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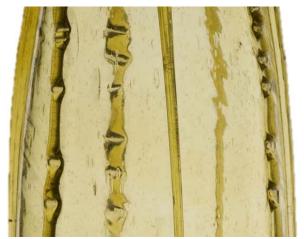




22nd A&T Symposium

MORTUARY ARCHAEOLOGY

methodology and theory





MEROVINGIAN MORTUARY STUDIES

in an interdisciplinary perspective



Faculty of Archaeology
Van Steenis building
Einsteinweg 2, Leiden
Room F1.04

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METHODOLOGY AND THEORY

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WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2015

09:45	Registration desk open	Registration desk open		
10:20	Word of welcome			
10:30	Keynote address:	Death, disembodiment and immateriality: some		
	Sofia Voutsaki	reflections on recent developments in mortuary		
	University of Groningen	theory and methodology		
	Session 1: Exce	avation, publication and theory		
11:00	Martine van Haperen	Fragmentation information – studying reopened		
	Leiden University	Merovingian graves.		
11:30	Kaja Stemberger	Old bones, new stories?		
	King's College, London			
12:00	Rica Annaert & Leentje	Analysing the Broechem-cemetery finds: an		
	Linders	interaction between archaeologist and conservator.		
	Flemish Heritage Agency			
12:30	Lunch			
Session 2: Integrating scientific methods				
13:30	Raphael Panhuysen	United in a grave, analysing multiple burials in Late		
	University of Amsterdam	Roman and Merovingian Maastricht		
14:00	Sabina Ghislandi	Micromorphological analysis of sediments in		
	University of York	mortuary archaeological contexts: case studies from		
		Hungate and Haymarket (York, UK)		
14:30	Kristopher Poole	Sustaining souls or informing identity? Reassessing		
	University of Sheffield	the roles of animals in human graves from Roman		
		Britain		
15:00	Tea/coffee break			
	Session 3: Ant	thropology: guidepost or decoy?		
15:30	Adrienne Frie	Animals for the Dead: Animal sacrifice in Iron Age		
	University of Wisconsin-	funerary rites		
	Milwaukee			
16:00	Ilona Bede	Role and sense of animal deposits in the funerary		
	Université Paris 1 Panthéon-	practices: horses of the early Medieval Ages in		
	Sorbonne	Central Europe		
16:30	Quentin Bourgeois	Identifying communities of praxis		
	Leiden University			
17:00	Closing remarks and			
	drinks reception			

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ABSTRACTS

Keynote Address

Death, disembodiment and immateriality: some reflections on recent developments in mortuary theory and methodology

Sofia Voutsaki (University of Groningen)

The study of death has been the field par excellence where archaeological theory has been debated, shaped and contested. The last two decades have seen exciting new theoretical developments in the study of mortuary practices: the critique of earlier social reductionism; the emphasis on facets of personal identities other than social status, e.g. on age, gender or kinship; the move away from the detection of general patterns to the study of agency and microtraditions; the discussions on personhood and materiality; the emphasis on bodily practices, etc. etc. At the same time, there have been important methodological advances in the excavation and recording of burial data (e.g. photogrammetry), the analysis of burial contexts (taphonomic observations, soil micromorphology, phytolith analysis), and especially the analysis of skeletal remains (osteoarchaeological analysis, ancient DNA and stable isotope analyses, etc.). This increasing sophistication and refinement of interpretive approaches and analytical techniques is exciting, but it also brings some risks with it. Mortuary studies in archaeology are becoming characterized by a certain over-specialization, a fragmentation and lack of communication between the different specialists, but also, more generally, between those interested in the more interpretive aspects, and those specializing in various scientific methods. I would like to argue in this paper that it is precisely the integration of these different approaches that gives the field an immense potential. I shall therefore reflect on the problems arising and the opportunities opening up when bringing together theoretically informed and methodologically sophisticated approaches to the study of death in past societies.

Session 1: Excavation, publication and theory
Chaired by: James Symonds

Fragmentation information – studying reopened Merovingian graves Martine van Haperen, Leiden University

In the Merovingian period, many graves were reopened in the years after burial. The study of such post-depositional interventions requires a specific research methodology and a detailed data set. Precise information about the state of the grave and the condition and location of all the artefacts and bones is needed to date post-depositional interventions and hypothesize about the meaning of this practice.

Many cemetery publications focus primarily or exclusively on the intact graves and objects. Reopened graves are considered 'disturbed' and therefore less interesting than intact ones.

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Broken grave goods and fragments are sometimes omitted from the catalogue or pictured in a reconstructed complete form, so their fragmented state is not apparent. There is a focus on finds from the grave's bottom, while information obtained from the higher levels of the fill is often overlooked.

In this paper I will present a methodology for the study of reopened graves. It will be argued that fragmentation and disturbance should be considered as a source of data that merits detailed documentation and study.

Old bones, new stories?

Kaja Stemberger, King's College London

The aim of this paper is to present possibilities for reinterpreting burials from older excavations. As a case study, I focus on the cemeteries of Colonia Iulia Emona (present-day Ljubljana, Slovenia). The data is patchy, inconsistent, and has not been subjected to modern interdisciplinary approaches as samples for scientific analyses are mostly unavailable. With more than 3,000 graves, the cemeteries at Colonia Iulia Emona are one of the biggest excavated and published cemeteries in the Roman Empire. The graves date from the last years of the reign of Augustus to at least the first half of the fifth century A.D. The majority of the excavated material was published in the form of a catalogue in the seventies. Work was limited to putting objects in their typological groups, so this sample offers great potential for holistic interpretation.

The majority of scientific archaeological analyses were developed and came into use only after excavations in Emona took place; therefore, certain groups of objects such as animal and human bones were not properly studied. I will discuss how to deal with artefacts and bones from the older excavations, where they still exist, in order to address different questions about age and status, mobility and the spatial and chronological development of Emona's cemeteries. I will address the question of how the material remains from the necropolises should be dealt with in future in order to reconstruct the funerary ritual in as much detail as possible.

