquity* 92(366): 1659–1661.

Bonacchi, C., M. Altaweel and M. Krzyzanska 2018 The Heritage of Brexit: roles of the past in the construction of political identities through social media. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 18(2): 174–192.

Brophy, K. 2018. The Brexit hypothesis and prehistory. *Antiquity* 92(366): 1650–1658.

Brown, P. 1971. *The World of Late Antiquity: from Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Gibbon, E. 1776. *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell.

Lowenthal, D. 1985. *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Merriman, N. 1991. *Beyond the Glass Case: the Past, the Heritage and the public in Britain*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

Ward-Perkins, B. 2005. *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Public Archaeology for the Dark Ages

Howard Williams

with Pauline Clarke, Victoria Bounds, Sarah Bratton, Amy Dunn, James Fish, Ioan Griffiths, Megan Hall, Joseph Keelan, Matthew Kelly, David Jackson, Stephanie Matthews, Max Moran, Niamh Moreton, Robert Neeson, Victoria Nicholls, Sacha O'Connor, Jessica Penaluna, Peter Rose, Abigail Salt, Amelia Studholme and Matthew Thomas

This introductory chapter identifies the principal issues and themes in the public archaeology of the Early Middle Ages, exploring the specific and compelling challenges of investigating and evaluating the early medieval past in contemporary society mediated by archaeology. In doing so, we review and contextualise the contributions to the 3rd University of Chester Archaeology Student conference: 'Digging into the Dark Ages', which took place at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester, 13 December 2017. The resulting book comprises a selection of the student contributions and a range of additional chapters by heritage professionals and academics. The book's structure and contents are then outlined: the first-ever collection dedicated to 'Dark Age' public archaeology. It is argued that for future research, critical public archaeologies are essential for ethical and engaging early medieval archaeology in both theory and practice.

Introduction[1]

Professor Broom (played by actor Ian McShane) narrates the opening sequence of 2019 film *Hellboy* (starring David Harbour and Milla Jovovich). King Arthur and Merlin ride to Pendle Hill to confront Nimue, the Queen of Blood, and her creatures of darkness. Broom sets the scene: 'The year is 517 AD, known as the Dark Ages, and for f**king good reason' (Hellboy 2019).

Two years before, in 2017, the Justified Ancients of Mu Mu returned after 23 years of retirement from the music industry with a three-day socially critical art event in Liverpool called 'Welcome to the Dark Ages'. With multiple striking funerary archaeological undertones, they launched the 'Toxteth Day of the Dead' and announced their plan to build a 'People's Pyramid' comprised of bricks containing human cremated remains.[2]

A year earlier still, to distinguish the traces of 5th–7th-century buildings revealed by excavation and on display to visitors from the nearby ruins of the 13th-century castle on, English Heritage's indoor displays and on-site interpretation boards were updated at Tintagel (Cornwall), calling its early medieval phase a 'Dark Age' (Williams 2016a). The term's widespread deployment on site was part of the redesign of this premier heritage destination involving new art and installations. The Arthurian allusions 'Tintagel: where history meets legend') and 'Dark Age' label together prompted a storm of protest in 2016. Some academics supported a social media campaign to convince English Heritage to '#stopthedarkages'. Meanwhile some locals and Cornish nationalists were furious at the 'disneyfication' of the site as well as the derogatory 'Dark Age' epithet (Williams 2016b; Greaney this volume).

From Hollywood films to the KLF to English Heritage: the 'Dark Ages' remain an eclectic, mutable, contentious but unquestionably widespread frame of reference in contemporary society. There seem

---

1 The chapter was authored by Howard Williams with input from Pauline Clarke. The entire student group are credited for their ideas and arguments which were presented at the student conference, adapted for their assignments, and a selection are published in this collection. Their choices and endeavours have shaped this Introduction and the book project.

2 https://www.nme.com/blogs/nme-blogs/weird-events-klf-welcome-dark-ages-2132941

to be many different intersecting 'Dark Ages', bearing complex, contradictory and controversial social, religious, economic and political associations. They also harbour varying degrees of negative and positive, real-world and fantastical bearings, and embody both educational and performative political dimensions (see also Elliot 2017: 55–77). Only some of these 'Dark Ages' relate directly to how contemporary society engages with and judges the material evidence of the centuries following the decline and collapse of the Western Roman Empire. Others relate to the popular perception of later medieval societies and materialities. Further 'Dark Ages' are fixated more with our anxieties and imaginings about the future of our 'civilization', its communities, built environments and late-modern consumerism.

In this context, how do the material cultures of the early medieval period (defined here as the 5th–11th centuries AD, and including graves, settlements, artefacts, art, inscriptions, architectures and landscapes), manifest themselves and acquire meanings and significance in our contemporary world? Within the complex entanglement of archaeology with contemporary culture and politics, what specific issues are faced for the public engagement and politics of 'Dark Age' societies mediated by their material traces? How do we promote some narratives and discourage and counter misleading and dangerous stories? What are archaeologists' ethicial considerations and responsibilities to improve the ways in which we engage and educate global publics, involve new audiences, attract new participants and practitioners, and tackle misconceptions of, the middle and later first millennium AD?

A starting point is to recognise that 'public archaeology', as identified and explored cogently by Gabriel Moshenska (2017), incorporates not only the practice and critical evaluation of public outreach (archaeologists working with the public) and community archaeology (archaeology by the public), but also the practice and investigation of public-sector archaeology, including heritage conservation, management and interpretation of artefacts, monuments, sites, architectures and landscapes. The field of public archaeology also extends to archaeology deployed in educational environments, and to strategies and approaches in digital and open archaeology that seek to bring archaeological knowledge to wider and diverse audiences. Furthermore, public archaeology incorporates the practice and appraisal of the communication and dissemination of archaeological knowledge via the media and throughout popular culture, including intersections between real and imagined past times and a range of present-day landscapes, monuments and material cultures, including archaeologists' investigations of the early medieval past as a 'brand' within our contemporary 'experience' society (Morrison 2000; Holtorf 2007).

Public archaeology also endeavours to evaluate and critique the politics of archaeology, including how archaeologists might operate as public intellectuals and political voices in contemporary society (Tarlow and Nilsson Stutz 2013; Nilsson Stutz 2018). Thus, in tackling 'public archaeology' for the 'Dark Ages' in this broad and multi-faceted way, we situate public archaeology, following both Grima (2016: 54) and Moshenska (2017), as a disciplinary practice and theoretical orientation that investigates both archaeologists' voices and practices in the contemporary world. Indeed, arguably of all periods of the human past, the Early Middle Ages faces some of the most enduring challenges: the cocktail of immense popularity but also widespread ethnic, religious and racial stereotypes, and thus enduring popular appeal and political uses and appropriations.

Yet this is not all, following Almansa (2018), we must consider public archaeology as itself a critical theory of archaeology, one which opens new trajectories for research and public engagement. For a robust public archaeology of the Early Middle Ages, we must tackle head-on the popular culture of archaeological narratives, critiquing not only the presence of words, symbols and ideas of medieval origin, but also evaluations of the complex uses and reuses of early medieval artefacts, buildings, monuments and landscapes, and considering their reproduction and replication, life-histories and popular cultural resonances down to, and in, contemporary communities and environments as well as printed and digital

spaces (Jones 2004; Foster and Jones 2019). Central to this is a greater investigation of who is doing what, and for whom, in the study of the early medieval past: revaluating its creators, participants and audiences.

