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Kleos - *Amsterdam Bulletin of Ancient Studies and Archaeology* is a peer-reviewed, open access academic online journal, launched in 2014, which publishes current research and review articles by graduate and PhD students, as well as starting independent researchers, from the fields of archaeology and ancient studies (i.e. classics and ancient History). Kleos also provides reviews of recent books, conferences and exhibitions. The journal is published once a year and its main goal is to provide a possibility to graduate and PhD students to publish their research. The journal thus mainly aspires to serve as a platform for starting academic careers, and help students and starting researchers to share their research, gain experience in publishing, and improve their scientific skills. At the same time the journal aims to provide an overview of the research being conducted within the fields of archaeology, ancient history and classics, and support the interdisciplinary dialogue between these adjacent academic disciplines.

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The Kleos editorial team consists of an interdisciplinary team of ten (R)MA, PhD students and professionals (at least two editors from each main study field and one chief-editor). This editorial team is supported by a team of English editors and an academic advisory council of professors from the different disciplinary fields.

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Academic Advisory Council

Acknowledgements

The Kleos editorial board is supported by an interdisciplinary group of renowned scholars, covering fields from classic linguistics to archaeological theory and heritage studies, brought together within the Kleos Academic Advisory Council (AAC). The members of this board hail from prominent Dutch research institutes – such as ACASA. The AAC functions in an advisory role to the editors, providing them with advise in their consideration of specific theme issues or search for peer reviewers from particular niche areas. Thanks to their help, the editorial board has a wide network of experts and peer-reviewers at their disposal. Their endorsement is invaluable and paramount to guarantee the quality of the journal. The editors of Kleos would like to thank the following members of the Academic Advisory Council for their valued contribution to Kleos.

Prof. dr. H. Ronnes - Historical elite architecture (castles and country houses), heritage studies, ego-documents (travel accounts, memoirs).

Prof. dr. N. Roymans - Archaeology of North-western Europe, Roman archaeology, archaeology of conflict.

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CONTENTS

KLEOS
AMSTERDAM BULLETIN OF ANCIENT STUDIES AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The fourth Kleos issue is out! As always we are proud to present the work of starting scholars of (r)MA, PhD, and even BA-level. The papers included in the issue cover a wide range of subjects, ranging from gendered patterns in funerary practices of the Northwest-European Corded Ware culture to the opportunities that present day collaborations between game developers and scholars of the ancient past can offer us. As is our custom, you will find the papers ordered in chronological order, leaving aside disciplinary divides.

The first paper, entitled *Reassessing the Gender Ideology of the Supra-regional Corded Ware culture*, is written by Louise Olerud. As the title suggests, Olerud questions current ideas on Corded Ware gender ideology through the study of funerary practices and the material culture deposited in funerary contexts. In particular, she questions the current revival of a traditional narrative according to which the introduction of a binary gender system related to mass migrations from the Pontic Caspian steppe is associated with the establishment of a patriarchal society. Olerud does this by analysing (gendered) associations between grave goods, which she makes visible through the use of network graphs. In contradiction to the traditional narrative she concludes that gendered identities might have been more complex and in fact related to other societal structures than a binary patriarchal system.

In the second paper, entitled *Becoming Roman? Romanness, non-Romanness and barbarity in Pacatus' Panegyric on Theodosius*, Daan van Diemen scrutinizes the use of stereotypical concepts of Romanness and barbarity in Pacatus' *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12). In his paper, van Diemen presents the paradoxical case of emperor Theodosius' employment of Gothic troops in his usurpation of power and the apparent subsequent need to 'Romanize' them in order to legitimate his position. Moreover, through his analysis, van Diemen illustrates how from the late fourth century AD onwards perspectives on the ethnic composition and hierarchy within the Roman empire were starting to change.

In the third article, entitled *Mixing Roses with Milk: recovering the Tradition behind the* Ekphrasis *of Niketas Eugenianos' Drosilla and Charikles 1.120-158*, Emma Huig discusses previously unconsidered similarities between a passage from the Byzantine author Niketas Eugenianos' novel Drosilla and Charikles and the poem *Anacreonta* 16. These similarities centre on the description of a painter's contribution to the creation of a girl and the use of a mixture of milk and roses as a metaphor for a girl's skin colour. Not only does she argue that Eugenianos might have been inspired by the Anacreontea poems, but she also contextualises these similarities within a wider corpus of ancient and Byzantine novels in order to assess the degree to which the Anacreonta were a source of inspiration.

The fourth research paper, written by Ingmar Hof and entitled *The Early Medieval Augustus: An Analysis of Orosius' Influence on Charlemagne's Reception of Augustus*, has as its subject the Early Medieval reception of Augustus. Specifically, Hof focuses on the question to what degree the so-called 'pillars of Carolingian reception' – being the imperial coronation of 800 AD and Charlemagne's biography by Einhard – were based in the sixth-century 'Orosian' perception of Augustus as God's divine instrument and facilitator of early Christianity. Hof concludes that, contrary to the dominance of this Orosian perspective in the Early Middle Ages, this Christian reading of Augustus' legacy was of less concern to Charlemagne and his contemporaries.

The final paper included in this issue concerns a dialogue article by Marijke van Kempen and Aris Politopoulos. In this dialogue, entitled *Climbing on Culture: The Public Opinion on Archaeological Heritage Management through Assassin's Creed Origins and Assassin's Creed Odyssey*, Van Kempen presents the results of a survey focussing on the role video games might play in the dissemination of academic knowledge in the field of ancient studies. Having presented the results of the survey, Van Kempen – and subsequently Politopoulus – reflect on the various possibilities and opportunities the interaction between the academic field of ancient studies and the gaming industry might offer the wider public. These reflections include foremost a call for the active participation of scholars, encouraging them to take a proactive stance and reach out to the gaming industry and engage with the developers of historical games.

As always, the production of this issue and the included papers would not have been possible without the help of our anonymous expert peer reviewers. We are infinitely grateful to them for taking the time out of their busy schedules to peer-review the papers and provide the authors with indispensable feedback.

As editorial team we have seen some changes in the last year. Our team has been strengthened by three new editors who we would like to officially give a warm welcome: Arjen van Lil, Sara Mura and Bas Wagenaar. Having been dropped in the middle of the editorial process of issue 4, they have been great in picking up all the necessary skills. Moreover, they have brought a lot of enthusiasm and new ideas with them for the future of Kleos. Sadly, two of our editors, Janneke Maas and Lindsay Morehouse, have also decided that Issue 4 will be their last issue as editors. Starting their editorial work in 2017 and 2018, they have been part of the editorial team for the last three issues of the journal. As chief-editor and vice-chief-editor we would like to thank them wholeheartedly for their efforts and the way they have contributed to Kleos in general and to papers in the field of ancient history specifically.

Lastly, as is our tradition by now, work has already started on Kleos issue 5 – our first lustrum issue! As some might have already noticed through our social media, this issue will be a special one: not only will it contain regular Kleos papers, but also the proceedings of the Archon conference Narrative and Storytelling in Archaeology. Consequently, the next issue promises to be a rich one, containing a plethora of interesting papers. We hope you look forward to this issue as much as we are enthusiastic to be working on it.

First, however, we hope you enjoy reading this issue of Kleos!

THE KLEOS EDITORIAL TEAM

Reassessing the Gender Ideology of the Supra-regional Corded Ware Culture

Louise Olerud

Abstract

The Corded Ware culture (c. 2900-2200 BC; hereafter 'CWC' for the phenomenon itself or 'CW' as the adjective) is a widespread prehistoric phenomenon encountered throughout Europe and was characterised by standardised burial practices and material culture. Recent studies incorporating scientific methods have revived the traditional hypothesis that the sudden appearance of the CWC was caused by mass migrations from the Pontic Caspian steppe. Among other things, this new archaeological culture is typically associated with the introduction of a binary gender system and the establishment of a patriarchal society.

However, such a narrative is largely rooted in andro- and ethnocentric, Western assumptions: biological sex is equated with gender, grave goods are taken as a direct representation of identity, and weapons (i.e. the CW 'battle-axe') are associated with masculinity. Moreover, burials under barrows are overrepresented in the 'grand narrative' of the CWC, while other funerary and depositional contexts are underrepresented.

This paper aims to investigate CW gender, while taking the abovementioned problems into account. The emphasis is placed on the expression of gender through material culture and its selective deposition (i.e. specific objects deposited in specific contexts). Two regions have been selected as a case study: Southern Jutland (102 burials, 13 depositions (i.e. buried objects without a body), 29 single finds) and Bavaria (90 burials, three depositions, 32 single finds). The co-occurrences of various object categories in different depositional contexts are studied in each region. The results are contextualised in comparison to the extensive network analysis by Q. Bourgeois and E. Kroon (2017), which consisted of 1161 CW burials and resulted in the recognition of striking burial norms, but only takes the funerary context into account.

The present comparative and multi-contextual study adds nuance to the binary reading of CW gender and suggests that CW gender may have been constructed through an interplay of

Louise Olerud has completed her Research Master programme 'Prehistoric Farming Communities in Europe' at the Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University in 2019. This research paper discusses the results of her thesis. Her main research interests lie in burial rites and gender identities in European prehistory. She currently works as an archaeological advisor at the municipality of Delft and has been accepted for a PhD position at Leiden University.

▶ *Profile page*

normative supra-regional versus idiosyncratic local identities. The supra-regional and local burial styles do not necessarily convey a 'male' and 'female' gender identity but emphasise the larger CW community and local values respectively. Thus, this study argues that the core value displayed in burials is the CW community, rather than gender and particularly 'male-dominant', martial values as suggested in the grand narrative of this period.