Analysing the Broechem-cemetery finds: an interaction between archaeologist and conservator

Rica Annaert & Leentje Linders, Flemish Heritage Agency

The early medieval graveyard of Broechem is not only one of the biggest graveyards excavated in Flanders, it is also the first graveyard that was discovered in decades. This means that for the first time in Flanders archeologists used recently developed techniques for the excavation of a Merovingian graveyard. This in turn can mean a lot for future specialized research. Probably the most innovative act for Flanders was the use of block lifting. When in 2001 the first grave contexts were extracted from the graves, the strongly fertilized soil didn't prove to be an ideal place for preservation of the metal burial gifts. Therefore it was decided, in agreement with the conservator, to lift metal finds in blocks whenever possible. From the moment imprints of

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iron, bronze or silver were visible on the surface, the object was lifted out of the earth with the surrounding soil.

These blocks were then analyzed under the best conditions in the conservation and restauration studio. The first step in this process was X-radiography, a necessary step for the first identification of the objects by the archeologist. In accordance with the expected scientific knowledge accumulation the archeologist and the conservator decided on the further approach. Some objects, for example, need a complete cleaning, while for other objects a partial cleaning suffices and a graphic registration can be completed on the basis of the x-ray.

New aspects of the research were the numerous block lifts, which not only delivered us the objects within, but also gave us additional information that until then was completely unknown. In the corroded metal, for example, we found a considerable amount of mineralized textile and leather residue and the shafts of the weapons and tools contained wood particles. Even the imprints of pupae were clearly visible. All these remnants tell us new stories, unknown to us in the past.

But also the conservation techniques themselves offer more perspective than in earlier days: the possibilities for better preservations and for scientific research analysis are vast. This paper shows that the interaction between archeologist and conservation specialist is essential for the new approach in the study of Merovingian graveyards.

Session 2: Integrating scientific methods Chaired by: Daan van Helden

United in a grave, analysing multiple burials in Late Roman and Merovingian Maastricht

Raphael Panhuysen, University of Amsterdam

Multiple burials are defined as inhumations of more than one individual in a single burial context. These burials have often attracted interest from the public and regularly are featured in the media. However, to archaeologists they remained rather enigmatic. This paper investigates whether the study of multiple burials within a confined space and time frame provides clues to a better understanding of this phenomenon. This paper will provide an overview of the number, location and content of multiple burials in Merovingian Maastricht. Data will consist of excavation data, analysis of post-depositional processes, anthropological examination and aDNA analysis. In and around Maastricht multiple burials have been excavated at three sites: the Servatius church site, the Boschstraat site and the Borgharen site. The majority of multiple burials consist of an adult individual and one or two children. Detailed excavation methods applied at the Borgharen site provide a more detailed view of the timing of the chain of events leading to the creation of a multiple burial. Analysis of aDNA has shown that the individuals in one of the multiple burials from the Borgharen site were most likely members of a single family. The implications of these results for the interpretation of other multiple graves at other sites in Maastricht will be discussed.

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Micromorphological analysis of sediments in mortuary archaeological contexts: case studies from Hungate and Haymarket (York, UK)

Sabina Ghislandi, University of York

The InterArChive project is taking a novel and interdisciplinary approach integrating soil micromorphology, inorganic geochemistry and trace organic chemical analysis to examine archaeological inhumation contexts. The main objectives of InterArChive are to develop and testing systematic approaches to sampling and laboratory analysis of graves soils to increase the quality and quantity of information that is recovered from inhumations. The analyses exploit the physical and chemical characteristics of the soils in which the remains were included. This presentation focuses on micromorphological analysis of grave soils as a methodology to identify interactions between the soils and the materials placed in the grave, including the body. Particular attention is given to biological activity inside the graves and the presence of exotic features that can be linked with funeral practices or different land uses.

The 30 µm thin sections analysed for this purpose were prepared from undisturbed bulk samples collected within the graves at specific body locations: typically the skull, pelvis and feet. Furthermore, depending on grave conditions, control samples were taken inside and outside the burials.

Additional SEM-EDX analyses have been conducted on some slides to clarify the inorganic chemical composition of specific features. The graves analysed and discussed here were from the Roman cemetery of Hungate and the medieval cemetery of Haymarket, both located in the same area of the city centre of York (UK).

Sustaining souls or informing identity? Reassessing the roles of animals in human graves from Roman Britain

Kristopher Poole, University of Sheffield

Animal remains are often recovered from human graves excavated in locations across the Roman Empire. This ritual slaughter and deposition of animals (with the usual exceptions of dogs and horses) is typically interpreted as representing the provision of food offerings for the deceased to enjoy in the afterlife. Such verdicts often oversimplify the motivations for interring humans and animals together, frequently with insufficient focus being placed on the specific details of each animal deposit. The animal remains themselves are also often considered in isolation from other aspects of the same graves. This paper will draw upon a survey of animals in graves from Roman Britain in order to explore these issues. The importance of considering a number of aspects of graves will be argued, in particular, features such as the age and sex of human and animal, the type of burial, the animal body-parts present, as well as other associated finds. Only by examining these aspects can we seek to understand the biographies of these deposits (e.g. Morris 2010). Additionally, the potential interaction in life between humans and animals as a factor in selection of individual animals for interment with specific people is considered. Only by taking into account these diverse range of factors can we begin to realize the potential of zooarchaeological data from funerary contexts for understanding identity (including urban/rural differences, religious beliefs, gender and social status) and attitudes to death.

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Reference:

Morris, J. 2011. Investigating Animal Burials: Ritual, Mundane and Beyond. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, British Series 535

Session 3: Anthropology: guidepost or decoy?