Having set the scene, let us now consider some specific dimensions to public early medieval archaeologies. While we recognise the broader European and global contexts, our attention here focuses on the UK.

The politics and popular culture of the 'Dark Ages'

How are archaeologists investigating the 'Dark Ages' in contemporary society? In the UK, and indeed in much of northern and western Europe, 'public archaeology' debates and practices strongly feature the early medieval period, from television documentaries to museum displays. The 5th–11th centuries AD is frequently perceived as the 'Dark Ages' in popular discussions: characterised in terms of 'barbarian' invasions, Christian conversion, and kingdom formation. Present-day concepts of identity, faith and origin myths are seemingly indelibly linked and revitalised through nationalist, colonialist *and* imperialist discourses which appropriate and mobilise the early medieval period in complex interleaving fashions (e.g. Effros 2003: 1–70; Geary 2001; Sommer 2017).

Yet increasingly, and particularly over the last half-century, archaeological discoveries, analyses and syntheses are contributing towards fundamental revaluations of traditional historical narratives and their racial and religious underpinnings, as well as the many legendary and mythological elements that have sometimes been treated as historical and archaeological events and processes (e.g. Carver 2019; Halsall 2013; Higham and Ryan 2013; Hills 2003; Harland 2019; Oosthuizen 2019). Archaeologists can offer new discoveries, but also distinctive stories and fresh paradigms, operating on a range of scales, media and contexts, in which the social, political, economic and religious histories of early medieval Europe can be told. Having said this, how can archaeologists do this while popular culture retains static and out-moded narratives for the era (see Content and Williams 2010). Moreover, are we hampered by still-popular accounts of the period, including James Campbell's (1982) *The Anglo-Saxons* and Michael Wood's (1981) *In Search of the Dark Ages,* which whilst engaging are now decades old and no longer represent the latest archaeological research and thinking?

While there have been numerous prominent community archaeology and public engagement projects with an early medieval focus, including notably the Sedgeford project (Faulkner 2000) and the ongoing Dig Ventures/Durham University dig at Lindisfarne,[3] the explicit and extended investigation of the 'public archaeology' for early medieval Europe, including the many sub-dimensions Moshenska (2017) identifies, has to date escaped detailed academic attention. While academics themselves explore the period in relation to nuanced perspectives and are critical of out-moded racial and culture-historic narratives, fantastical and simplistic narratives persist in popular culture without detailed exploration or rebuke. For Anglo-Saxon archaeology, to take one region by way of example, to date there have been very few studies attempting to evaluate some of the principal educational and popular interactions with archaeological evidence, sites and narratives (see Lucy and Herring 1999; Marzinzik 2011; Walsh and Williams 2019; Williams 2009) and fewer still that situate these in relation to prevalent pseudo-historical narratives for early medieval Britain more broadly, from 'Arthur' to 'Alfred' (see Halsall 2013). There are, to date, only a small number of studies which have tackled further material 'early medievalisms', including music and intangible heritages of the early medieval past (Ashby and Schofield 2015); the biographies and replications of early medieval stone sculpture (e.g. Jones 2004; Foster and Jones 2019); re-enactment societies and festivals (Kobiałka 2013); the early medieval period as represented in films and television programmes (e.g. Hall 2004, 2009; Sanmark and Williams 2019); heritage experiences of 'time travel' to the late prehistoric/early historic past (e.g. Holtorf 2013); and finally, the broader popular culture consumption of the early medieval past (see now Dale 2019).

[3] https://digventures.com/lindisfarne/

In this context, there is a pressing need to extend and develop critical historiographies of early medieval archaeology, such as the research conducted on the nineteenth-century origins of Anglo-Saxon archaeology and how its definitions and interpretations, inspired by theories of race, religion and class, have continued to shape both specialist and popular attitudes towards the *Adventus Saxonum* and the origins of England (Lucy 1998; McCombe 2011; Williams 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008, 2013; see also Effros 2003; 2012). Furthermore, public archaeological research must build upon evaluations of how we envision and display early medieval archaeological contexts for both academic and popular audiences (Gardeła 2016; Watson and Williams 2019; Williams 2009; Williams 2016c). Additional key dimensions of public archaeology relating to the Early Middle Ages includes digital public archaeology, such as blogging (e.g. Meyers and Williams 2014; Williams and Atkin 2015; Williams 2019a) and video-blogging (Tong *et al.* 2015) as both media for public engagement and academic critique.

To do this we can take inspiration from the growing number of literary and interdisciplinary studies of medievalism (e.g. Albin *et al.* 2019; Alexander 2007; Elliott 2017; Harty 2011; Sturtevant 2017; Wollenberg 2018). However, to date, such studies of 'medievalism' remain literary and historical in focus. To extend their evaluations to archaeological and heritage dimensions and stakeholder communities, as well as to digital environments, archaeology must be front and centre as theory, method, practice and data.

Why is this project particularly timely?

There are a series of more specific contexts that justify why this book is not only timely but essential. The last decade has seen an upsurge in early medieval academic research operating in a complex and evolving digital media (Williams *et al.* 2019b). Particularly in the last few years, academic discoveries and publications have benefitted from open-access digital publication, with the peer-reviewed articles disseminated via stories composed on online news media platforms, facilitating 'viral' coverage. A notable and 'viral' early medieval global news story was the osteological and genomic reinterpretation of the Birka Bj581 chamber grave dating to the 10th century AD as a female-sexed individual and thus perhaps a 'warrior-woman': the real-world equivalent to Lagertha from the popular TV series *Vikings* (Hedenstierna Jonson *et al.* 2017; Price *et al.* 2019). Another example is the re-dating of the mass-graves and furnished inhumation burials from Repton, Derbyshire to confirm an association with the Great Heathen Army's over-wintering in 873–874 (Jarman *et al.* 2018). During 2019, the publication and media stories of the 'Prittlewell Prince' offers a further prominent instance of a carefully strategised launch of a new museum exhibition, academic and popular publications, and press releases to the media (Hirst and Scull 2019). These examples provoke us to reconsider how digital media are affecting how we disseminate and debate early medieval scholarship, with many scholars engaging with social media, via blogs and for digital platforms like *The Conversation* alongside journals and books. Through dialogues with journalists, as well as more direct means of engagement such as academic open-access digital publication and a range of new media, including podcasts and video blogging, early medieval enthusiasts subsequently engage with new audiences and debate evolve rapidly online regarding archaeological discoveries and analyses (see also Williams 2018; 2019b). Yet this also prompts many new challenges, and genomic research and popular consumption is fostering a host of new challenges, including the popular uncritical dissemination of race science through both ancient and modern DNA research (see Booth 2018; see Maldonado this volume).