Introduction

A binary gender system (male and female) is thought to have developed in Europe during the Bronze Age.[1] The appearance of the Corded Ware culture (c. 2900-2200 BC; hereafter 'CWC' for the phenomenon itself or 'CW' as the adjective) throughout Europe is thought to correspond with the establishment of this binary gender system. This prehistoric phenomenon has recently received significant attention in both academic circles and the wider public, due to newly developed methods to analyse ancient DNA (hereafter aDNA) of skeletal remains. Indeed, recent aDNA studies propose that the CWC was the result of large-scale population movements, of mostly men, from the Pontic-Caspian steppe (see figure 1).[2] This has been interpreted in accordance with the traditional, culture-historical idea of mass migrations spreading Indo-European languages and the horse and wheel into Europe. In this narrative, the migrants were militarist pastoralists originating from the Yamnaya culture (c. 3300-2500 BC, Pontic-Caspian steppe).[3] While recent research from the years preceding the aDNA studies emphasised continuity of older European cultures,[4] the new findings have revived this traditional idea without nuance. Indeed, the new grand narrative claims that the Indo-European-speaking male migrants took the native Neolithic women in Europe as their wives and established a patriarchal, male-dominated CWC, which developed into the establishment of a binary gender system during the Middle Bronze Age.[5] Such an interpretation is problematic on several accounts. This paper proposes an alternative – much more nuanced – interpretation of CW gender, by a multi-contextual and comparative approach and through network analysis.[6]

1 Robb/Harris 2018.

2 Allentoft et al. 2015; Haak et al. 2015; Goldberg et al. 2017.

3 Anthony 2007; Anthony/Ringe 2015; Childe 1929; Gimbutas 1956.

4 Furholt 2014; Iversen 2016.

5 Kristiansen et al. 2017, 335-342.

6 This paper is based on the author's Master's thesis: Olerud 2019.

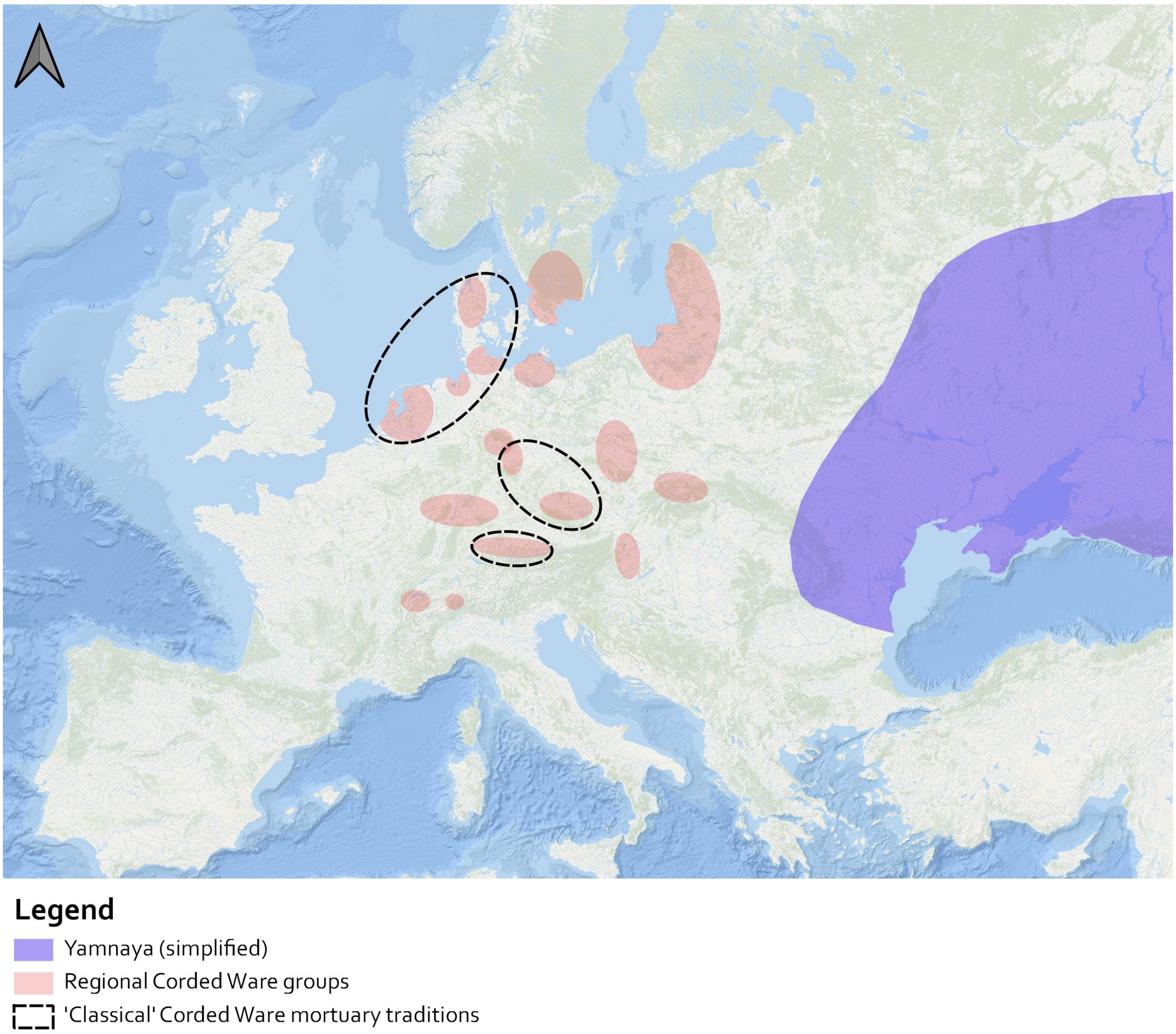

Figure 1
The distribution of the Corded Ware culture in Europe (reproduced from Johannsen et al 2017, 1120; map courtesy of ESRI Ocean via QGIS QuickMapServices plugin by NextGIS).

Deconstructing the Grand Narrative of the Third Millennium BC

The CWC is primarily known through its mortuary context. CW graves are characterised by a single burial in a crouched flexed position underneath a burial mound. A standardised set of grave goods marks out CW graves: a beaker with cord impressions (hence the name of the culture), a flint blade, a flint axe, a stone 'battle-axe' (i.e. a stone axe interpreted as a weapon), and amber or bone jewellery. The position of the deceased and the accompanying grave goods have traditionally been considered gendered and distinctly binary. Men are thought to have been placed in a right-flexed position and given a battle-axe, and women in a left-flexed position and given jewellery (see figure 2).[7] The appearance of this new mortuary style marks a break from the megalithic graves of the preceding period (fifth and fourth millennia BC), i.e. communal

7 Beckerman 2015, 13, 23-4; Bourgeois/Kroon 2017; Turek/Černý 2001.

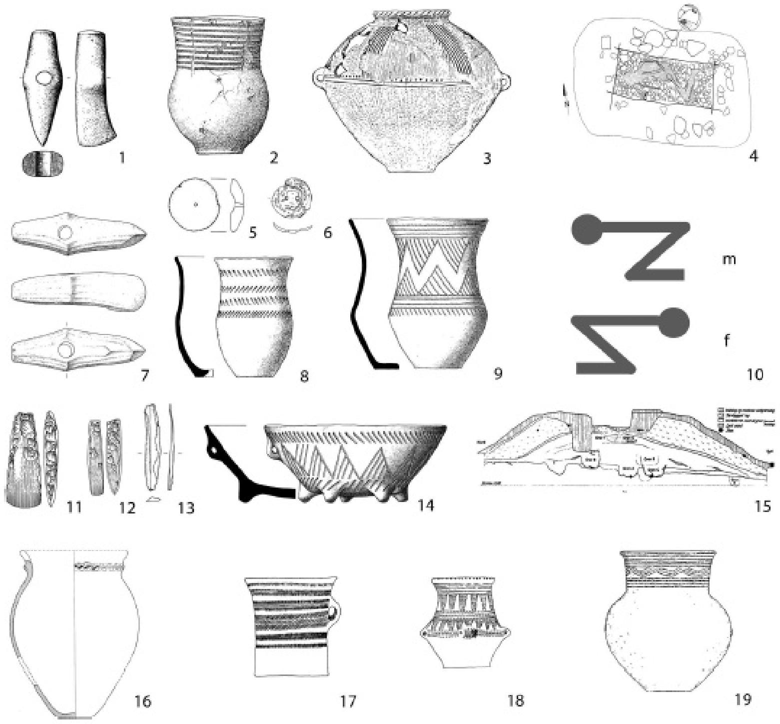

Figure 2
The typical elements of the CWC, which recur throughout Europe (after Furholt 2014, 69, fig. 2): 1 & 7 (Facetted) battle-axe; 2 Cord-decorated beaker; 3 Amphora with Strichbündel decoration; 4, 10 & 15 Single burial in a (gender-specific) crouched flexed position underneath a burial mound; 5 & 6 Amber and bone discs; 8 Beaker with herring-bone motif; 9 Beaker with triangular decoration; 11-13 (Flint) axe, chisel and blade; 14 Bowl; 16 Storage vessel with Wellenleisten decoration; 17 Straight-walled beaker; 18 Amphora; 19 Short-necked beaker.

tombs built with large stones and then covered by a mound.[8]

From the 1980s onwards, scholarly contributions have debated the sudden appearance of the CWC and its uniform nature throughout Europe, emphasising regional variability and continuity.[9] Yet as a result of recent aDNA studies, the traditional migrationist stance has reappeared.[10] Criticism of this renewed migrationist grand narrative includes the view that it is increasingly uncritical and unidirectional and that it reminds of the culture-historian equation of 'pots and people' as well as contemporary extremist ideas about European identity.[11] The linguistic and genetic data, on which this grand narrative is based, is itself not uncontested and genetic transmission does not necessarily imply cultural transmission.[12]

Moreover, this revived narrative is based on numerous assumptions.[13] A first problem is the concept of the Indo-European warrior band, which originates from comparative mythology and the accompanying notion of 'male warriorhood', which has been criticised as a projection of the idealised individual in Western culture.[14] A second assumption is the interpretation of grave goods as a direct representation of the identity of the deceased: an

8 Bourgeois 2013, 5, 12; Scarre 2002, 2.

9 Beckerman 2015, 16, 27-28; Furholt 2014.

10 Kristiansen et al. 2017.

11 Friemann/Hofmann 2019; Furholt 2016; Furholt 2018; Heyd 2017, 354.

12 Bourgeois/Kroon 2017, 2; Burmeister 2016, 55-56; Heyd 2017, 350; Klejn et al. 2017.

13 Kristiansen et al. 2017.

14 Anthony/Ringe 2015, 213; Brück/Fontijn 2013; see also Friemann/Hofmann 2019.

abundance of battle-axes in graves are taken as indicative of a male-dominated society with martial ideals.[15] Additionally, such statements about CW society are considered problematic due to the overrepresentation of funerary contexts – and particularly barrows – while the domestic sphere and other ritual contexts are largely unknown; burials, however, cannot give a full picture of daily life.[16] Finally, the underlying notions of traditional gender roles do not adhere to the current theoretical discourse in and beyond archaeology as well as to developments in contemporary Western society.[17] This grand narrative portrays women as passive objects of exchange, who are only credited with bringing ceramic skills into the CWC after an assumed 'marriage by abduction'.[18] In a system of female exogamy, these women would have brought with them knowledge about other CW communities and perhaps material culture. Rather than being 'dominated by men', these women would have exerted power in their own right by maintaining supra-regional relations and upholding a system of female exogamy for future generations.[19]

Binary gender

While the current consensus is that CW burials had a clear notion of binary gender based on biological sex, in some regions (e.g. the sandy soil regions of north-western Europe) the preservation of skeletal remains is rarely good enough for an osteological determination of sex. Instead, burials are often identified as either male or female on the basis of their position and/or the accompanying grave goods.[20] Besides the danger of circular reasoning, this identification is problematic even in cases in which the biological sex of the skeletal remains can be established. Firstly, the equation of biological sex and gender is a notion rooted in biological determination and disregards variability. Many ethnographic and historical societies as well as contemporary Western society know of more than two genders and of a range of variability in gender identities.[21] Thus osteological determinations

15 Beckerman 2015, 24-25; Edenmo 2008, 19-20; Ekengren 2013, 174-80.

16 Beckerman 2015, 20-23; Furholt 2014, 70; Nobles 2016, 16-17.

17 Even societies with a predominantly binary gender system show complexity of gender relations (Arnold 2016; Robb/Harris 2018).