Chaired by: Canan Cakirlar

Animals for the Dead: Animal sacrifice in Iron Age funerary rites

Adrienne Frie, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Mortuary rituals were key sites not only for mediating grief and providing appropriate care and respect for the deceased individual, but also for negotiating the reorganization of the community in the absence of the newly deceased. In the Early Iron Age Dolenjska Hallstatt culture (800-300 BCE) the deposition of animals may have been implicated in both of these processes. This presentation will discuss the animal remains from Dolenjska Hallstatt mortuary contexts, specifically focusing on the ritual distinctions between the depositions of whole horses versus animal parts from various species. To interpret the ritual significance of these two forms of animal deposition I draw on anthropological, ethnoarchaeological, and historical discussions of animal sacrifice. While I do not propose a one-to-one correlation between these theoretical frames and the archaeological data, I do argue that these frameworks may broaden our perspectives on the possible motivations and material correlates of ritual activity. I hypothesize that the ritual deposition of whole horses was primarily related to the identity of the deceased individual, and referenced the meaningful human-animal relationships between particular elite males and particular horses in life. In contrast, I interpret the deposition of animal parts in burials as the remains of animal sacrifice associated with funerary events, and the subsequent division and distribution of the parts of the animal to members of the community. Animal parts in graves may represent the deceased individual's final sacrificial portion. The act of sacrifice, where the deceased participated one final time in the apportioning of animal parts to strengthen the community whole, marked the deceased as a key member of that community, but also may have begun the process where community ties were reconfigured with one less living member. Often in mortuary studies animal remains are considered analogous to grave goods, rather than as potentially meaningful participants in funerary activities. This study draws on the anthropological literature to reconstruct the essential role of living and deceased animals in funerary rituals, as important members of the local community with ties to the deceased individual.

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Role and sense of animal deposits in the funerary practices: horses of the early Medieval Ages in Central Europe

Ilona Bede, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

The horse burials of the so-called "Migration Period" have been linked to the nomadic eastern barbarians, especially in Central Europe where the Huns, the Avars and the Magyars settled between the end of the 4th and the end of the 9th centuries. The studies have often referred to the ethnographical observations in the wide Asian steppes, without considering chronology and space neither the variety of the nomadic societies. The accepted meaning of "horse burial" covers also a very large range of deposits and practices. Through the examination of horse skeleton remains of the Avar period, the analysis will show how anthropological theories and ethnographical comparisons can help archaeology to define the role and meaning of deposits in funerary practices, as well as their limits. The notions of "sacrifice" and "accompanying death" will be discussed in order to consider the possibilities offered by archaeology to deliver a picture of the past societies intentions and representations. Considering the socio-cultural context of European early Middle Ages, the conclusion proposes to cross the anthropological analysis with other phenomena to explain this peculiar funerary practice.

Identifying communities of praxis

Quentin Bourgeois, Leiden University

The early 3rd Millennium BC in north-western Europe is one of the most transformative periods in European prehistory and is characterized by the emergence of pan-European networks. Particularly puzzling are the Corded Ware groups, recognized primarily through their highly standardized burial ritual. From Moscow till the Netherlands, people buried their dead in a semi-flexed position (usually) underneath a barrow and added a very restricted set of artefacts – such as a cord/decorated pot or a battle-axe – to the grave.

This rigidly structured way in which these groups buried their dead hints at the existence of a conceptual network, where group affiliation with an idea was expressed over great distances through a highly standardized burial ritual. While it is certainly true that much of this burial ritual is highly standardized and homogeneous – certainly from the perspective of the artefacts contained within them – there is still much variation to be accounted for. Detailed inspection of the rituals involved in these burials reveals sets of practices that are usually idiosyncratic to specific regions.

This paper aims to adopt a practice perspective – i.e. by looking at the series of actions involved in the burial ritual – and to combine it with a network-analysis to highlight how the shared concept of the burial ritual was implemented within a particular region. This technique can then highlight how certain groups of people adopted and put into practice a shared concept of how someone ought to be buried.

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THURSDAY 23 APRIL 2015

09:00	Registration desk open			
09:20	Very short introduction by Frans Theuws Leiden University			
09:25	H. Hamerow	Furnished Female Burial in Seventh-Century England:		
	University of Oxford	Gender and Sacral Authority in the Conversion Period		
10:00	M. de Haas	Places to rest; the meaning of cemetery locations in the		
	University of Amsterdam	landscape		
Coffee and tea break				
11:00	L. Van Wersch, O. Vrielynck,	We have ways of making you talk! Chemical analyses of		
	C. Pion, B. Gratuze, Fr.	Merovingian artifacts from Belgian sites.		
	Mathis, D. Strivay Université Catholique de			
	Louvain (Louvain-La-			
	Neuve)/Région Wallonne			
	Direction de Archéologie			
11:35	Chr. Brandenburgh	Clothing the dead and its meanings: textile research on		
	Gemeente Leiden / University of	early medieval burials		
10.00	Leiden	D		
12:00	F. Theuws Leiden University	Depositing food? Cooking the dead? Vessel depositions in		
	Leiden University	Merovingian graves Lunch		
13:30	E. Nieveler	Merovingian burial archaeology in the Northern		
19:90	LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn	Rhineland – a short summary of recent research		
14:00	J. Hendriks	Micromorphological analysis of sediments in mortuary		
14.00	Bureau Archeologie en	archaeological contexts: case studies from Hungate and		
	Monumenten, Nijmegen	Haymarket (York, UK)		
14:30	C. Van der Linde	Osteoarchaeological research in the Netherlands with		
14.00	Tot op het Bot	special attention to the cemetery of Lent-Lentseveld		
Special attention to the cemetery of Lent-Lentseveld Coffee and tea break				
15:30	L. Verslype, O. Vrielynck	The Merovingian Graveyards studies and publication		
	Université Catholique de	program in Wallonia: a long tradition, a long silence,		
	Louvain (Louvain-La-Neuve)	renewal and perspectives.		
	Région Wallonne Direction de	P. P		
1005	l'Archéologie	D (* 1M 1.)		
16:05	F. Lippok, M. Langbroek, D.	Byzantine and Mediterranean finds in the		
	Ausina, B. van de Weerd, G. de Groote	Netherlands/Belgium and the German Rhineland		
	Researchmaster group			
	Leiden University			
16:30	M. Langbroek	Northern Gold in the Merovingian Realm: The use and		
	Leiden University	distribution of amber in north-western Europe 450-750		
		AD		