The Early Middle Ages is more than just in the news and online: it can be a prominent part of immersive mass-entertainment too. In recent years it has exponentially enhanced its profile in Western popular culture through television documentaries, but particularly via a revitalised craze of the Victorian fantasy and popular historic renditions. The 'Dark Ages' are thus commercialised and manifest through the arts and entertainment industries (see also Ashby and Schofield 2015; Trafford and Pluskowski 2007; Dale 2019). Fictional versions inspired by the early medieval past have a long history, but they are now proliferating like never before and via a host of media: via printed fiction, video games, television dramas and films. Over

the last two decades, versions of imaginary 'Dark Ages' can be experienced via *Skyrim* to *Vikings* and *The Last Kingdom,* inspirations from Norse mythology including *American Gods* and the Marvel *Thor* comics and movies, and fantasy genres heavily inspired by medieval mythology, history and archaeology, including *Game of Thrones, The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* (Larrington 2016; Ford Burley 2019; Hall 2004; 2009; Tveskov and Erlandson 2007; Williams 2019a). It is increasingly apparent that the 'Dark Ages' is alive and well in our popular culture via many guises, sometimes directly inspired by archaeological interpretations and narratives, often wholly disconnected from academic discourse. Moreover, this panoply of renditions require detailed investigations by those trained as archaeologists and familiar with early medieval material culture. Indeed, lead researchers are increasingly aware that we cannot ignore these detailed and rich entanglements with archaeological evidence and interpretations, but explore them and their implications for our own storytelling (e.g. Dale 2019; Price 2015).

Figure 1: the student-designed logo for the 'Digging into the Dark Ages' conference

The Dark Ages is darker still than popular science news and entertainment, however. Indeed, the aesthetics and stories of the Early Middle Ages have long fostered extremist fantasies about the past but these have expanded and intensified in recent years (e.g. Ford Burley 2019). Notably, the global popularist and far-right's appropriations of Germanic and Norse material culture, myths and symbols has garnered scholarly attention, including how we evaluate it, and how we position ourselves and our scholarship in response to it (Bonacchi *et al.* 2018; Niklasson and Hølleland 2018; Richardson and Booth 2017). In particular, following the 'Unite the Right' rally of 13 May 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, and subsequently with citations to the early medieval past in the message left behind by the shooter who massacred worshippers in a mosque in Christchurch (New Zealand) in March 2019, medievalists have witnessed further instances of the longer-term close proximity of toxic extremism with fantasies of racial purity and national origins within white supremacist and Islamophobic discourses (see also Elliott 2017; Wollenberg 2018). In addition to these global concerns, for the UK, the early medieval past is contested on multiple scales simultaneously

Figure 2: Final-year archaeology students participating in the student conference in December 2017 at the Grosvenor Museum

between different religious, ethnic and socio-political groups, as witnessed, for example, in the mobilisation of the end of Rome and the 'Dark Ages' in defining positions and arguments in both the 2014 IndyRef and 2016 Brexit referenda debates (Bonacchi *et al.* 2018: Brophy 2018; Gardner 2017; Gardner and Harrison 2017).

Figure 3: Dr Chiara Bonacchi (left), Prof. Howard Williams (centre) and Dr Adrián Maldonado (right) at the conference, December 2017

Building on this intense and divisive political environment, there had been multiple controversies regarding the uses and abuses of the Early Middle Ages in academia, the heritage sector and museums. A good example of this is the aforementioned #stopthedarkages reaction to the use of the term 'Dark Ages' on heritage boards at Tintagel, Cornwall and in English Heritage's broader educational and public-facing literature (Hicks 2017; see also Williams 2016a and b). Likewise, the debate surrounding the re-display of the Viking gallery in the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen has led to public disagreements between scholars and the public over the involvement of non-specialists in the creation of the display, notably its more anachronistic and speculative representations of Viking people (Pentz *et al.* 2019; Sindbæk 2019). Other pertinent strands of debate have emerged since the conference, prompted by a growing awareness of the early medieval past's use by the far-right. Notably, the merits of using the term 'Anglo-Saxon' for scholars and scholarship when investigating the Early Middle Ages has been challenged afresh (Pitts 2020). These debates demand robust correctives and critique from archaeologists, for whom ethnic terms have long been widely deployed for both specialist and public-facing media to communicate the material cultures of the Early Middle Ages.

Given this background, when tasking the final-year single honours Archaeology students at the University of Chester in the 2017–2018 academic year to tackle a theme in public archaeology as part of the module 'HI6001 Archaeology and Contemporary Society', a focus on the Early Middle Ages seemed potentially rich and rewarding as well as timely. The previous two student conferences had already incorporated distinctive critiques of early medieval monuments and material culture in heritage and museum environments as well as the Early Middle Ages in digital media (Evans and Williams 2019; Gardeła 2019; Walsh and Williams 2019; Watson and Williams 2019; Williams and Alexander 2019; Williams and Evans 2019; Williams 2019a; 2019b; Williams *et al.* 2019). Consequently, the third University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference, which took place on 13 December 2017, was thus called 'Digging into the Dark Ages'. This title consciously encapsulated the stereotype of 'Dark Ages' as a popular, but non-ethnically specific term for the period: one readily understood yet fraught with problems. Meanwhile, the title also deployed a double entendre for 'digging', evoking both the practical discoveries and insights into the period afforded by archaeology, and the intellectual 'digging' of the past through critical evaluation of archaeology's narratives and public engagements.

Having identified why this book is timely, let us now sketch the conference proceedings.

The 'Digging into the Dark Ages' conference

The 3rd University of Chester Archaeology Student Conference was a public and free day conference, organised by final-year archaeology students and hosted by the Grosvenor Museum, Chester. It was a formative exercise leading to a summative assignment for the students involved, but it equally served as a public forum for debating a distinctive theme in public archaeological research. Simultaneously, through the event, and its digital presence in the form of a Wordpress blog site, it served as an example of public outreach in itself.[4] Note: while the first and second student conferences had been recorded for video, the sensitive nature of some of the topics presented by students was such that we felt it best not to share via social media to uphold our duty of care within the context of a University educational activity (cf. Morgan 2018) (Figures 1 and 2).

The conference followed the format of previous conferences (see Williams *et al.* 2019c). In total, 20 students presented their work across six themed sessions addressing: (i) debates; (ii) entertainment; (iii) heritage displays; (iv) digital themes; (v) commercial and consumerism dimensions; and (vi) heritage management and political contestations of the Early Middle Ages. The conference thus explored both analogue and digital mechanisms for public engagement and participation in archaeological research into the Early Middle Ages, as well as popular, economic and political appropriations of the Early Middle Ages through its archaeology. The student talks were augmented by question-and-answer sessions.

The Guest Lectures

The conference was enriched considerably through the contributions of two keynote speakers. Chiara Bonacchi (University of Stirling) presented a case study in digital archaeology, evaluating how the end of the Western Roman Empire was mobilised in debates surrounding the Brexit referendum (subsequently published: Bonacchi *et al.* 2018). Meanwhile, Adrián Maldonado (National Museum of Scotland) explored the misuse of palaeogenetics and modern DNA in narratives surrounding the early medieval past (addressed in Maldonado, this volume; see also Booth 2018). Both guest lectures afforded the students and other delegates superb present-day case studies in the investigation of the uses and abuses of archaeological evidence and narratives in personal and political contexts (Figure 3).

Dark Age Debates

The first session comprised three presentations which tackled broad contemporary issues in the public perception and engagement with the early medieval past. Ioan Griffiths reviewed the use of the term 'Dark Ages' and found its use rife outside of academic literature, including in newspaper articles and media debates as a derogatory term applied to people, institutions and situations typified by ignorant, prejudiced, superstitious and old-fashioned attitudes and ideas (see also Elliott 2017). He identified its mixed response among historians and archaeologists when applied to the Early Middle Ages itself (e.g. see Halsall 2013; Hicks 2017) and found it rarely used by heritage organisations, with many clearly avoiding the term, with the exception of Tintagel where the term 'Dark Ages' was common (see also Williams 2017; Greaney this volume). Griffiths had further distinctive points to make, speculating that the term specifically maximised associations with 'mystery' and the Arthurian allusions of this prominent heritage attraction. Griffiths's second point was that it is not merely in political discourses in which 'Dark Age' is deployed in a derogatory fashion (Elliott 2017): it is actually widely deployed rhetorically in medical and biological literature as a term implying backward and ignorant methods and remedies. In short, scientists and academics are evidently as guilty as politicians and the media in perpetuating the widespread use of 'Dark Ages' to allude to a myth of progress.