18 Kristiansen et al. 2017, 338-40.

19 A CW system of female exogamy has been shown by stable isotope studies (Knipper et al. 2017; Sjögren et al. 2017).

20 Bourgeois/Kroon 2017, 2; Larsson 2009, 61. This happens in regions with good preservation as well (Buchvaldek and Koutecký 1970, see footnote 43).

21 Sørensen 2000, 42-5; Turek 2016, 353-356; Weglian 2001, 137-138. Yet a strict distinction between biological sex and cultural gender is equally difficult to establish as this reflects the Enlightenment dichotomy of nature and culture (Robb/Harris 2018, 129; Sørensen 2000, 42-45); on the nature-culture dichotomy: see Brück 2019; Fontijn 2019, 137.

of sex (and age) do not directly reflect the experienced reality of gender.[22]

Secondly, the equation of grave goods and gender is a direct inheritance of 19th-century (male) archaeologists, who first categorised archaeological artefacts from their ethno- and androcentric points of view: weapons and 'rich' burials indicating a male grave, and jewellery (or a lack of grave goods) indicating a female grave.[23] Current practice-based mortuary archaeology does not interpret grave goods as a direct representation of the identity and status of the deceased, instead emphasising mortuary rites and the relationship between the mourners and the deceased.[24] Biographical and contextual approaches emphasise the interaction between humans and objects, through which gender is actively constructed and performed (e.g. dress, production and use of objects).[25]

Lastly, even though (biased) statements are being made about gender in the CWC, the nature of CW gender has rarely been the subject of study. Contextual and practice-based interpretations of gender are often undertaken for the European Bronze Age, but not for the CWC and only rarely for the Neolithic as a whole.[26] Instead, the consensus of a binary CW gender symbolism is reiterated, perhaps with a critical side-note.[27] Burials, which are exceptions to the 'rule', are rather ascribed to homosexual or transgender individuals instead of being included in a critical analysis of CW gender.[28] Clearly, more research is necessary in order to gain a better understanding of CW gender; this paper aims to bridge this gap.

Methodology: a multi-contextual and comparative gender archaeology

This study aims to provide an initial investigation of CW gender in reaction to the grand narrative, while acknowledging both the aforementioned problems and the limitations of the CW archaeological record. As an initial and reactive study, the traditional idea of binary CW gender is explicitly investigated,

22 Nor is this method without problems of its own (Krogman/Iscan 2013, 59-60, 143-146; Sofaer 2011; Sørensen 2000, 45-46).

23 Hjørungdal 1994; Sofaer/Sørensen 2013, 530-531; Sørensen 2000, 27. One example (out of many) of a rich grave with weapons (thus 'male'), that later research showed to belong to a biologically female, is the (much contested) 'female Viking warrior' from Birka (Hedenstiera et al. 2017; Price et al. 2019).

24 Ekengren 2013, 174-180; Sofaer/Sørensen 2013.

25 Brück/Fontijn 2013, 203; Fowler 2004; Sørensen 2000, 75-76.

26 Robb/Harris 2018.

27 E.g. Bourgeois/Kroon 2017; Larsson 2009; Vandkilde 2007, 70-71. A notable exception to this is Turek 2017.

28 E.g. Falvey 2011.

thereby proceeding to some extent from the same basis, that is criticised above.[29] However, the used approach towards gender in this paper is practice-based and biographical: the emphasis is on how various bodies and objects have been treated differently in different contexts.[30] Thus, CW gender is investigated through a multi-contextual analysis, in which not only burials from barrows are included, but also other funerary (reused megalithic graves and flat-graves) as well as depositional (defined here as buried objects without a body and single finds) contexts. Depositions are considered to be objects buried intentionally and with meaningful purpose in particular locations in the landscape.[31] The funerary context is analysed first in order to determine if certain CW objects are typically associated with differently treated (gendered) bodies. Next, the investigation includes other contexts in order to determine whether there were rules of (gendered) 'selective deposition' throughout CW depositional contexts: the discard of particular objects in a proper way and in a proper place.[32] Even though gender is qualitative and experiential, gendered behaviour is expected to result in patterns in the archaeological record. Therefore, elementary statistics as well as network analysis are employed in order to help in finding such patterns.

In order to compare a high number of burials from different sites, the focus is placed on the position of the body (see figure 3) and on the osteological categories of sex and age.[33] Taking the abovementioned issues into account, these categories should not

29 This choice has been made in order to 'test' the grand narrative. Thus, the focus is on gender rather than other forms of identity or other possible explanations for the found patterns. Moreover, this article takes gender as a fixed entity rather than fluid. This investigation assumes either one gender (male or female) or none (other or non-gendered). This limitation of the methodology needs to be overcome in future research. It must also be kept in mind that the choice for studying burial rites as well as (ritual) depositions can only lead to an ideological representation of identity instead of an understanding of the lived reality of prehistoric persons during the CW period.

30 See Olerud 2019 for a full discussion of the theoretical concepts underlying this approach, which is (mainly) inspired on: Arnold 2016; Aspöck 2008; Brück/Fontijn 2013; Ekengren 2013; Fahlander 2012; Fontijn 2002; Fontijn 2019; Fowler 2004; Haughton 2018, 2-4; Sofaer/Sørensen 2013; Sørensen 2000; Stratton 2016.

31 Throughout European prehistory (as well as later periods), it has been a common practice to deposit valuables in the landscape, for example in wetlands. These depositions can be singular objects or hoards consisting of multiple of the same (one-type hoards) or different objects (multi-type hoards) (Fontijn 2002; Fontijn 2019).

32 Fontijn 2002; Fontijn 2019.

33 Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate the taphonomic processes resulting in the position of the body at the time of excavation. Instead, body positions are taken as the deliberate placement of the deceased in their grave by the burial community. Particularly for the supine (left-/right-) flexed position, however, this may be an incorrect assumption: perhaps the legs were placed flexed upright rather than towards one particular side, or perhaps a crouched flexed position was intended.

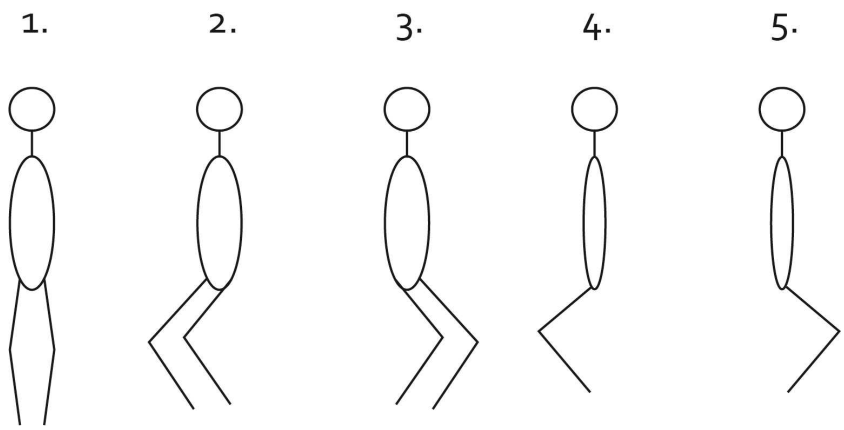

Figure 3
Possible body positions of inhumation graves (reproduced from Sternitzke 2017, 376): 1. Supine stretched position; 2. Supine right-flexed position; 3. Supine left-flexed position; 4. Crouched right-flexed position; 5. Crouched left-flexed position.

be regarded as concrete gender identities in themselves.[34] The goal is to find patterns in the ways sexed and aged bodies have been treated after death and to determine whether these patterns relate to gendered norms. Body positions are emphasised because the consensus of CW gender is that biological males are placed in a crouched right-flexed position and that the crouched left-flexed position is reserved for biological females.

For artifacts, the emphasis is placed on the object category and their embodiment, by which is meant the way these objects relate to the body: 'on body' (i.e. ornaments), 'in hand' (e.g. tools, weapons), 'non body' (e.g. pottery) and 'other' (e.g. food remains).

The typology of the objects has deliberately been left out since typo-chronology (as well as absolute chronology) is unfortunately not without problems for the CW period.[35] Thus, a limitation of this study is, that all objects and all sites are regarded to be from one period, whereas there would have been chronological differences within the CW period.[36]

In order to find patterns of (gendered) selective deposition, the focus is placed on which objects co-occur with other objects and which do not, and how this relates to the context in which these objects are found. In order to find such patterns, a simple network analysis is conducted consisting of two associated visual graphs, which show nodes connected by links.[37] The two-fold visualization

34 Arnold 2016; Fahlander 2012, 138; Haughton 2018, 3; Stratton 2016, 862.

35 There are two main problems. Firstly, CW typo-chronologies were originally based on the Danish Single Grave culture. They have been revised in some regions, but not in others. Secondly, the CW period coincides with broad plateaus in the radiocarbon calibration curve (2880-2580 cal BC and 2460-2200 cal BC) (Beckerman 2015, 13-4, 19; Bourgeois 2013, 26-8; Furholt 2003, 15-6; Furholt 2014, 70-1).