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ABSTRACTS

Furnished Female Burial in Seventh-Century England: Gender and Sacral Authority in the Conversion Period

Helena Hamerow, Oxford University

It is well known that women - primarily royal women -- played a prominent role in the Conversion of England from the middle decades of the seventh century onwards, as reflected most strikingly in the founding and running of monasteries. A small number of richly furnished female burials containing explicitly Christian objects have, furthermore, been directly linked to this phenomenon. Yet the date, context and location of a relatively large number of wellfurnished female burials now recorded make it unlikely that all or even most of the individuals buried in this way were directly attached to religious houses. This raises the possibility that the small number of nuns and abbesses who figure so prominently in written accounts of the Conversion were part of a wider, undocumented change in the role of women, a change that predated the foundation of the first female houses and extended beyond the monastic sphere. A recent study providing a new absolute chronological framework for Anglo-Saxon inhumations and grave goods identifies an 'upsurge' in well furnished female burials beginning in the second quarter of the seventh century and continuing until the 680s. These burials are geographically widespread and characterized by a range of new artefact types, often made of precious metals and exotic materials. The authors of the study (J. Hines and A. Bayliss (eds), Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave Goods) regard the sudden prominence of furnished female burials as puzzling, yet the chronologically nuanced picture of burial rites that their study presents -- based on highprecision radiocarbon dates -- opens up new interpretive possibilities in relation to these burials, and indeed to gender and authority in seventh-century England more widely.

Places to rest; the meaning of cemetery locations in the landscape

Maaike de Haas, University of Amsterdam

Recent studies on Merovingian cemeteries incorporate all facets of the burial sequence, instead of focussing on grave goods alone. However, the surrounding landscape is often still forgotten. This research presents a first attempt to treat the location of a cemetery as an integral part of the Merovingian burial ritual. The idea behind this is that the choice for a specific location to bury the dead played an active role in defining the Merovingian mortuary ritual and the relation between inhabitants and the landscape.

In the research for my master thesis I examined landscape-settings of 30 cemeteries in the Southern Netherlands and Northern Belgium. The results showed a great variety in terms of

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distance to waterways, elevation, visibility and placement on fertile or non-fertile soil. However, some interesting remarks could be made on the relation between cemeteries and ancient remains.

In total, 14 of the 30 cemeteries were located in areas that contained traces of former occupation. Moreover, certain areas seemed to favour specific types of ancient remains. The reuse of Roman remains, for instance, was more common in loess areas around the river Meuse, while cemeteries in the Kempen region were more often located on prehistoric burial grounds.

Since it is assumed that the people creating the Merovingian cemeteries in my research area were new settlers we presume they had to claim the land, establish new boundaries and define their territory. The location of a cemetery could have played an active role in that. Ancient ruins probably formed important points of focus in the landscape. They could be used for social, political and religious purposes and may have functioned as boundary markers, or monuments. At the same time, they were also associated with former occupants. Even though no physical inhabitants were living in the area anymore, the land could still be perceived as being 'owned' by former dwellers. The incorporation of ancient remains into the cemetery could be used to release the location from old claims. Especially in combination with the creation of powerful ancestors through the burial ritual, this must have been perceived as a powerful statement.

Further research with a more elaborate dataset and larger research area is necessary to provide better answers. However, the present research shows that treatment of the location of cemeteries as part of the ritual sequence certainly offers promising leads.

We have ways of making you talk! Chemical analyses of Merovingian artifacts from Belgian sites.

Line Van Wersch, Olivier Vrielynck, C. Pion, B. Gratuze, Fr. Mathis, D. Strivay. Université Catholique de Louvain (Louvain-La-Neuve)/Région Wallonne Direction de Archéologie

With the right methods, even the smallest finds can tell great stories. Merovingian ceramics, garnets, glass beads and glass vessels from Belgian sites were analyzed in PIXE-PIGE at Liège University and in LA-HR-ICP-MS at Orléans University in order to obtain their elementary compositions. Thanks to archaeological studies and chemical analyses, the material and techniques used to make these artifacts have been investigated and the different materials bring complementary data to retrace exchanges networks, to draw their evolution and to bring a fresh look on the economy and on the society of the Merovingian period.

At the end of the 5th century, the fall of the Western Roman empire is supposed to lead to the end of international trade and to the death of long distance exchanges. However, until the first half of the 6th century, imported ceramic is still in use and importation of fresh raw glass from eastern Mediterranean regions is attested. During that period garnets and small beads from India are widely available. The imports of gemstones do not seem to be disturbed before the 7th century, while the available amount of raw glass decrease and local ceramic dominates the market. In the

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last century of Merovingian period, sources for glass appear to vary as those for ceramic and garnets that were coming from Bohemia. On a social point of view, at the beginning of the period, imports were not a privilege of rich graves and most strata of the society seemed to have access to these goods. Then, people adapt to the available products and make the customs evolve. Still, the Merovingian society seemed much more opened and bright than previously thought.

Clothing the dead and its meanings: textile research on early medieval burials Chrystel Brandenburgh, Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken

This presentation will focus on the textiles that have been found in cemeteries. Merovingian burials often yield organic finds such as textiles and these may give us insight into the way textiles were used in the burial ritual. It is commonly assumed in textile research that clothing is not merely 'practical' in function. In the past as in the present, dress holds a social dimension as well. Grave objects and clothing in Merovingian graves are considered to be symbolic for the social status, age or gender of the deceased and/or the mourners and as such played a role in the grave ritual. Since the deceased were fully dressed upon burial, making a reconstruction of these grave-clothes is a first step towards understanding the social and symbolic meaning behind these clothes. Moreover, the graves were often richly furnished with textiles as well. There is evidence for mattresses, cushions and shrouds in these graves and objects that were covered before or during the burial ritual.