[4] https://diggingintothedarkages.wordpress.com/

Figure 4: Skyrim archaeology explored by Stephanie Matthews

Next, Sacha O'Connor tackled the topic of the iconic significance of horned helmets in contemporary society in 'Why do horned helmets still matter?' (see O'Connor this volume). This was followed by Matthew Kelly who considered the Icelandic althing site of Thingvellir in relation to heritage interpretation and extremist appropriations (see Kelly this volume).

Together these three presentations served to identify the complex ways in which archaeological ideas interact with fiction, fantasy and politics in popular culture. Yet while the iconic horned helmet might be regarded as floating free of real-world moorings in heritage sites, monuments and landscapes (see also Ward 2000), the term 'Dark Ages' persists in relation to particular heritage sites (see Greaney this volume), while nationalist myths of origin are very much alive and well in the presentation of Þingvellir.

Dark Age Entertainment

The second conference session explored the reception of the Dark Ages in the arts, focusing on video games, film and television (see also Hall 2004, 2009, this volume; Harmes 2017; Harty 2011; Tveskov and Erlandson 2007; Williams 2019a).

In 'Dark Age video games: authenticity and arms in *Skyrim*', Stephanie Matthews evaluated the action role-playing video game *The Elder Scrolls 5: Skyrim* (Figure 4). This virtual gaming world is populated by fantastical ruins, architectures and material cultures: an epic adventuring environment inspired by Old Norse legends and myths through the lens of 20th/early 21st-century fantasy literature, Matthews focused on the authenticity of the martial gear as a playful engagement with an imagined 'early medieval' universe (for context, see Copplestone 2017; Reinhard 2018). The weapons, body armour, shields and helmets were shown to be starkly fantastical, with little relationship to known early medieval equivalents. Matthews insightfully recognised a relatively close similarity between the Skyrim war hammer and the axe-hammer from the early seventh-century ship-burial beneath Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, whether by coincidence or not. Following Meyers Emery and Reinhard (2015), she argued that the game creates an aura of pastness (see also Copplestone 2017), but also that many of the detailed misconceptions might provide the basis for constructive public discussions and debates about the 'real' early medieval past. Moreover, there is both the technology to enable, and the appetite among gamers, for more authentic early medieval pasts to be portrayed in future immersive experiences in virtual worlds provided by this popular medium.

Next, in the presentation 'Archaeology in *Alfred the Great* (1969) and *The Last Kingdom* (2015–)', Victoria Nicholls compared the representations of the late 9th-century West Saxon landscape, including its worked landscapes, buildings and costumes in the film starring David Hemmings and the first season of the recent television adaption of Bernard Cornwell's *The Saxon Stories* starring Alexander Dreymon.

She was able to show anachronisms and issues of authenticity abound in each production, focusing on dress accessories, weapons, ships, halls, fortresses and battlefields. She concluded that the decades that divide them do not readily see an improved attention to detail or plausibility in recreating a 'Dark Age' world. This talk has been developed further in the context of this book (Nicholls and Williams this volume).

James Fish then tackled the significance of the great hall in the television drama *Vikings*: 'The great hall in *Vikings:* fact and fiction'. He presented the evidence for early medieval halls before considering the centrality of the hall, its external features, internal fittings, and its varied functions for feasting, ceremony, and many other activities. Fish also explored the personalisation of halls for different characters, seeing that while many details are speculative, attention has been afforded to creating a sense of poorly lit but lavishly adorned dwellings that were at the heart of social, political, legal, cultic and economic life in mid–late first millennium AD Scandinavia and in the legends and myths that stemmed from this world.

The fourth and final contribution to the *Dark Age Entertainment* session, by Peter Rose, considered the representations of the Early Middle Ages in the time-travel science fiction series *Stargate SG-1* (1997–2007). As well as portraying a fictional archaeologist as a scientific detective and adventurer (see Holtorf 2007 for context), in the Season 1 episode 'Thor's Hammer' the Norse god Thor is revealed to be an alien being. The plot incorporates an encounter with a stone monumental version of a Viking-period Thor's hammer pendant set atop of free-standing early medieval cross-shaft. In crude terms, therefore, despite the fantastical plot, the show reveals a degree of attention to 'Viking' artefacts and carved stone monuments. Moreover, tellingly, Thor himself wears headgear clearly inspired by the Gjermundbu helmet, and thus without the stereotypical horns.

In combination, the four presentations in this session afforded a sense of the wide range of fashions by which early medieval archaeology permeates Western popular culture. While the 'Vikings' are preeminent, fantasy worlds draw their inspirations far wider, and through multiple generations of epic adaptions via Tolkien and other writers, before they are rendered in video games. Archaeological engagement with these genres need not focus on criticism and denouncement, but upon using both stereotypes and misunderstandings as platforms with which to tackle new approaches and interpretations of the archaeological record (see also Williams 2019a).

Displaying the Dark Ages

The third conference session comprised a triad of papers exploring how the early medieval past is curated and displayed in museum contexts, a topic that has received sparse published discussion to date (Lucy and Herring 1999; Walsh and Williams 2019; Williams 2009). The expectation for displays to go beyond, and challenge, our stereotypes, is a pressing need for current and future heritage sites and museums (e.g. Ashby 2014).

Sarah Bratton's talk – 'So 'dark' you can hardly see it: the Early Middle Ages in the museums of Chester and Liverpool' – identified the relatively limited attention afforded to the early medieval past in museums in the North West of England. Her contribution has been adapted and developed for inclusion in this book (Williams *et al.* this volume).

In 'Jorvik's re-opening explored', Robert Neeson considered the 2017 re-launch of JORVIK Viking Centre having been closed to undergo a significant overhaul following the damage caused by the 2015 flooding of York city. The contribution to this volume by Tuckley takes up and contextualises the re-launch, but Neeson in particular emphasised the Centre's use of the axe as an icon of York's Viking past. This was

not only because of the axe as a Norse weapon and tool, but specifically through the association with the name of the tenth-century king of Northumbria: the Norwegian Eric Bloodaxe.

Amelia Studholme then evaluated the distinctive open-air museum of West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village, near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, in her talk 'Re-enacting the Early Middle Ages'. She reflected on her experiences of visiting the museum and witnessing a re-enactment display (see also Holtorf 2013). The talk also considered West Stow's biannual RingQuest: drawing on the popularity of *The Lord of the Rings* to have an orc in residence! Studholme drew on Johnson's (2015) discussion of the theatrics and somatic power of historical re-enactment to engage children with the early medieval past and experimental archaeology.

The Digital Dark Ages

The fourth session explored digital archaeology, for which there is a burgeoning literature but there remains scant published literature addressing and evaluating the specific interdisciplinary and archaeology themes and challenges associated with engaging publics in the Early Middle Ages (but see Richardson and Booth 2017).