36 Typo-chronological differences between CW graves (e.g. underground, ground, and overground graves in Danish barrows, grave and barrow structures, and body positions) are not taken into account either. Particularly the supine stretched position may have been a later development, as this position occurs more frequently towards the end of the Danish Younger Neolithic (Hübner 2005, 747).

is done twice, first only for the funerary context (see figures 8-9, 14-16) and then for all contexts, thus including depositions and single finds (see figures 20-23).

The first graph (see figures 8, 14, 20, 21) consists of the objects (nodes): connected nodes indicate that these types of objects can co-occur, while stronger (darker) links indicate that these objects co-occur more frequently than weaker (lighter) links. The size of the nodes indicates how often this object co-occurs with other objects (larger nodes imply more connections). A graph showing clustered nodes with strong links between them thus indicates that these objects commonly occur together, whereas scattered (or isolated) nodes indicate that these objects rarely occur with other objects (or not at all). The latter are typically uncommon finds.

The second graph consists of the sites themselves: first, only the graves (see figures 9, 15, 16) and later all features (graves, depositions and single finds, see figures 22-23), offering context to the first graph. The placement of the nodes (i.e. the sites) reflects the same connections of the first graph, while connected nodes indicate that they have similar (co-occurring) objects found at these sites. In order to help interpret the patterns, the second graph (see figures 9, 15, 16, 22, 23) includes further context by adding colour or differently shaped nodes. Lastly, the size of the nodes represents the 'reliability' of the data: a scale of 1-3 has been chosen (1: unreliable; 2: reliable; 3: excellent). This reliability factor has been included to show the limitations of the data explicitly, as the archaeological record is not only fragmented, but the quality of the documentation of the features differs enormously per site.

Dataset

Due to the supra-regional nature of the CWC, this multi-contextual methodology is combined with a comparative approach, in which two regions are contrasted. The comparison is expected to allow a better understanding of contextual gender patterns on a supra-regional and a local level. The discerned patterns are then contextualised in relation to the large-scale network analysis of CW burials throughout Europe, conducted by Q. Bourgeois and E. Kroon.[38]

37 For this purpose, the programme Visone was used to create node-link graphs, by importing a'two-mode' adjacency matrix that indicates only the presence or absence of each object category per site. Multiple numbers of an object are thus ignored. The two-mode visualization is then divided into two one-mode visualizations, in which object categories and sites are visualized as nodes, while links indicate the occurrence of an object category on a site. The layout of the network, i.e. the placement of the nodes, is arranged through Visone's stress minimization algorithm (multidimensional scaling).

38 Bourgeois/Kroon 2017.

Two case studies were chosen. The first is Southern Jutland, which is considered to be a core area of the Single Grave culture (i.e. the regional CWC in Scandinavia, north-western Germany and The Netherlands, figure 4). CW graves from Jutland form a large part of the CW narrative, due to the large number of battle-axes found there, although skeletal remains are rarely preserved in the sandy soils of the region. Secondly, Bavaria was chosen, because skeletal remains are preserved there, and the region has been included in several recent studies (figure 5).[39]

The data included in the analysis are shown in tables 1-2.[40] A limitation of the CW funerary context is the often-poor preservation of skeletal remains. In the Danish case study, this is especially the case as only few skeletal remains have been recovered. Most bodies recognised in the Danish graves were preserved as 'soil silhouettes': discolourations in the shape of a body or skeletal element. Fortunately, also soil silhouettes can reveal the position in which the deceased was laid to rest.[41] In Bavaria, skeletal remains are preserved well enough for osteological determinations and aDNA analyses. This variation in preservation and documentation is reflected in the reliability scale employed in this paper.

Indeed, even in the absence of a preserved body, graves with grave goods are included in the analysis, albeit with lower reliability, because these graves still contribute to finding a pattern, in which some grave goods co-occur only with certain other grave goods. These features have been recognised as graves mainly due to the presence of grave structures (e.g. barrows, grave pits, stone frames etc.). The graves with bodies then give an indication about how this pattern may be interpreted, bringing to light which co-occurring objects are given to which bodies (and which are not).

39 Ebbesen 2006; Massy et al. 2017.

40 Bavarian data: Andrades Valtueña et al. 2017; Heyd 2000; Massy et al. 2017; Knipper et al. 2017. Danish data: Ebbesen 2006; Hübner 2005; Siemen 2009; Frei et al. 2019. The sources used in this study are catalogues of CW burials and finds (descriptions and images). No primary data are used and neither skeletal remains nor archaeological objects are determined by the author; the main method is thus a re-analysis of already published and determined material. Source criticism can be found in Olerud 2019. Sites are the locations at which one or more features were found, for example cemeteries, barrow landscapes, and so on. Despite the multi-contextual approach, the funerary context is overrepresented in both case studies, particularly in Bavaria. This is a limitation of the data, which could be solved by including more sites in future research.

41 Some soil silhouettes are very well-preserved and show the exact position of the body, including on which side the deceased was lain. Yet others are less clear and only indicate for example the location of the skull. Taphonomic research into soil silhouettes may provide more information, but to the author's knowledge this has not been undertaken.

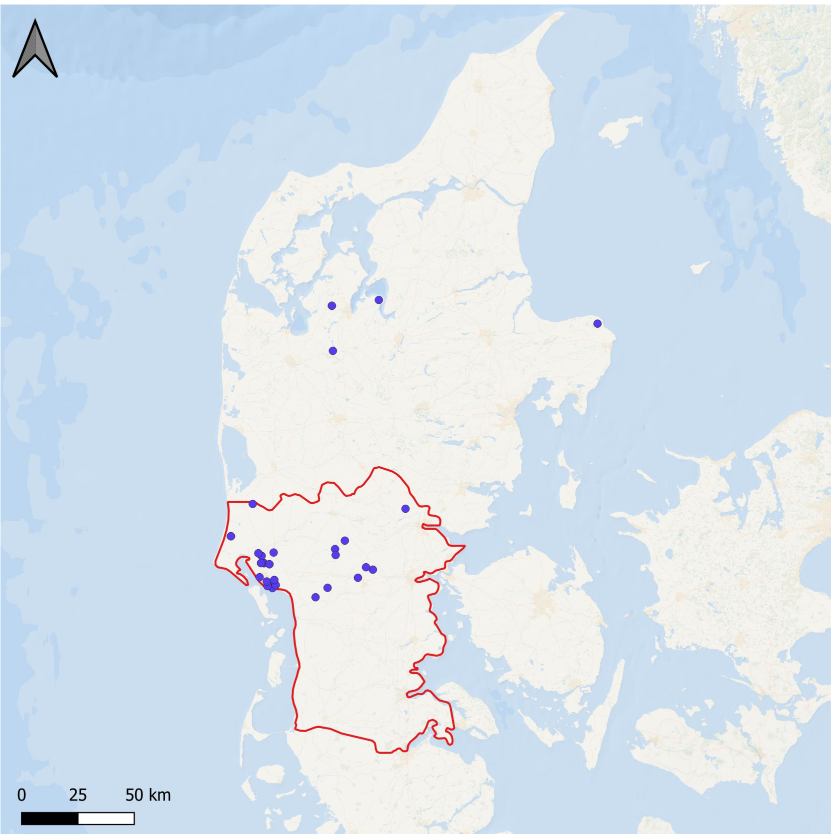

Figure 4
The sites (purple dots) included in the Danish case study from Southern Jutland (red outline). A few beyond the region were included, as these yielded skeletal remains as well (created by author, map courtesy of ESRI Ocean via QGIS QuickMapServices plugin by NextGIS).

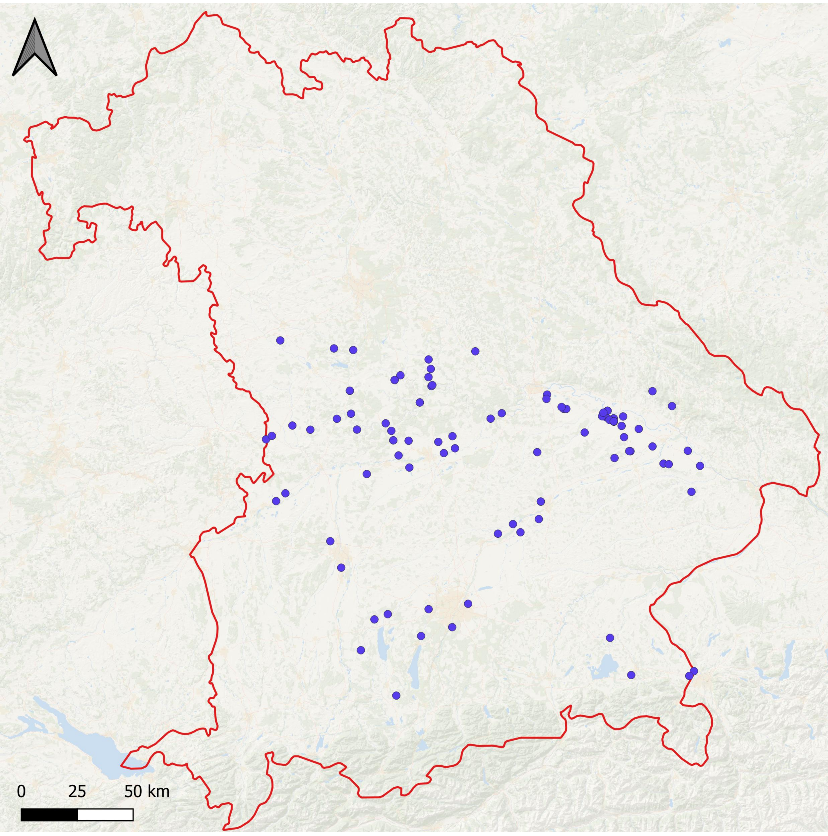

Figure 5
The sites (purple dots) included in the case study of Bavaria (red outline) (created by author, map courtesy of ESRI Ocean via QGIS QuickMapServices plugin by NextGIS).

Features	Jutland (29 sites)	Bavaria (94 sites)
Graves	102	90
Graves with bodies	45 (in 39 graves; 11 skeletal remains)	72 (in 60 graves)
Depositions	13	3
Single finds	29	32
Total	*144*	*125*

Table 1
Features included in the dataset.