In light of a Phd- research textile remains have been analysed from 9 cemeteries from the centre and south of the Netherlands. The methods of analysis and the results of this research will be presented. It will become clear that there are substantial differences between the Dutch sites regarding the textiles types and the quality of textiles used in burials, the way they were used in graves of men and women and the way they were used in the burial ritual. A preliminary comparison between Dutch sites and those from surrounding countries shows that there are differences between this region and other parts of the Merovingian world as well.

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Depositing food? Cooking the dead? Vessel depositions in Merovingian graves

Frans Theuws, Leiden University

Vessels are one of the most common type of objects placed in Merovingian graves. Their study however hardly reaches beyond typo-chronological analyses. Moreover vessels of different materials have almost never been studied in relation to each other. Each category, such as pottery, glass vessels, wooden buckets and bronze basins/jugs, is studied on its own. In this paper I suggest that vessel *ensembles* in graves are an important source of information for the study of burial rites in Merovingian times. The study of vessel ensembles is hampered by a lack of basic information on the reasons behind the deposition. Did the vessels at the time of deposition contain food and liquids? Were they brought to the grave to be deposited or were they the remains of a meal on the cemetery? Who deposited the vessels? What is the function and meaning of various types of vessels?

In spite of these uncertainties some patterns emerge when analysing the vessel ensembles of a number of cemeteries. Moreover interesting differences can be observed between inhumation and cremation graves.

Merovingian burial archaeology in the Northern Rhineland – a short summary of recent research

Elke Nieveler, LVR-Landesmuseum Bonn

Research on early medieval burials in the Northern Rhineland did improve a lot during the last two decades. As dissertations at the universities of Bonn and Cologne finds and archaeological documentation were published for almost the whole region by several authors. Frank Siegmund created a chronological scheme from the second half of 5th century to 8th century. Some years later it was completed by the so-called "Franken AG" at University of Bonn and nowadays valid not only for Rhinish material but can also be connected with several chronological schemes for example in Southern Germany. Those dissertations mainly dealt with the topography of settlement, their development in the dependence of natural landscape and how to improve planning dependability for care of field monuments.

Publishing of several cemeteries is still going on. At the LandesMuseum Bonn we use several technical equipment like digital X-ray, mobile X-ray fluorescence (XFA) or digital microscopy to save the maximum of data from the finds during the restoration. Research is now also focusing on questions of material science, trade, demographic or social development.

Besides of a small summary of research history the paper gives further information to methods and results of a recent project in the LandesMuseum Bonn. It dealt with social differences between of one of our most famous rich furnished graves, the so-called "Fürst von Morken" and the population of his settlement.

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The early Merovingian cemetery of the Lentseveld (Lent, Nijmegen)

Joep Hendriks, Bureau for Archaeology and Monuments, Nijmegen

During the first millennium the village of Lent can be considered as a bridgehead for Nijmegen, lying just north of the town across the river Waal. In Roman times a settlement or villa complex must have existed in the present village centre, consisting of several stone buildings. Habitation seems to have continued more or less at the same place during the Early Middle Ages. Until recently, the most important site here was the late Merovingian cemetery at the Azaleastraat, consisting of two separated burial areas and dating between c. AD 610 and 670/750. It was excavated in the seventies of the 20th century.

When modern building activities shifted away to the outskirts of the village during the beginning of this century, several late 4th, 5th and early 6th-century metal finds indicated that the habitation partly spread to the north of the village in late antiquity. Nevertheless, the 2011 discovery of a hitherto unknown early Merovingian cemetery came as a complete surprise. Situated in the Lentseveld, approx. 500 m north of the village centre, this new cemetery possibly belonged to another (second?) settlement nucleus. The cemetery – though not completely excavated – consists of at least 50 inhumation and 20 cremation burials that can be dated between c. AD 480/500 and 600.

The demographical composition of the inhumations seems to be remarkable for the Merovingian period: 18 female and 15 male burials, and as much as 17 child or non-adult burials. Based on the Rhenish and French typochronologies of grave goods, most of the inhumation graves can be dated between c. AD 520 and 580. For now, there seems to be a small chronological gap between both Merovingian cemeteries.

It is therefore still unclear whether this cemetery represents the late 5th and 6th-century burial ground of native inhabitants of the Nijmegen region or that of a group of newcomers. A future research topic will be the study of the relationship between the members of the consecutive burial communities in Lent and the alleged representatives of the Merovingian kings on the Valkhof, the site of the late Roman fortress in Nijmegen.

Thanks to its good state of preservation it will be possible to analyse all grave constructions, numerous grave goods, and skeletal remains in great detail. Thus, the Lentseveld cemetery will provide new insights into the social and demographical composition of early Merovingian society in Lent, and of course that of Nijmegen as well.

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The Merovingian cemetery of the site 'Lentseveld' in Nijmegen, from a physical anthropological perspective

Constance van der Linde, Tot op het Bot

those of other Merovingian cemeteries.

The focus of this paper is the osteological study of the deceased who were buried in a Merovingian cemetery named 'Lentseveld'. This cemetery is situated in the north of Nijmegen. A total of 50 inhumation graves were excavated in 2011. During the archaeological excavation several tentative conclusions could be made about the number of interred individuals, the male/female ratio, the ratio adults/non-adults and the burial practices on the basis of the skeletal remains.