Amy Dunn considered 'The digital public archaeology of early medieval stone monuments', making a case that many churches do not appreciate, conserve or interpret the unique carved stone monuments in their custody for visitors, in part due to limited funds and the lack of expertise guidance. Meanwhile, information and images available online are of variable detail and quality. Using churches in Cheshire, Lancashire and the Isle of Man as case studies, she identified the effective uses of Wikipedia and websites for some churches. Dunn highlighted the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture and lauded their extensive online digital corpus, and suggested online information and resources could be created to further public engagement. The chapter by Lang and Powlesland in this volume takes up this challenge.

Next, Matthew Thomas's 'Vikings and virality' explored how we must more effectively target our digital engagement to target questions asked via the search engine Google (see Thomas this volume). Focusing on the story of Viking warrior women promulgated virally via online news outlets and social media provides a valuable case study to reflect on the rich potentials and challenges of appealing to popular public interests in the early medieval past (Hedenstierna-Jonson *et al.* 2017; Price *et al.* 2019).

Finally, Joseph Keelan tackled the digital media explosion that surrounded the 2017 *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* open-access publication on Birka Bj581 (Hedenstierna-Jonson *et al.* 2017). 'Viking warrior women? The Birka chamber grave and its impact on the media' considered the huge scale and conflicting views expressed in the media regarding the identity of the individual in grave Bj581 and why it was such a controversial and appealing story.

Selling the Dark Ages

This significant theme was tackled by four talks in the fifth session, each identifying and critiquing ways in which early medieval material cultures are commodified by the heritage industry and other businesses. In 'Dark Age artefacts in museum advertising' Victoria Bounds discussed how two early medieval artefacts were widely used in the promotional materials of Ludlow Museum (Shropshire). She argued that this constituted a misrepresentation of the scale and character of the early medieval collections on display where there are no wider narratives regarding the 5th–11th centuries AD. This has broader implications for how other early medieval artefacts are turned into icons for museums, and thus potentially treated as de-contextualised 'treasures', from the Staffordshire Hoard and the Sutton Hoo helmet to the Book of Kells and the Alfred Jewel.

Jessica Penaluna explored neo-Pagan commodification of runic texts and their purported magical qualities, through a review of shops, festivals and online outlets. She identified how the scholarship linking runic inscriptions to archaeological contexts and past societies is deemed largely irrelevant, and how 'Celtic' healing magic is seemingly conflated with Germanic and Norse runes in some contemporary Paganisms. Her talk foregrounded the challenge of negotiating between neo-Pagan narratives and its commercial dimensions, and academic scholarship regarding runes and their occurrence on early medieval monuments and material culture.

Next, Abigail Salt evaluated 'Selling the Vikings via online museum shops', exploring the commodification of the early medieval period by comparing national Scandinavian museums and the British Museum. She was able to identify how museum shops deploy a complex range of items, from 'serious' reproduction items (including pendants and glassware) to more playful items including 'Viking' rubber ducks for bath time (see also Ward 2000).

Finally, in '1066: nationhood, memorials and car insurance', David Jackson considered how the Battle of Hastings is commemorated and commodified in contemporary British society, from Battle Abbey and public sculpture to its use as a marketing tool (see also Hicks 2006: 282–302).

Imagining the Dark Ages

The final session explored some of the more controversial fantasies about the 'Dark Ages', some merely misguided, some dangerous and violent. Niamh Moreton considered the persistent heritage connections between prehistoric and early historic archaeological sites, including Glastonbury, South Cadbury and Tintagel, with Arthurian legends in 'The potentials and pitfalls of an Arthurian Early Middle Ages' (see also Halsall 2013). She recognised the many problems with the Arthurian connection but also the benefits in sparking interest in a broader public who might not normally engage with the early medieval past.

This theme was taken up by Max Moran in 'Exploring the public archaeology of Tintagel: Arthur and archaeology' in relation to the recent re-branding of Tintagel by English Heritage. Moran reviewed the archaeological evidence for the site and its long biography from prehistory to the present, and discussed the effective dimensions of the new narratives, emphasising the inseparable connections of history and legend at the site, despite the widespread public backlash. Like Salt's paper, however, Moran notes the problematic Arthurian gifts that English Heritage are still willing to sell through their online shop as part of an ongoing problem of Arthurian commodification and misrepresentation linking the English Heritage property to Tintagel's many businesses more broadly (see also Greaney this volume).

Finally, Megan Hall considered 'Analysing the appropriation of early medieval runes by contemporary far-right groups', suggesting that there might not be an easy and straightforward method of combatting such misuses by extremist groups. In particular, she considered the potential threats of violence and abuse targeting those who challenge the misuse of the past by the far-right, particularly among younger and female scholars. She did point out positive steps, such as the Facebook group 'Vikingar Mot Racism' to combat the appropriation of the early medieval past by the far-right among re-enactors and enthusiasts.[5] One can also add the need for academics to not simply signal their distance from white supremacism, but to adapt their curricula and public engagements to counter extremist narratives (e.g. Downham 2017; Sayer 2017).

Welcome to the Dark Ages: From Conference to Book

As with the previous two conferences, students were given the opportunity to participate as authors and/or editors in publishing their research. In total 6 students of the 20 took up this opportunity,

[5] https://www.facebook.com/groups/vikingarmotrasism/

although one unfortunately subsequently withdrew. Pauline Clarke was in the same year-group, but as a combined honours student she did not take the module HI6001; she attended but had not presented at the conference. She volunteered to co-edit the book.

These student pieces were joined by especially commissioned additional studies with contributions spanning a wide range of themes, plus one former student. This has resulted to the first-ever edited collection dedicated to the public archaeology of the Early Middle Ages or 'Dark Ages'.

The structure of the book has inevitably shifted, and the six conference sessions described above have been re-arranged into three sections. In 'Dark Age Debates', Maldonado, Sassin, O'Connor, Kelly and Walsh explore a range of fringe, popular, educational, political and commercial appropriations of the Early Middle Ages. The second section, 'The Public Dark Ages', includes prominent case studies in the heritage interpretation, community engagement and the creation of new strategies for real-world and digital engagement in the early medieval past by Tuckley, Williams *et al.*, Greaney, Nowakowski and Gossip, Williams and Evans, Lang and Powlesland, and Parsons and Strong. The third and concluding section, called 'Dark Age Media' contains evaluations by Nicholls and Williams, Hall, Jarman, Thomas, Crawford and Wulgar the Bard, tackling the Early Middle Ages in film, television and the use of digital media, from simple Google searches and open-access resources and publications to Twitter and YouTube, as outreach strategies and platforms of dialogue with non-specialist publics.

Inevitably there remain gaps and unexpected emphases, relating to which students wished to take their work forward to publication, and those heritage professionals and archaeologists who agreed to contribute. However, these have been reduced to a minimum by inviting digital public archaeologist Dr Chiara Bonacchi to compose a Foreword. Equally important in providing a wider perspective, Professor Bonnie Effros has composed a far-reaching Afterword tackling the development of medievalisms' investigation from multiple perspectives. A further distinctive way by which further voices and perspectives were included was by interviewing key practitioners and researchers. Hence, the aforementioned chapters by Maldonado, Parsons and Strong, Crawford and Jarman were commissioned from those innovativing in different dimensions of public engagement in the early medieval past.