Features	Jutland	Bavaria
Graves	233 (in 86 graves)	212 (in 79 graves)
Graves with bodies	97 (with 38 bodies)	139 (with 47 bodies)
Depositions	38	5
Single finds	61	73
Total	*332*	*290*

Table 2
Objects included in the dataset.[42]

Results: binary norms and convention-breakers in southern Jutland versus idiosyncratic identitites in Bavaria

The funerary context: sex, age and body positions

Due to the poor preservation of CW graves in Jutland, the sex and/or age of only six burials could be determined osteologically (see table 3). In addition, three soil silhouettes were 'aged' as children based on their size. The crouched right-flexed position is most common (n=19), while the crouched left-flexed (n=5) and supine stretched positions (n=6) are prevalent, but less common. Supine flexed burials have not been recognised in the scholarly debate, perhaps due to poor preservation or a different research tradition. While both sexes and all ages are represented, these numbers do not allow a reliable comparison between sex/age and body position. Thus, the hypothesis that the males were buried on their right side and females on their left side, cannot be tested with the Danish data alone.

In Bavaria, 24 bodies have been attributed a sex, 34 an age and 18 both, sex and age (see appendix 1). It is however not always clear what this determination is based on. Therefore, the burials in which physical anthropology is not explicitly mentioned as part of

42 The Danish object totals have been corrected due to a high amount of (amber) beads. Rather than the actual number of beads, the number of features with beads is used in the analysis.

Sex/age	F	M		n/d	unknown		
Body position	adult	adult	mature	infant	child	unknown	*Total*
crouched flexed	1					1	*2*
crouched left-flexed						5	*5*
crouched right-flexed				1	2	16	*19*
supine stretched		1	1			4	*6*
unknown				2	1	10	*13*
Total	*1*	*1*	*1*	*3*	*3*	*36*	*45*

Table 3
The bodies in the Danish dataset, with their body position, sex and/or age.

the method for sex determination (or otherwise unreliable)[43] are given a lower reliability factor. Most of the sexed bodies are categorised as male or 'probably male', which means that biologically male burials could be overrepresented in the data, but the high number of unsexed burials makes this uncertain.

The most common body position for all sexes and ages is the typical crouched flexed position (n=37). The supine flexed position is also common (n=17), while supine stretched position (n=2) seems to be an irregularity, reserved for children. According to the CW consensus, the difference between crouched left- and right-flexed positions may be related to sex. However, only six of the 24 sexed burials conform to this rule. Most burials in these positions have an unknown sex and, consequently, this rule cannot be confirmed (nor rejected). Furthermore, the supine flexed position does not conform to the assumed CW gendered position: both males and females are buried on the left or right side.[44] This may indicate a third way of burying both biological sexes, perhaps related to gender or another form of identity. Indeed, approximately half of the bodies in supine flexed positions are from unique multiple burials (i.e. graves with two or more bodies). Lastly, subadults are generally placed in the same positions (except perhaps the supine flexed position), which could indicate that children were gendered along similar lines as adults.

The funerary context: grave goods

The most common grave goods in Jutland are battle-axes and

43 51 burials have explicit mention of physical anthropology as the method of sex determination, although some of these have conflicting information between the catalogue and the appendix (Heyd 2000). Moreover, three subadults have been 'sexed', which is not possible (personal communication, R. Schats 2019); these burials may have been unreliably sexed according to the accompanying grave goods or their body position.

44 Intriguingly, more biological males are buried on their left side (n=4) than on their right side (n=3). With such low numbers, however, it is unclear if this is a significant peculiarity. More research is needed.

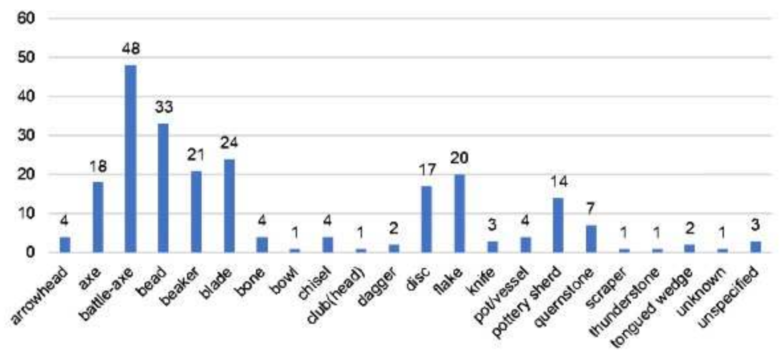

Figure 6

The objects occurring in all Danish graves (n=233), shown according to object category.

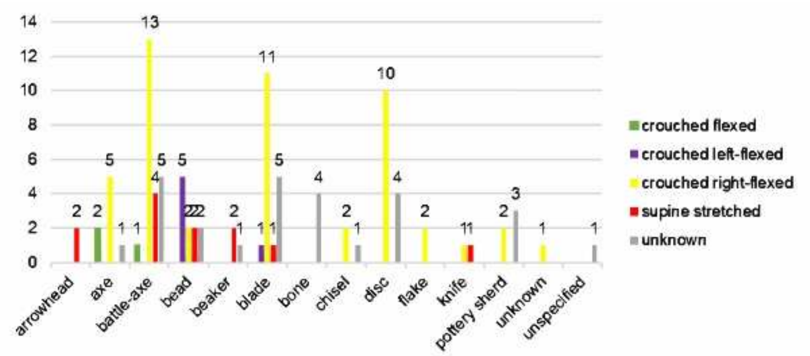

Figure 7

The objects associated with bodies in the Danish graves per age/sex (n=97), shown according to object category and the body position of the burial.

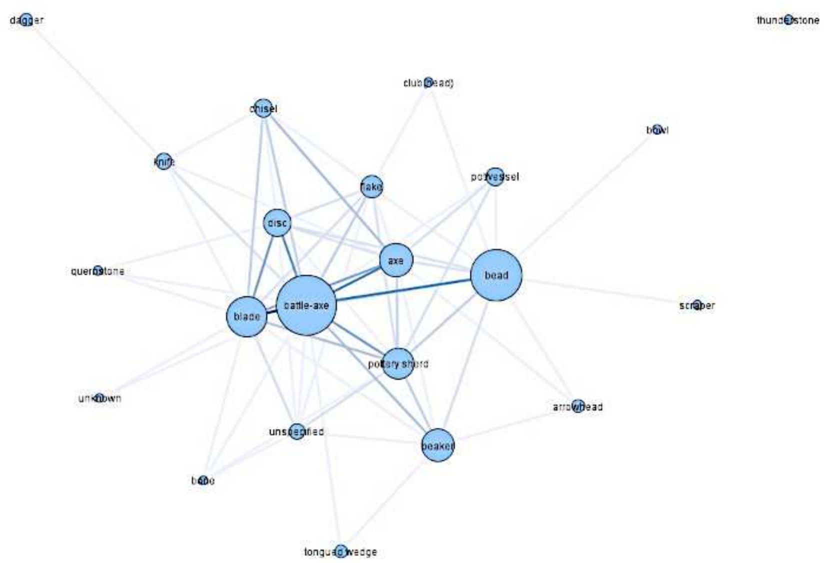

Figure 8

The co-occurrence of the objects in the Danish graves, visualized as a node-link graph. Network type = one-mode; node value = object category; node size = degree centrality; node layout = stress minimisation; link colour = number of sites, where this object category co-occurs with another object category.

beads (see figure 6). The majority of the objects are found in crouched right-flexed burials with flint flakes as exclusive object categories for this position (see figure 7). Only two object categories (beads and a flint blade) occur in crouched left-flexed burials with certainty, but neither object category is exclusive to this body position. The battle-axe co-occurs with most other objects, particularly with flint blades and beads (see figure 8).

A dichotomy can be observed in the co-occurrences in the graves (see figure 9). Almost all crouched right-flexed burials are centred in the left side of the graph (burials associated with battle-axes, which are never left-flexed), while all crouched left-flexed

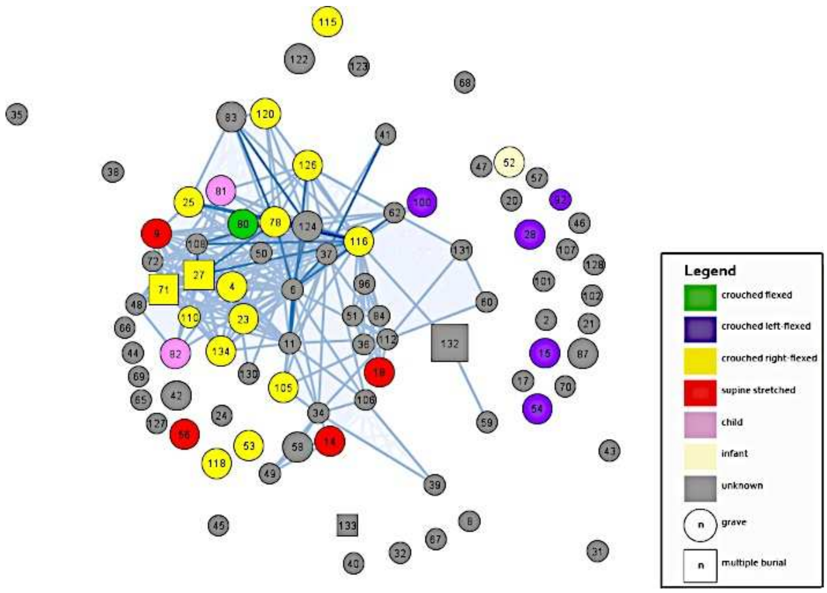

Figure 9
The co-occurrences between the Danish graves on the basis of their grave goods (as in figure 8). Network type = one-mode; node value = grave ID; node colour = body position or age (if known); node shape = single or multiple burial; node size = reliability; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = amount of shared object categories.