One of the main objectives of the elaboration of the physical anthropological research is to establish the demographic profile of this sample. The aim is to determine the mortality ratio between infants, children, adolescents and adults and to find out if one of these age-intervals is predominant or under-represent. The next step is to calculate the average life expectancy of this population in its entirety as well as the average life expectancy of males and females. Besides this data, topics like the dental status, the cranial index and the standing living height of adults (if possible) will be established. An inventory will be made of every bone change caused by trauma or disease. This overview will give an indication of the frequency of one or more defects and diseases and it will give us an idea of the general health status of this sample. In an attempt to extract as much information as possible from the skeletal material a multidisciplinary approach is essential. A combination of stable isotope analysis, DNA-research, botanical and parasitological analysis will yield far more information of a cemetery population than the macroscopic research of the disciplines of physical anthropology and pathology alone. Therefore the results of all of these disciplines will need to be integrated.

The results of the collected data will be used to compare the skeletal sample of Lentseveld with

Byzantine objects in the west - their involvement in Western economics

Dita Auziņa, Gwendolynn de Groote, Mette Langbroek, Femke Lippok, Bas van de Weerd. Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University

It has been acknowledged that the north western part of Europe did not exist in a state of isolation of the Roman empire, even after the collapse of its Western part. Those connections are represented by numerous byzantine objects found in archaeological contexts dated to the early middle ages. But what is the nature of these connections, how did they change over time and which actors were involved? Acknowledging the complicated nature of these questions, we strive to reconstruct the development of the inhabitants' accessibility to imported goods in the early

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middle ages. Answering these questions can help us understand the oriental objects' involvement in early medieval economics in the region under investigation.

During our research, the territory of modern Benelux and the German Rhineland was covered. We concentrated on the connections that have resulted in material traces and archaeological contexts through mapping items with an oriental origin, such as Byzantine coins, Garnet inlayed items, Beads and Cowry-shells. In the light of the acquired data, several exchange models are put up for discussion as well as the involvement of non-elite actors in this exchange.

Northern Gold in the Merovingian Realm: The use and distribution of amber in northwestern Europe $450\text{-}750~\mathrm{AD}$

Mette Langbroek, Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University

This presentation will outline the first results of a Master thesis on the use and distribution of amber in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Nordrhein-Westfalen:

As far as amber is concerned in the centuries following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the Merovingian period, exceptionally little is known about the use of amber and its exchange. To researchers of the Merovingian period it is common knowledge that amber beads can be found in Merovingian burials in north-western and central Europe on a regular basis and thus that it must have had a role in the contemporary burial ritual. That is about it. So far, not much has been written comprehensively about the ritual use or meaning of amber in the Merovingian period. Likewise, there are no studies on the scale on which amber was used in north-western Europe during the Merovingian period or written about how people might have obtained it. For example, it remains unclear whether amber was procured from the Baltic or whether enough of it could simply be collected from a local beach or other source to support the regional demand for raw amber to be worked into beads or pendants. Usually, it is assumed that all archaeological amber found in Merovingian graves has an origin in the Baltic. If this is accurate, this study can offer a northern counterweight against the various publications on Merovingian exchange with the Byzantine and oriental world in which exotic imports such as garnets from India and cowry shells from the red sea are studied to establish proof for exchange contacts between early medieval peoples.

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Friday 24 APRIL 2015

00.00				
	B.Nowak Böck Bayer. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege	Micro-stratigraphy and new developments in restoration strategies		
	M. van Haperen Leiden University	Early Medieval reopened graves from the Low Countries		
	A. Nieuwhof Groningen University	Before the Merovingian period: Human remains in terp settlements in the northern Netherlands		
Coffee and tea break				
	R. Annaert K. Quintelier Flanders Heritage Agency, Brussels	Analysis of the human cremated remains and funerary rites at the Merovingian cemetery of Broechem, Antwerp (Belgium)		
	E. Knol Groninger Museum	Early medieval burial rituals in the Northern Netherlands		
12:00	M. Kars University of Leiden	Burial objects, the social world and typological orderings: a complex relation		
Lunch				
	M. Hemminga, T. Goossens <i>ARCHOL</i>	The Merovingian cemetery of Uden-Schepersweg		
	R. Lauwerier, JW. De Kort Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands	A multifocal view on the Merovingian cemetery Borgharen (Netherlands)		
	E. Altena Leiden University	Insight in social structures with genetic analysis		
	Coffe	ee and tea break		
	Closing comments by D. Quast Frankfurt University Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Forschungsinstitutfür Archäologie			
16:05	Drinks reception			

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ABSTRACTS

Micro-stratigraphy and new developments in restoration strategies

Britt Nowak-Böck, Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege (BLfD)-Bavarian State Department for the Protection of Historical Monuments and Sites

Organic remains, usually corroded to metal artefacts, offer a high scientific potential in studies of early medieval cemeteries. To ensure this advantage, a complete documentation on the excavation in good quality is necessary as well as a proper handling of the fragile objects from the time of discovery to the final storage in the depot of a museum. Therefore an adequate and process-oriented strategy must be available to safeguard the wanted standard of information as well the protection of the original substance. For this a close collaboration with various partners and academic disciplines is required.

This paper will point out the intervention possibilities for conservation/restoration in particular within the archaeological heritage service (Bodendenkmalpflege) for the preservation and recording of organic remains. This also includes the evaluation and communication of this kind of material in regard to the large number of discoveries made every year.

A standardized mapping system for organic remains on metal objects or in in-situ blocs developed in the BLfD will be presented. It is a planar mapping with a defined colour scheme and a stratigraphic depiction with coloured pictograms. This procedure offers an easily understandable point of departure for further studies and its advantages will be discussed. Present experience shows that in spite of the standardization the digital mapping system can easily be adopted to suit the demands of particular artefacts and projects. Further additional information gained during the research process can be cooperated into the system. The scheme simplifies the understanding and comparison of complicated, often difficult to recognise structures of organic remains particularly for untrained researchers.