Discussion

We hope this book will foster further critical investigations in the public archaeology of the Early Middle Ages which evaluate our practices and engagements in a rigorous and systematic fashion (cf. Almansa 2018). While early medieval archaeologists have long engaged in the historiography and theoretical frameworks of their study, we contend that they have neglected public archaeology as integral to their work. We should be long past regarding public engagement and its evaluation as 'extras' to our research (see Flatman 2012), let alone regarding 'outreach' simply as an avenue for funding (Almansa 2018). Instead, a critical and robust public archaeology should be seen as central to all our research endeavours, whether we are engaging with fieldwork involving community participation, discussing early medieval archaeology in schools, evaluating the Dark Age dimensions of video games and other entertainment venues, or engaging on social media about medieval matters. Spanning different scales and contrasting communities, scholarship and practice, we would contend that there is no more pressing need to tackle head-on the importance and hybridity of public archaeology than when dealing with the early medieval period: a time of intersecting prehistories and histories, complex and fluctuating peoples, practices and institutions. This, of course, involves understanding how the early medieval past fits into broader multi-period discourses on past and place, but also a specialist understanding of the particular interdisciplinary and geographical and chronologically complex ways in which early medieval archaeology has special and distinctive, powerful and problematic, relationships with contemporary society.

Furthermore, whether the dialogue with the Early Middle Ages involves touchstones of faith, political debates, or senses of community, place or identity, or challenging myths and fantasies about the past and the present, the public archaeology of the Early Middle Ages should be more inclusive of traditionally excluded groups. Thus, rather than about serving pre-existing needs, public archaeologies of the early medieval past must construct new relationships between past and present (see Belford 2014). To do this, we must operate as public intellectuals, straying outside our niche disciplinary expertise to debate how the past is presented and discussed in contemporary society, and themes linking past, present and future (cf. Tarlow and Nilsson Stutz 2013). Moreover, we must take up the challenge (recently sketched by González-Ruibal *et al.* 2018) of ensuring our archaeological research and practice *provokes* rather than simply flatters people, *teaches* them rather than indulges their fantasies, and an archaeology that escapes the 'heritage crusade' to explore the many intersections and meanings of archaeology in the contemporary world. In this regard, the public archaeology of the 'Dark Ages' should be disturbing and challenging of stereotypes and the status quo, not comforting and assuring. It should involve a variety of methods to provide 'thick' and rich engagement with archaeological interpretations using new methods and techniques. Finally, it should extend its focus from the preservation and management of fixed and valued resources, to consider the constantly evolving material worlds of imagined Dark Ages, thus robustly evaluate their significance in contemporary society.

Conclusion

Both in its inception as a student conference, and in its scope and character, this book might be indeed considered an example of such an approach. It is therefore striking and concerning that this is the first book dedicated to debating the reception and appropriation of early medieval material cultures and monuments in the present. In taking forward this avenue of research, we can promote and enhance the ways in which early medieval archaeologists and interdisciplinary researchers can engage with various publics and evaluate these engagements. We can all endeavour to become 'public intellectuals' (Tarlow and Nilson Stutz 2013; Nilson Stutz 2018) if not as polymath thinkers, but as passionate advocates for the responsible and data-rich engagement with early medieval pasts revealed by archaeological research. In doing so, we should seek not only to enhance how we tell our stories, but to develop new narratives as well as deploying fresh media. Whether we call it the 'Early Middle Ages', the 'Anglo-Saxon period', the 'Dark Ages' or any other spatio-temporal or ethnic label, the ongoing task of denouncing 'false' and pseudoarchaeology remains critical at this time. Yet equally important, archaeologists must work collectively to create exciting and engaging narratives that challenge existing audiences and reach out to new publics. Rather than conceding terms and territories to extremists, re-energised stories, from grand narratives down to local histories, can be mobilised by archaeologists to combat misrepresentations and appropriations of the early medieval past in robust and sensitive and sustainable fashions.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Kara Critchell, Bonnie Effros, Suzanne Evans, Cat Jarman, Jacky Nowakowski, Adrián Maldonado and Ethan Doyle White for constructive comments on an earlier draft of this chapter. We wish to thank the Department of History and Archaeology, University of Chester, the Grosvenor Museum, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Ben Wills-Eve for helping make the conference a success.

Bibliography

Albin, A., M.C. Erler, T. O'Donnell, N.L. Paul, N. Rowe (eds) 2019. *Whose Middle Ages? Teachable Moments for an Ill-Used Past.* New York: Fordham University Press.

Alexander, M. 2007. *Medievalism. The Middle Ages in Modern England.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Almansa Sánchez, J. 2018. New paths for the future of public archaeology? *CPAG* 28: 197–209.

Ashby, S.P. 2014. More than blood and bling: our many visions of the Vikings. *The Conversation,* 6 March, https://theconversation.com/more-than-blood-and-bling-our-many-visions-of-the-vikings-23791

Ashby, S.P. and J. Schofield 2015. 'Hold the heathen hammer high': representation, re-enactment and the construction of 'Pagan' heritage. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 21(5): 493–511.

Belford, P. 2014. Sustainability in community archaeology. *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* Special Volume 1: 21–44.

Bonacchi, C., M. Altaweek and M. Krzyzanska 2018. The heritage of Brexit: roles of the past in the construction of political identities through social media. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 18(2): 174–92.

Booth, T. 2018. Exploring your inner Hades: DNA as mortuary archaeology. *Online Journal in Public Archaeology* 8(2) Special Volume 3: 221–248.

Brophy, K. 2018. The Brexit hypothesis and prehistory. *Antiquity* 82: 1650–58.

Campbell, J. (ed.) 1982. *The Anglo-Saxons.* London: Penguin.

Carver, M. 2019. *Formative Britain. An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD.* London: Routledge.

Content, S. and H. Williams 2010. Creating the Pagan English, in M. Carver, A. Sanmark and S. Semple (eds) *Signals of Belief in Early England: Anglo-Saxon Paganism Revisited*: 181–200. Oxford: Oxbow.

Copplestone, T.J. 2017. Designing and developing a playful past in video games, in A.A.A. Mol, C.E Ariese-Vandemeulebrocke, K.H.J. Boom and A. Politpopoulos (eds) *The Interactive Past*: 85–98. Leiden: Sidestone Press.

Dale, R. 2019. From barbarian to brand: the Vikings as a marketing tool, in T. Birkett and R. Dale (eds) *The Vikings Reimagined: Reception, Recovery, Engagement*: 214–231. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Downham, C. 2017. Vikings were never the pure-bred master race white supremacists like to portray, *The Conversation,* 28 September, https://theconversation.com/vikings-were-never-the-pure-bred-master-race-white-supremacists-like-to-portray-84455

Effros, B. 2003. *Merovingian Mortuary Archaeology and the Making of the Early Middle Ages.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Effros, B. 2012. *Uncovering the Germanic Past. Merovingian Archaeology in Frances 1830–1914.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elliott, A.B.R. 2017. *Medievalism, Politics and Mass Media: Appropriating the Middle Ages in the Twenty-First Century.* Woodbridge: Boydell.

Evans, S. and H. Williams 2019. Death's diversity: the case of Llangollen Museum, in H. Williams, B. Wills-Eve and J. Osborne and (eds) *The Public Archaeology of Death*: 37–54. Sheffield: Equinox.

Faulkner, N. 2000. Archaeology from below. *Public Archaeology* 1(1): 21–33.

Flatman, J. 2012. Conclusion: the contemporary relevance of archaeology – archaeology and the real world? in M. Rockman and J. Flatman (eds) *Archaeology in Society: Its Relevance in the Modern World*: 291–303. New York: Springer.