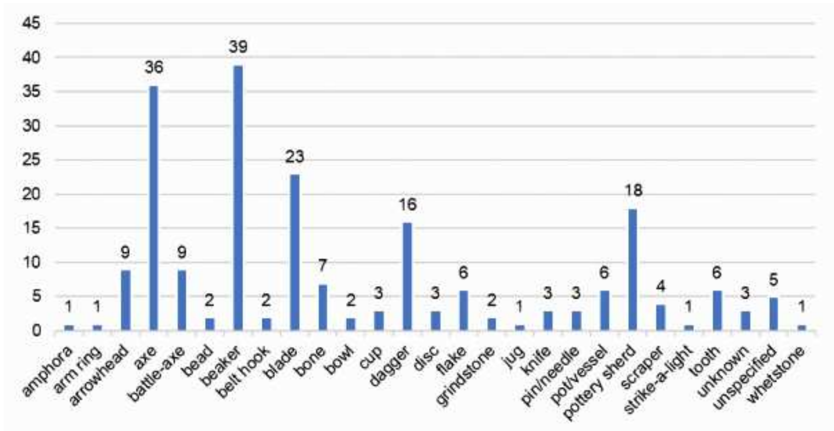

Figure 10
The objects occurring in all Bavarian graves (n=212), shown according to object category.

burials are located on the right side (burials with only beads; this includes one crouched right-flexed infant). This implies, that both body positions have rather standardised – yet distinct – grave sets. This may indicate a binary (perhaps gendered) distinction. The multiple burials and supine stretched burials, however, are spread out throughout the graph and do not follow this distinction. Intriguingly, the burials in a supine stretched position seem to have elements of both crouched right-flexed and crouched left-flexed burials. The supine stretched position may thus indicate a third, more idiosyncratic way, in which (at least) biologically males could be buried.[45] The few subadults in the dataset bring further complexity to the observed dichotomy.[46]

45 The only two sexed males in the dataset were placed in the supine stretched position, for which typically regarded 'male' objects (battle-axes, arrowheads) are common.

46 Two crouched right-flexed children were treated in the same way as adults, while one crouched right-flexed infant was given amber beads and no battle-axe or other 'male' objects.

Gender of body position	Bavaria	Jutland
'Male'?	Crouched right-flexed	Crouched right-flexed
		Supine stretched
'Female'?	Crouched left-flexed	Crouched left-flexed
'Male and female?'	Supine (left-/right-)flexed	
?	Supine stretched	

Table 4
Summary of the possibly gendered body positions in the dataset, from a purely gender-driven perspective.

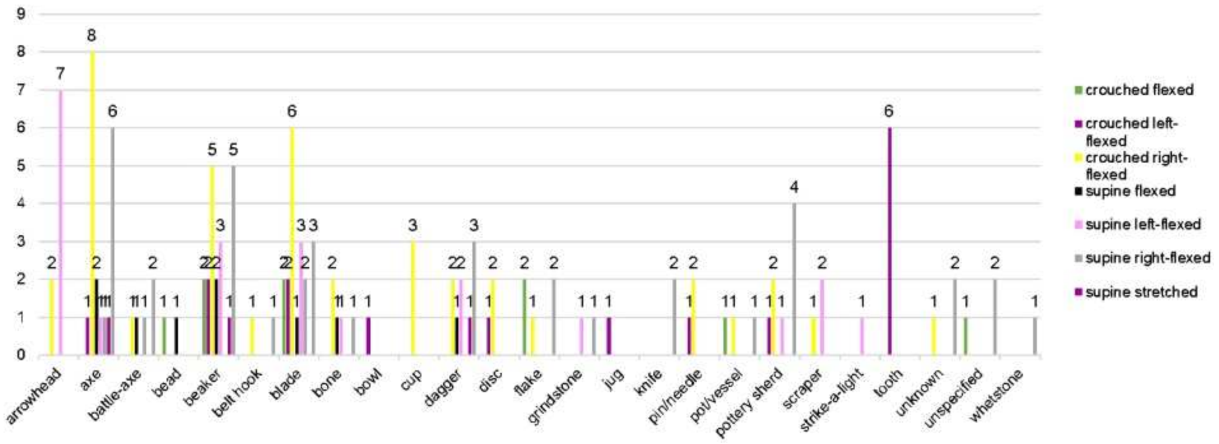

Figure 11
The objects associated with bodies in the Bavarian graves (n=139), shown according to object category and the body position of the burial.

In Bavaria, the beaker and stone axe are the most common grave goods, typically co-occurring with the dagger and blade (see figures 10-14). Biologically male burials appear to have most variability in grave goods, while biologically female burials display much less variability (see figures 12-13). This may relate to the overrepresentation of males in the sexed burials. Axes, daggers and flint blades are most likely to occur in crouched right-flexed and adult male burials, while perforated animal teeth only occur in crouched left-flexed (and one female) burials. Beakers and flint blades are common for almost all positions, sexes and ages and are thus perhaps 'non-gendered'.

Corresponding to the most common and co-occurring grave goods, the graves, which contain these objects, are largely clustered in the middle (see figures 14-16). The middle cluster mostly contains crouched right-flexed positions and adult males. However, other positions, sexes and ages also occur in (or close to) this cluster. In comparison to the Danish co-occurrences, there appears to be much less standardization for a particular position, sex or age, as these are all rather spread out throughout the graph. Clearly, it is difficult to discern particular treatments of sexed and aged bodies in the Bavarian dataset.

In sum, both case studies bring nuance to the interpretation of a strictly binary gender symbolism in the funerary context, if the correlation between body position, biological sex and age is systematically examined (see table 4).

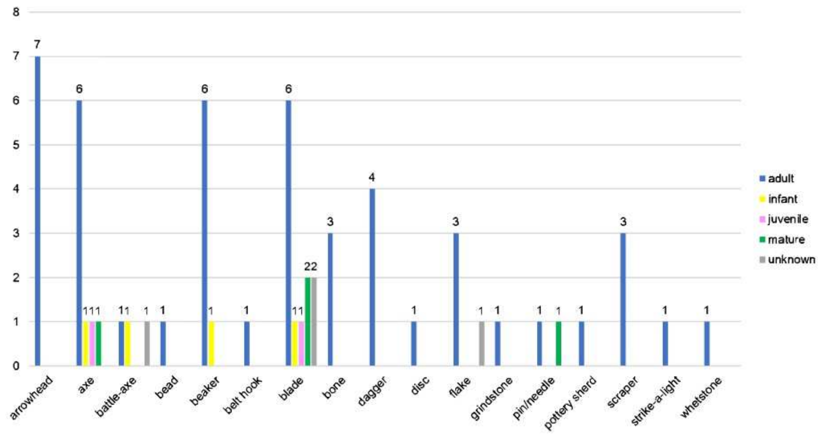

Figure 12
The objects associated with (probably) male bodies in the Bavarian graves (n=61), shown according to object category and the age of the body.

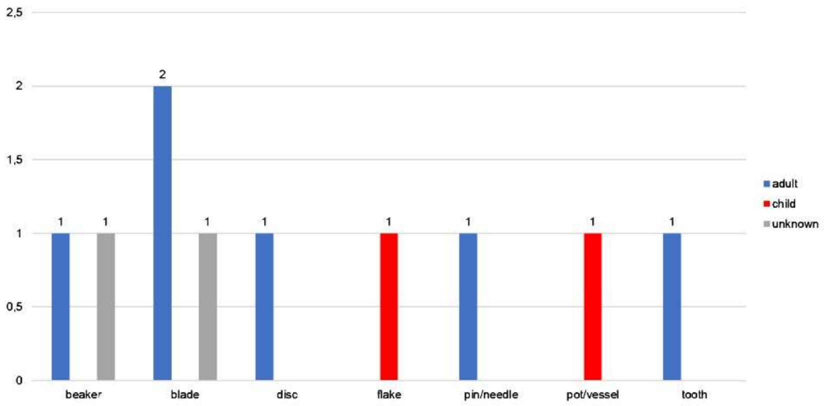

Figure 13
The objects associated with (probably) female bodies in the Bavarian graves (n=10), shown according to object category and the age of the body.

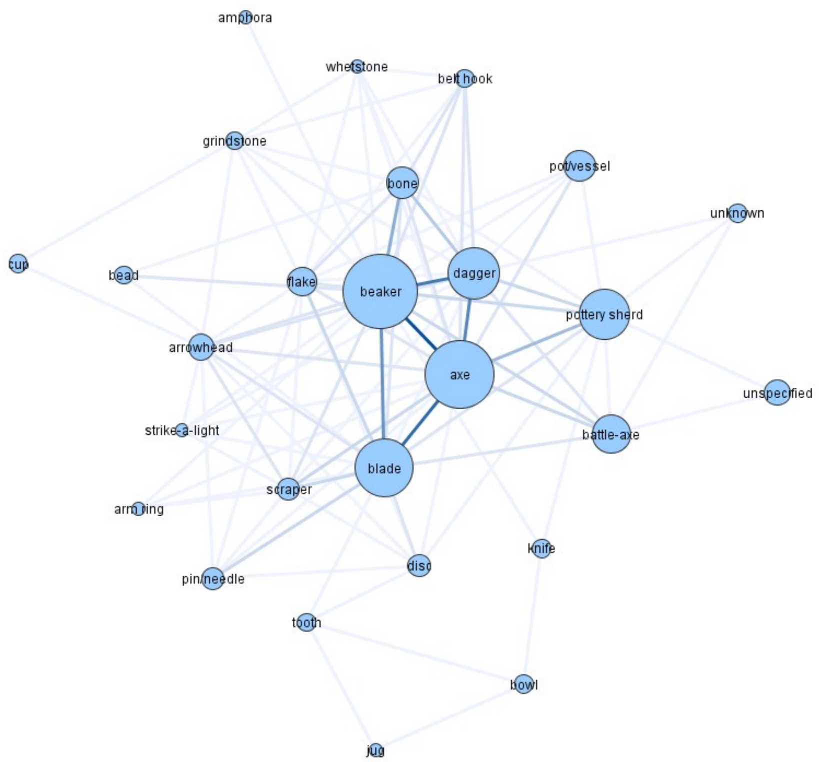

Figure 14
The co-occurrence of the objects in the Bavarian graves. Network type = one-mode; node value = object category; node size = degree centrality; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = number of sites, where this object category co-occurs with another object category.