Early Medieval reopened graves from the Low Countries

Martine van Haperen, Leiden University

In the Netherlands numerous Merovingian cemeteries have been excavated in the course of the 20th century. Unfortunately, many of these were never analysed in detail. As a result, little was known about the post-depositional interventions that these graves were subjected to. Recent research has revealed that many early medieval graves in the Low Countries were reopened after burial. The characteristics of the interventions are quite similar to those found in Merovingian graves from other regions of North-West Europe.

The growing scholarly interest for reopened graves has not led to a consensus on their interpretation. The older literature mostly evokes material gain and/or fear of the dead to explain

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why graves were reopened. Recently themes like revenge on the deceased's family, ancestor veneration, post-mortem Christianisation and extended mortuary ritual have been added to the debate.

This paper will take as its starting point cemetery data from the Netherlands and adjacent regions to discuss the various types of post-depositional interventions, varying from so called 'grave robbery' to intercuts and the reuse of graves. Using a scenario-based approach, we will explore how the Dutch data align with the various hypotheses.

Before the Merovingian period: Human remains in terp settlements in the northern Netherlands

Annet Nieuwhof, University of Groningen

Burials customs during the pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age in the terp region of the northern Netherlands differ considerably from the Merovingian period. Cemeteries do not occur. Cremation is extremely rare; single inhumations are regularly found, but in numbers that are too small to represent normal burial customs. Single human bones are also regular finds, but have not received much attention yet. This paper will present some of the results of a study on mortuary customs in this area during the pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age. It will be argued that excarnation by exposure was a common practice. After the process was completed, the remaining bones were collected and stored to be used later in secondary rituals. That use can be inferred from the study of ritual deposits in two terp settlements, Englum and Ezinge.

The single human bones in these settlements probably served as inalienable objects, as defined by Annette Weiner. The bones of deceased family members, ancestral bones, were used to maintain and establish the identity of families and households. Depositing them in and near houses made family farmyards into ancestral grounds. This practice was intensified during 1st century BC and AD, when the population reached a peak and the available space on the terps had to be shared with a larger number of households. Human bones from this period are sometimes worked into skull cups or amulets.

Although excarnation as a mortuary practice probably disappeared at the end of the Roman Period, the meaning of human remains as inalienable objects that were related to the identity of families may have survived into the early Middle Ages.

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Analysis of the human cremated remains and funerary rites at the Merovingian cemetery of Broechem, Antwerp (Belgium)

Rica Annaert & Kim Quintelier, Flanders Heritage Agency, Brussels

This paper discusses the preliminary results of the anthropological analysis of the human cremated bone excavated at the Broechem cemetery and sheds light on early medieval funerary practices in the Scheldt valley. The cemetery was excavated in 2001-2003 and 2007-2010 by the predecessors of the Flanders Heritage Agency. The funerary ensemble includes 442 inhumation graves and 68 cremation graves. Two groups of cremation graves are present. One group is situated in the northern part of the cemetery, which is the oldest section of the cemetery with deposits dating from the second half of the 5th to the first half of the 6th century. This cluster of cremation graves is characterised by big pits with a lot of charcoal and early finds from the 5th century, some with Germanic influences. One urn deposition and one 4-post grave house are to be mentioned. The second group is scattered all over the cemetery and is to be dated in the same period as the inhumation graves in these sections (second half of the 6th till the second half of the 7th century). The funerary structures consist mostly of so-called *Brandgrubengräber* or *Knochenlager*.

The osteological analysis aims to provide a detailed description of the nature of the deposits, to identify and quantify the human cremated bone, to assess taphonomic effects of thermal alteration and fragmentation, to estimate the minimum number of buried individuals, to assess demographic data (age, sex) and presence of pathological changes, to identify any evidence of pyre technology (used during the cremation process) and presence and type of pyre goods.

Vroeg Middeleeuws grafritueel in Noord-Nederland

Egge Knol, Groninger Museum

Van de vijfde tot in de achtse eeuw na Christus zijn uit Noord-Nederland grafvelden bekend waarin crematie en inhumatiegraven naast elkaar voorkomen. Naast grotere grafvelden met enige honderden graven, zoals Hoogebeintum, Oosterbeintum, Godlinze, Wijster & Zweeloo, kwamen ook locaties met enkele graven voor. Deze grafvelden zijn zowel in de terpen op het onbedijkte land langs de waddenkust, als ook landinwaarts op het Drentse pleistocene zand hinterland aangetroffen. In de terpen bleven objecten van been, gewei, kalk en hout vaak verrasend goed bewaard. Op een voorwerp werd een runeninscriptie waargenomen. Zo zijn in het kustgebied ook de nodige kindergraven teruggevonden. In het achteland zijn been, gewei en hout in graven vergaan. Het crematieritueel resulteerde in verschillende grondsporen. Naast de urn, zijn er ook paalgaten en te minste eenmaal de plaats van crematie aangetroffen. De meegegeven grafgiften zijn merendeels kledingaccessoires, maar soms ook wapens, vaatwerk of dieren. Zowel honden als paarden konden meegegeven worden met de dode. Het vaatwerk kon ook van hout

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zijn. De inhumatiegraven waren op allerlei windrichtingen georiënteerd. Sommige doden waren in een boomkist bijgezet. Ook resten van overnaads gebouwde schepen werden gebruikt. Maar zelden werden echt kostbare sieraden van goud of zilver meegegeven. Als schat of depotvondst- is goud en zilver, met name in Friesland wel veel teruggevonden. Een opmerkelijke waarneming vormt een dwerg in een overigens niet opvallend graf in Oosterbeintum.

De achtste eeuw kenmerkt zich door een verdwijnen van crematiegraven, een grote veelheid aan wapengraven. De wapengraven kunnen samenhangen met de sociale onrust als gevolg van de verovering van Noord-Nederland door de Frankische koningen. De daaropvolgende transitie naar het Christendom kan door kleine locale verschillen worden waargenomen. Een mogelijkheid was het begraven op een nieuwe locatie, maar er kon ook gekozen worden voor het voortzetten van de begraving op hetzelfde grafveld. Een korte tijd waren er grafgiften met een Christelijk karakter.