Ford Burley, R. 2019. Ambiguous images. 'Vikingness,' North Americian white nationalism and the threat of appropriation, in P. Hardwick and K. Lister (eds) *Vikings and the Vikings: The Norse World(s) of the History Channel Series*, 201–200. Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press.

Foster, S.M. and S. Jones 2019. Concrete and non-concrete: exploring the contemporary authenticity of historical replicas through an ethnographic study of the St John's Cross replica, Iona. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25(11): 1169–1188.

Gardeła, L. 2016. Vikings reborn: the origins and development of early medieval re-enactment in Poland. *Sprawozdania Archaeologiczne* 68: 165–82.

Gardeła, L. 2019. Death on canvas: artistic reconstructions in Viking Age mortuary archaeology, in in H. Williams, B. Wills-Eve and J. Osborne (eds) *The Public Archaeology of Death*: 95–112. Sheffield: Equinox.

Gardner, A. 2017. Brexit, boundaries and imperial identities: a comparative view. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 17(1): 3–26.

Gardner, A. and R. Harrison 2017. Brexit, archaeology and heritage: reflections and agendas, *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 27(1), art. 24 DOI: http://doi.org/10.5334/pia-544.

Geary, P.J. 2001. *The Myth of Nationsl: The Medieval Origins of Europe.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Grima, R. 2016. But isn't all archaeology 'public' archaeology? *Public Archaeology* 15(1): 50–58.

González-Ruibal, A., P. Alonso González and F. Criaod-Boado 2018. Against reactionary populism: towards a new public archaeology. *Antiquity* 92(362): 507–515.

Hall, M. 2004. Romancing the stones: archaeology in popular cinema. *European Journal of Archaeology* 7(2): 159–76.

Hall, M. 2009. Making the past present: cinematic narratives of the Middle Ages, in R. Gilchrist and A. Reynolds (eds) *Reflections: 50 years of Medieval Archaeology 1957–2007*: 489–511. Leeds: Maney.

Harmes, M.K. 2017. The Vikings at the end of the universe: *Doctor Who*, Norsemen and the end of history, in C. Fleiner and D. October (eds) Doctor Who *and History: Critical Essays on Imagining the Past:* 132–147. Jefferson, NA: McFarland.

Halsall, G. 2013. *Worlds of Arthur: Facts and Fictions of the Dark Ages.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harland, J. 2019. Memories of migration? The 'Anglo-Saxon' burial costume of the fifth century AD. *Antiquity* 93(370): 954–969.

Harty, K. 2011. The Vikings on film: a filmography, in K. Harty (ed.) *The Vikings on Film, Essays on Depictions of the Nordic Middle Ages:* 193–214. London: McFarland.

Hedenstierna-Jonson, C., A. Kjellström, T. Zachrisson, M. Krzewińska, V. Sobrado, N. Price, T. Günther, M. Jakobsson, A. Götherström and J. Storå 2017. A female Viking warrior confirmed by genomics. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 164: 853–860.

Hellboy (US 2019, d. N. Marshall).

Hicks, C. 2006. *The Bayeux Tapestry: The Life Story of a Masterpiece*, London: Vintage.

Hicks, L. 2017. Dark Ages, stopped, *History Matters: History brought alive by the University of Sheffield,* viewed 28 June 2019, http://www.historymatters.group.shef.ac.uk/dark-ages-stopped/

Higham, C. and M. Ryan 2013. *The Anglo-Saxon World.* Yale: Yale University Press.

Hills, C. 2003. *The Origins of the English.* London: Duckworth.

Hirst, S. and C. Scull 2019. *The Anglo-Saxon Princely Burial at Prittlewell, Southend-on-Sea.* London: Museum of London Archaeology.

Holtorf, C. 2007. *Archaeology is a Brand!* Oxford: Archaeopress.

Holtorf, C. 2013. Time travellers' tools of the trade: some trends at Lejre. *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20(7-8): 782–797.

Jarman, C.L., M. Biddle, T. Higham, and C. Bronk Ramsey 2018. The Viking Great Army in England: new dates from the Repton charnel. *Antiquity* 92(361): 183–199.

Johnson, K.M. 2015. Rethinking (re)doing: historical re-enactment and/as historiography. *Rethinking History* 19(2): 193–206.

Jones, S. 2004. *Early Medieval Sculpture and the Production of Meaning, Value and Place: The Case of Hilton of Cadboll.* Edinburgh: Scotland.

Kobiałka, D. 2013. The mask(s) and transformers of historical re-enactment: material culture and contemporary Vikings. *Current Swedish Archaeology* 21: 141–161.

Larrington, C. 2016. *Winter is Coming: The Medieval World of* Game of Thrones. London: I.B. Tauris.

Lucy, S. 1998. *The Early Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of East Yorkshire: An Analysis and Reinterpretation,* Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, British Series 272.

Lucy, S. and C. Herring 1999. Viewing the 'Dark Ages': the portrayal of early Anglo-Saxon life and material culture in museums, in N. Merriman (ed.) *Making Early Histories in Museums,* 74–94. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

Marzinzik, S. 2011. Anglo-Saxon archaeology and the public, in H. Hamerow, D.A. Hinton and S. Crawford (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Archaeology*: 1025–1042. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Meyers, K. and H. Williams 2014. Blog bodies: mortuary archaeology and blogging, in D. Rocks- Macqueen and C. Webster (eds) *Blogging Archaeology*, E-book: Succinct Research, pp. 137–70.

Meyers Emery, K., and A. Reinhard 2015. Trading shovels for controllers: a brief exploration of the portrayal of archaeology in video games. *Public Archaeology* 14(2): 137–149.

Morgan, C. 2018. Is it ethical to use social media for teaching archaeology? *Colleen Morgan* [blog] 2 January 2018, viewed 18 October 2019, https://colleen-morgan.com/2018/01/02/is-it-ethical-to-use-social-media-for-teaching-archaeology/

Morrison, I.A. 2000. Travel the Viking trail, in W.W. Fitzhugh and E.I. Ward (eds) *Vikings. The North Atlantic Saga:* 394–400. Washington: Smithsonian Institute.

Moshenska, G. 2017. Introduction: public archaeology as practice and scholarship where archaeology meets world, in G. Moshenska (ed.) *Key Concepts in Public Archaeology*: 1–13. London: UCL.

Niklasson, E. and H. Hølleland 2018. The Scandinavian far-right and the new politicisation of heritage. *Journal of Social Archaeology* 18(2): 121–148.

Nilsson Stutz, L. 2018. A future for archaeology: in defense of an intellectually engaged, collaborative and confident archaeology. *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 51: 48–56.

Tarlow, S. and L. Nilsson Stutz 2013. Can an archaeologist be a public intellectual? *Archaeological Dialogues* 20(1) 1–5.

Oosthuizen, S. 2019. *The Emergence of the English.* London: ARC Humanities Press.

Pentz, P., J. Varberg and L. Sørensen 2019. Meet the Vikings: for real! *Antiquity* 93 (369): 1–5.

Pitts, M. 2020. Should *British Archaeology* stop using 'Anglo-Saxon'? *British Archaeology* 170: 24–29.

Price, N. 2015. From Ginnungagap to the Ragnarök. Archaeologies of the Viking worlds. In *Viking Worlds: Things, Spaces and Movement*, edited by M.H. Eriksen, U. Pedersen, B. Rundberget, I. Axelsen and H.L. Berg, 1–10. Oxford: Oxbow.