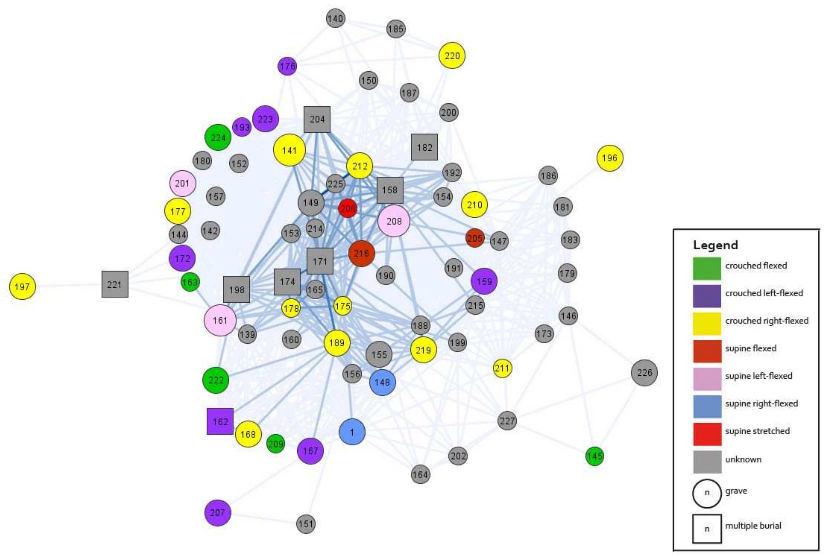

Figure 15
The co-occurrences between the Bavarian graves, on the basis of their grave goods (as in figure 14). Network type = one-mode; node value = grave ID; node colour = body position (if known); node shape = single or multiple burial; node size = reliability; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = amount of shared object categories.

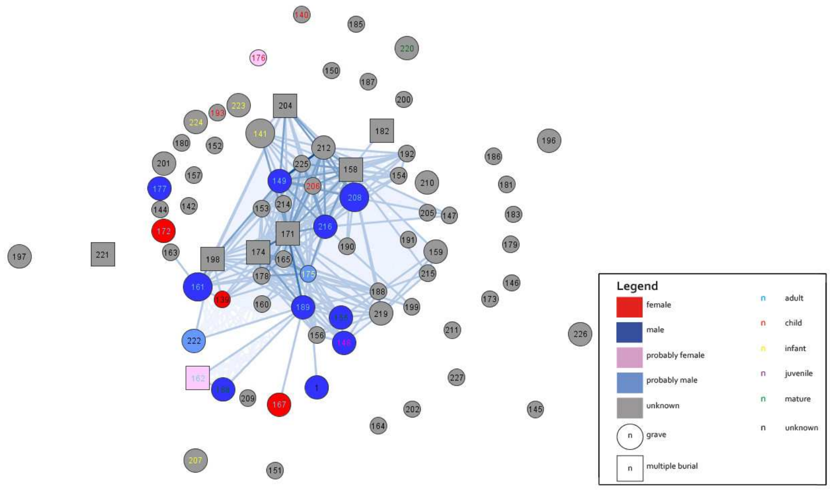

Figure 16
The co-occurrences between the Bavarian graves as in figure 15. Network type = one-mode; node value = grave ID; node colour = sex; label colour = age; node shape = single or multiple burial; node size = reliability; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = amount of shared object categories.

Gendered selective deposition

The majority of Danish depositions (i.e. buried objects without a body) typically consist of flint axes (see figure 17).[47] Strikingly, no bodily ornaments have been found in depositions. The three Bavarian depositions are too few and the single finds in both case studies are too uncertain to be scrutinised separately but are instead included in the multi-contextual analysis.[48]

Taking all contexts into account (figures 18-19), it becomes apparent that the highest variability in objects occurs in the funerary context in both case studies, which is unsurprising due to

47 Wet and dry contexts refer to different locations in the landscape, where objects are deposited. The distinction is made between wet locations such as rivers, lakes, and marshes on the one hand, and dry land on the other. This distinction (and its association with ritual and profane), however, is not uncontested (Fontijn 2002).

48 Single finds are uncertain features by nature, as it is unknown what they represent. They could be destroyed graves or depositions, settlement waste in secondary context, etc. See Olerud 2019 for a discussion of the single finds included in the analysis.

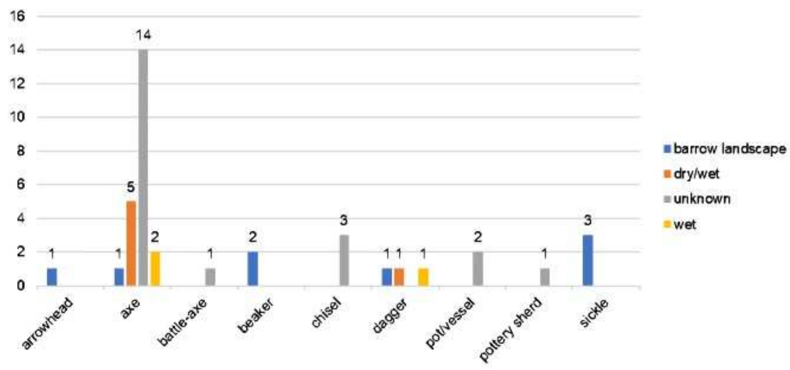

Figure 17
The objects in the Danish depositions, shown per object category and context (n=38). The 'dry/wet' context is one particular site with five depositions located on the sandy hills alongside the moors of a brook.

its overrepresentation. Interestingly, however, nearly all objects in the Danish graves as well as the most common Bavarian grave goods occur as single finds and in depositions. In Jutland, beads, flint blades, and amber discs appear to be excluded from depositions, while sickles may be typical for depositions (also found as single finds). Axes, on the other hand, seem to be more common in depositions rather than graves (see figure 20). In Bavaria, no object categories occur exclusively in depositions or single finds. A pattern may be discerned, however: perforated teeth, the only possibly 'female' object, and other 'on body' objects occur only in burials, while the possibly 'non-gendered' objects and the possibly 'male' objects can occur in other contexts as well (see figure 21).

The co-occurrences of all features in the Danish dataset (see figure 22) mirrors the funerary context (see figure 8) as only a few depositions and single finds are located within the dichotomous middle clusters of right-flexed and left-flexed (barrow) graves. However, another division reveals itself in this graph: in the top half, mostly depositions and megalithic graves are located, while flat-graves and single finds are mainly located in the bottom half. Although it must be kept in mind that single finds are uncertain contexts, which may be disturbed graves or depositions, this division may indicate, that objects were indeed treated differently according to context. Moreover, the megalithic graves are mostly located between different clusters, thus connecting different treatments of objects. No similarly clear patterns of differential treatment become apparent in the Bavarian co-occurrences (see figure 23), other than that the single finds and depositions are generally in the periphery of the graph. These are not, however, distinct from graves. This is because they typically consist of only one object, emphasising their uncertain nature.

Summing up (see table 5), it seems that potentially gendered rules of selective deposition can only be discerned in the Danish data, although the Bavarian dataset does follow a similar pattern: 'on body' objects are prevalent in graves and absent in depositions, while 'non-gendered' and possibly 'male' objects typically occur in

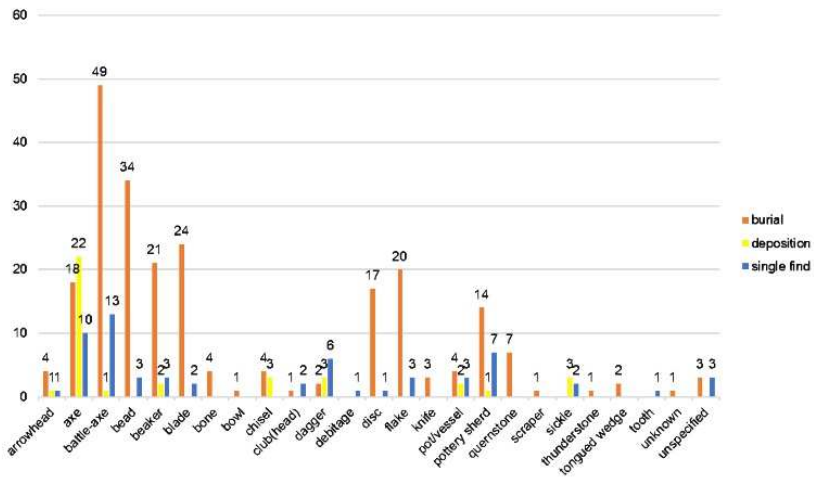

Figure 18

The objects in the Danish dataset (n=334), shown according to their object category and per feature type.

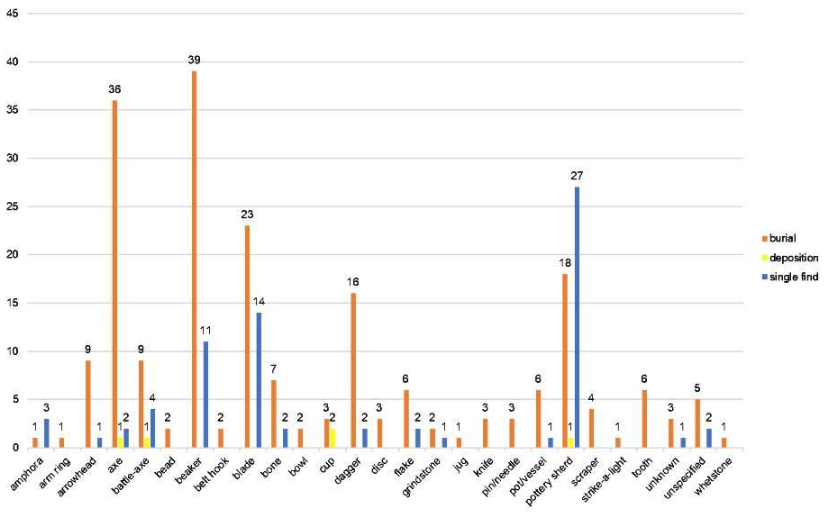

Figure 19

The objects in the Bavarian dataset (n=290), shown according to their object category and per feature type.

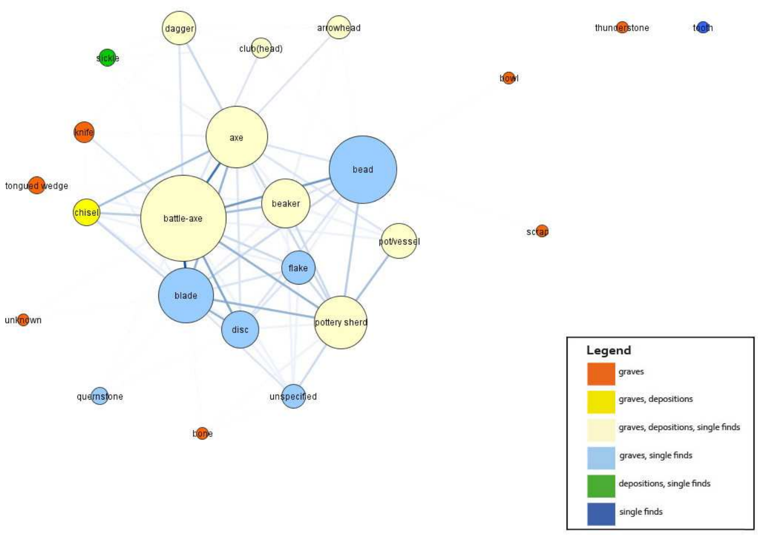

Figure 20

The co-occurrences of all objects in the Danish dataset. Network type = one-mode; node value = object category; node size = degree centrality; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = number of sites where this object category co-occurs with another object category.