Burial objects, the social world and typological orderings: a complex relation Miriam Kars, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Leiden

In this lecture some examples of burial objects and their active role in social contexts are introduced. These examples elucidate that typological orderings of early medieval grave goods, especially those at the basis of chronological analyses, are not as evident as generally assumed. This conclusion implies that results of chronological studies are not always as straightforward as one would hope for. It will therefore be discussed whether alternative approaches to typologies and chronological analyses, which integrate the social dimensions of early medieval grave goods, are feasible.

A rare find by chance. A medieval settlement and Merovingian cemetery of Uden Minja Hemminga & Titiano Goossens, Archol

In the spring of 2014 members of the amateur-archaeologist group Uden (Heemkundekring Uden) not only made a discovery of a medieval settlement but also of a major important find; a sword and pottery only know from Merovingian graves.

Shortly after this discovery, the extent of the settlement and cemetery were determined by test trenches. A rescue excavation had to take place because the area was going to be under construction soon. Within a short period students, Phd's from the Faculty, the amateur-archaeologists together with Archol, were digging and sweating to excavate a total area of 6000 m2. The medieval settlement consists of at least 14 houses, several granaries, pits and waterwells.

A total of 26 inhumations and two cremation graves were excavated under the scrutiny of the local press. Every day more and more information was gained from the soil.

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Amongst all the spectacular and rich burials two jumped out as extra special. Based on their orientation and grave goods they are preliminary interpreted as the so-called founders graves dating to the late 5th century. The majority of the graves date to the second half of the sixths and seventh century. In the coming months the analyses of the finds and features will reveal more secrets of this unique settlement and burial site.

A multifocal view on the Merovingian cemetery Borgharen (Netherlands)

Roel Lauwerier & Jan Willem de Kort, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands

In 2008, 2009 and 2012 a joint team of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), the municipality of Maastricht and researchers from the University of Amsterdam, VU University Amsterdam, University of Leiden, and other institutes excavated and studied part of a Merovingian burial site at Borgharen, near Maastricht. Special is the position of the graves, situated in the ruins of a Roman villa rustica, situated on a high gravel bed in the flood plain of the river Meuse.

In the presentation we give an impression of the research done in the field and the different laboratories and focus on the added value yielded by a combination of a detailed way of excavating and close cooperation between researchers from different disciplines.

Insight in social structures with genetic analysis.

Eveline Altena, Forensic Laboratory for DNA Research, Leiden University Medical Center

The Merovingian period is both an interesting and challenging one when it comes to ancient DNA analysis. First of all, funerary rituals in this earliest Christian period tend to be more divers compared to later periods. Multiple burials and clear indications of gender, status and wealth in the grave are the most obvious differences compared to the relatively modest graves that we see from the Carolingian period onwards. Reconstructions of how these features are connected to familial relations can be very informative considering social structures in Merovingian communities. Genetic analysis allows us to do this with the possibilities to reconstruct parent-offspring relations and relatedness in the male and female line in general. On a different level, populations genetics might provide a better insight in the complex migrations that took place around this period. This becomes especially interesting when sites or even regions can be compared genetically. Especially when combined with isotope data, this can be very informative.

Within the Netherlands and Belgium, genetic analysis has been conducted on only one Merovingian site so far, namely Borgharen in the south-west of the Netherlands, near Maastricht. This site comprises a Merovingian cemetery in the ruins of a Roman vicus, consisting

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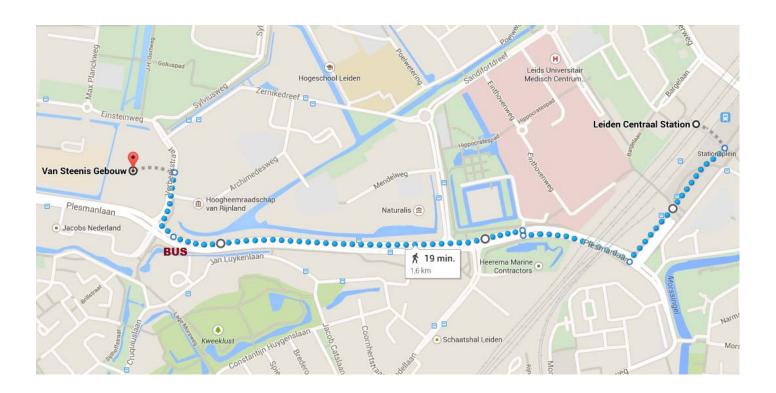
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of at least 24 burials, of which 15 were excavated. Genetic analysis has been performed on 10 individuals and the results allow us some insight in the social structures of a Merovingian community in the Netherlands for the first time. Due to the small sample size and lack of data from other contemporary sites, however, it is not (yet) possible to perform a population genetic analysis on this site.

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Location



Itinerary by foot:

It takes about 15 to 20 minutes to walk from the station to the Van Steenis building.

Exit the train station on the side of the city centre (Stationsplein).

Turn right and walk parallel to the train track until you pass a small public garden and reach a large tunnel that runs under the train track.

Enter the tunnel, there is a separate section for pedestrians, and continue walking along the same street (Plesmanlaan) when you exit it.

At after about 200 meters, you'll come to a crossing and there will be some sloping stairs that lead up from the pedestrian path to the main road. Go up the stairs and cross the side street.

Keep walking along pedestrian path on the Plesmanlaan until you come to another side street with a bus stop. This side street is the Einsteinweg.

Take the side path behind the bus stop and cross the Einsteinweg to enter the Van Steenis building.

By Bus

You can also take bus 221 to the Plesmanlaan stop or bus 30, 31 or 38 to the Verbeekstraat stop, which are on opposite sides of the street marked with BUS on the map. This takes 8 minutes. These busses leave from the Stationsplein on the city centre side of the Central train station.