Price, N., C. Hedenstierna-Jonson, T. Zachrisson, A. Kjellström, J. Storå, M. Krzewińska, T. Günther, V. Sobrado, M. Jakobsson and A. Götherström 2019. Viking warrior women? Reassessing Birka chamber grave Bj.581. *Antiquity* 93(367): 181–198.

Reinhard, A. 2018. *Archaeogaming: An Introduction to Archaeology in and of Video Games.* Oxford: Berghahn.

Richardson, L-J. and T. Booth 2017. Response to 'Brexit, Archaeology and Heritage: Reflections and Agendas'. *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 27(1); Art. 25. 1–5.

Sanmark, A. and H. Williams 2019. *Things* in *Vikings*, in P. Hardwick and K. Lister (eds) *Vikings and the Vikings: The Norse World(s) of the History Channel Series*, 173–200. Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press.

Sayer, D. 2017. Why the idea that the English have a common Anglo-Saxon origin is a myth. *The Conversation,* 15 December, https://theconversation.com/why-the-idea-that-the-english-have-a-common-anglo-saxon-origin-is-a-myth-88272

Sindbæk, S. 2019. Exhibition review: 'Meet the Vikings'—or meet halfway? The new Viking display at the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhange. *Antiquity* 93(367): 256–259.

Sommer, U. 2017. Archaeology and nationalism, in G. Moshenska (ed.) *Key Concepts in Public Archaeology*: 166–186. London: UCL.

Sturtevant, P.B. 2017. Introduction: race, racism, and the Middle Ages: tearing down the 'whites only' medieval world. *The Public Medievalist. TPM Special Series: Race, Racism and the Middle Ages,* 7 February 2017, viewed 21 October 2019, https://www.publicmedievalist.com/race-racism-middle-ages-tearing-whites-medieval-world/

Tong, J., S. Evans, H. Williams, N. Edwards and G. Robinson 2015. Vlog to death: Project Eliseg's video-blogging, *Internet Archaeology* 39. http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue39/3/toc.html

Trafford, S. and A. Pluskowski 2007. Antichrist superstars. The Vikings in hard rock and heavy metal, in D.W. Marshall (ed). *Mass Market Medieval. Essays on the Middle Ages in Popular Culture*: 57–73. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland.

Tveskov, M.A. and J.M. Erlandson 2007. Vikings, vixens, and Valhalla: Hollywood depictions of the Norse, in J.M. Schablitsky (ed.) *Box Office Archaeology: Refining Hollywood's Portrayals of the Past:* 34–50, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Walsh, M. and H. Williams 2019. Displaying the deviant: Sutton Hoo's sand bodies, in H. Williams, B. Wills-Eve and J. Osborne (eds) The Public Archaeology of Death: 55–72. Sheffield: Equinox.

Ward, E. I. 2000. Reflections on an icon. Vikings in American culture, in W. W. Fitzhugh and E. I. Ward (eds) *Vikings. The North Atlantic Saga*: 365–373. Washington: Smithsonian Books.

Watson, A. and H. Williams 2019. Envisioning Cremation: Art and Archaeology, in H. Williams, B. Wills-Eve and J. Osborne (eds) The Public Archaeology of Death: 113–132. Sheffield: Equinox.

Williams, H. 2002. "The Remains of Pagan Saxondom"? Studying Anglo-Saxon cremation practices, in S. Lucy & A. Reynolds (eds) *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*: 47–71. Leeds: Maney, Society of Medieval Archaeology Monograph Series 17.

Williams, H. 2006. Digging Saxon graves in Victorian Britain, in R. Pearson (ed.) *The Victorians and the Ancient World: Archaeology and Classicism in Nineteenth-Century Culture:* 61–80. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press.

Williams, H. 2007a. Introduction: themes in the archaeology of early medieval death and burial, in S. Semple & H. Williams (eds) *Early Medieval Mortuary Practices: Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology & History* 14: 1–11.

Williams, H. 2007b. 'Burnt Germans', Alemannic graves and the origins of Anglo-Saxon archaeology, in S. Burmeister, H. Derks and J. von Richthofen (eds), *Zweiundvierzig. Festschrift für Michael Gebühr zum 65. Geburtstag*, Internationale Archäologie - Studia honoraria 25: 229–238. Rahden: Westf.

Williams, H. 2007c. Forgetting the Britons in Victorian Anglo-Saxon archaeology, in N. Higham (ed.) *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*: 27-41, Woodbridge: Boydell.

Williams, H. 2008. Anglo-Saxonism and Victorian archaeology: William Wylie's *Fairford Graves*. *Early Medieval Europe* 16(1): 49–88.

Williams, H. 2009. On display: envisioning the early Anglo-Saxon dead, in D. Sayer. & H. Williams (eds) *Mortuary Practices & Social Identities in the Middle Ages: Essays in Burial Archaeology in Honour of Heinrich Härke:* 170-206. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

Williams, H. 2013. Saxon obsequies: the early medieval archaeology of Richard Cornwallis Neville, *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 23(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/bha.2312.

Williams, H. 2016a. The Dark Ages at Tintagel, *Archaeodeath*, viewed 28 June 2019, https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2016/06/26/the-dark-ages-at-tintagel/

Williams, H. 2016b. Bring back the Dark Ages! Archaeodeath, viewed 28 June 2019, https://howardwilliamsblog.wordpress.com/2016/06/02/bring-back-the-dark-ages/

Williams, H. 2016c. Firing the imagination: cremation in the modern museum, in H. Williams and M. Giles (eds) *Archaeologists and the Dead: Mortuary Archaeology in Contemporary Society*: 293–332. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williams, H. 2018. Introduction: public archaeologies of death and memory, in H. Williams and L. Richardson (eds) *Death in the Contemporary World: Perspectives from Public Archaeology*, AP Online Journal of Public Archaeology 8(2) Special Issue 3: 1–24. http://revistas.jasarqueologia.es/index.php/APJournal/article/view/229

Williams, H. 2019a. Death's drama: mortuary practice in Vikings Season 1–4, in H. Williams, B. Wills-Eve and J. Osborne (eds) The Public Archaeology of Death. 155–182. Sheffield: Equinox.

Williams, H. 2019b. *Archaeodeath* as digital public mortuary archaeology, in H. Williams, C. Pudney and A. Ezzeldin (eds) *Public Archaeology: Arts of Engagement*, 132–156. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Williams, H. and R. Alexander 2019. Dialogues with early medieval 'warriors', in H. Williams, C. Pudney and A. Ezzeldin (eds) *Public Archaeology: Arts of Engagement*: 66–84. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Williams, H. with R. Alexander, R. Bursnell, J. Cave, A. Clarke, A. Ezzeldin, J. Felgate, B. Fisher, B. Humphries, S. Parry, H. Proctor, M. Rajput, C. Richardson and B. Swift 2019. From *Archaeo-Engage* to *Arts of Engagement*, in H. Williams, C. Pudney and A. Ezzeldin (eds) *Public Archaeology: Arts of Engagement*: 15–35. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Williams, H. and A. Atkin. 2015. Virtually dead: digital public mortuary archaeology, *Internet Archaeology* 40. http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue40/7/4/index.html

Wollenberg, D. 2018. *Medieval Imagery in Today's Politics.* London: ARC Press.

Wood, M. 1981. *In Search of the Dark Ages.* London: BBC.