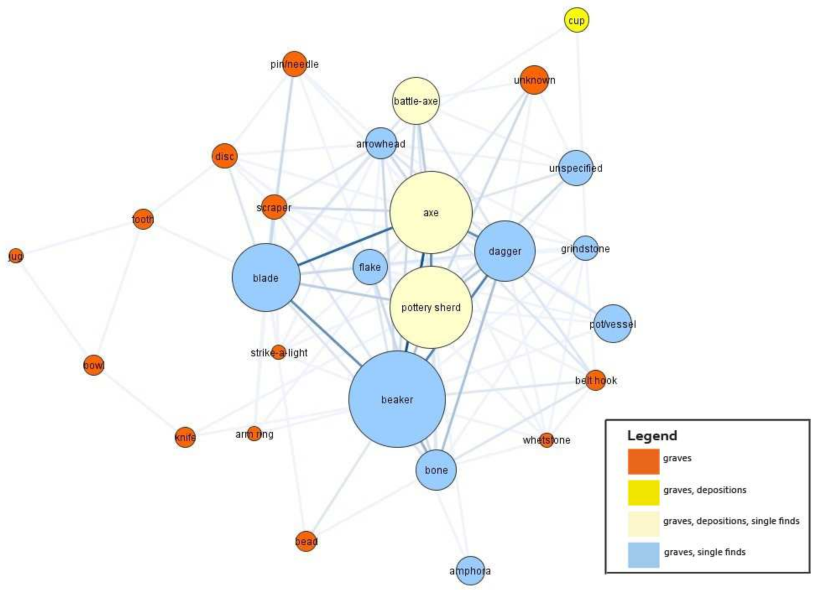

Figure 21

The co-occurrences of all objects in the Bavarian dataset. Network type = one-mode; node value = object category; node size = degree centrality; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = number of sites where this object category co-occurs with another object category.

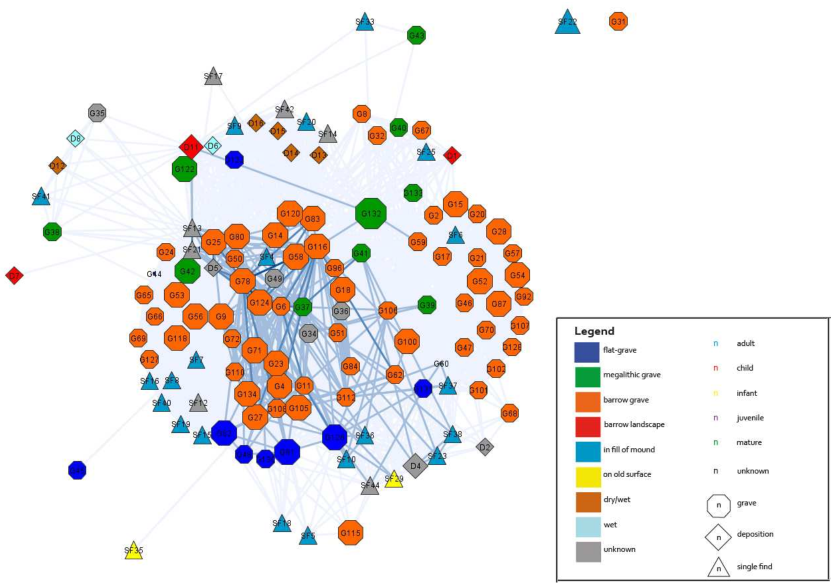

Figure 22

The co-occurrences between all Danish features, on the basis of their objects (as in figure 20). Network type = one-mode; node value = database ID; node colour = context; label colour = age; node shape = feature type; node size = reliability; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = amount of shared object categories.

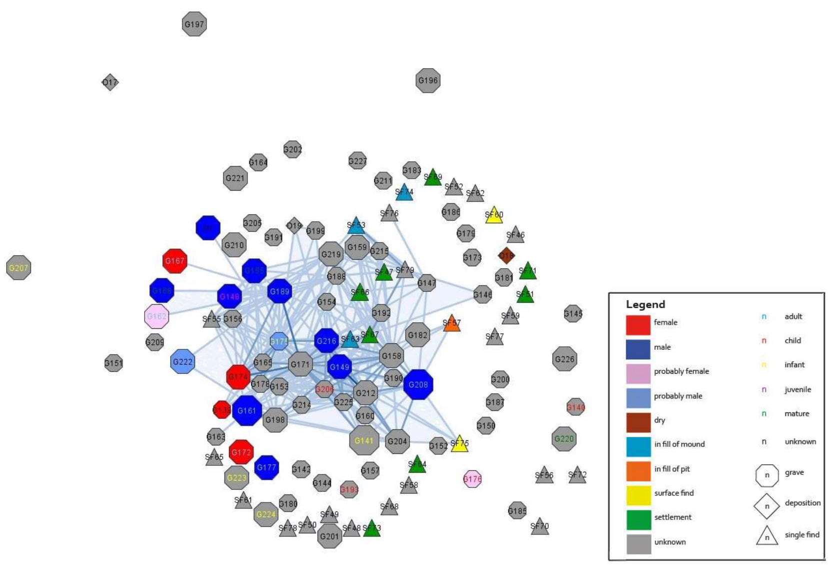

Figure 23

The co-occurrences between all Bavarian features, on the basis of their objects (as in figure 21). Network type = one-mode; node value = grave ID; node colour = context; label colour = age; node shape = feature type; node size = reliability; node layout = stress minimization; link colour = amount of shared object categories.

Identity	Object	Selective deposition
Supra-regional	'Male' objects:	'Male' objects:
	In hand: axes, battle axes, daggers, arrowheads	In hand: 'male' burials, crouched right-flexed position, supine stretched position (Jutland), wetland depositions, megalithic graves (Jutland)
	'Non-gendered' objects:	'Non-gendered' objects:
	In hand: flint blades	In hand: 'male' and 'female' burials, crouched (left-/right-) flexed position, supine (left-/right-)flexed position (Bavaria), supine stretched position (Jutland), wetland depositions
	Non-body: beakers, other pottery	Non-body: 'male' and 'female' burials, crouched (left-/right-) flexed position, supine (left-/right-)flexed position (Bavaria), supine stretched position, barrow landscape depositions, megalithic graves (Jutland)
Local	'Male' objects:	'Male' objects:
	On body: amber discs (Jutland)	On body: crouched right-flexed burials (Jutland)
	'Female' objects:	'Female' objects:
	On body: amber beads (Jutland), perforated teeth (Bavaria)	On body: 'male' and 'female' burials, crouched (left-/right-) flexed position, supine (left-/right-)flexed position (Bavaria), supine stretched position (Jutland), megalithic graves (Jutland)

Table 5
Summary of the possibly gendered object categories, their embodiments, and their selective deposition in the dataset from a supra-regional vs. local perspective. Regional differences are shown in brackets.

wetland depositions as well as in graves. However, objects deposited in or with megalithic graves (also together with bodies) bridge the gap between depositions and barrow graves.[49] Megalithic graves thus may have been 'convention-breakers', a special context, which allowed for the breaking of the prevailing conventions, connecting the differential treatments of bodies and objects.[50]

Discussion: contextualizing the results

Bourgeois and Kroon have conducted a large-scale network analysis of 1161 CW burials throughout Europe, focusing on the occurrence and placement of grave goods in relation to the position of the body.[51] They found that right-flexed burials were more standardised than left-flexed burials throughout the CW regions. The Danish dataset in the present study confirms this pattern, although the left-flexed burials also showed standardization in the exclusion of certain grave goods. This is perhaps not surprising, as Bourgeois and Kroon's dataset mostly

49 Particularly the sites of Børsmose (G42 and D11 in figure 22) and Gjerrild (G132 in figure 22), Jutland. The reused megalithic graves typically contain multiple burials with possibly 'male', possibly 'female' and 'non-gendered' artefacts.

50 Cf. Fontijn 2019, 35.

51 Bourgeois/Kroon 2017.

consisted of Danish burials.[52] Yet, the Bavarian case study indicates more variability than a simple dichotomy between left and right. Indeed, Bourgeois and Kroon did not distinguish between a crouched flexed and supine flexed position and, moreover, supine stretched burials as well as reused megalithic graves were not included. A possibility is that these positions indicate chronological differences, with the supine stretched position increasing towards the end of the period in Denmark and the supine flexed position being more closely related to Yamnaya burial traditions.[53]

Bourgeois and Kroon associate the ('male') right-flexed position with a supra-regional burial style, similar across all CW regions, and the ('female') left-flexed position with a local burial style, similar only within the different CW regions. In the present study, both case studies confirm this distinction: supra-regional objects such as beakers and axes occur mostly in the crouched right-flexed burials in both regions, while local objects are typical for the crouched left-flexed position (see table 5). Yet in both cases, the supra-regional flint blades (and beakers in Bavaria) as well as local objects occur with both positions as well. Moreover, this study has shown that supra-regional objects occur in both funerary contexts and wetland depositions, while local objects only occur in the funerary context.

This paper proposes that the supra-regional burial style (see table 5) does not necessarily convey a 'male' gender identity, although it seems to be more common for biologically male burials. Instead, the main value in these burials is not gender, but the CW community. This follows K. Wentink's suggestion, that standardised grave sets signify an 'archetypical', idealised ancestor rather than a particular identity, as well as D. Fontijn's explanation of wetland depositions as objects that are less attached to a particular person and more a symbol of the community.[54] Indeed, these supra-regional 'in hand' objects would have played an important ideological and economic role for an agricultural

52 802 sites, of which 425 were from Jutland (including Schleswig-Holstein), 283 sites from Central Germany, 17 from Czechia, and 77 from the Netherlands. The burial dataset in the present study was based on the database of Bourgeois/Kroon 2017 (425 Danish graves), deliberately focusing on sites that had not been included in their analysis (flat-graves, megalithic graves, depositions, single finds, and occasional barrows in their proximity; mostly Siemen 2009 but also Hübner 2005). The seven Danish graves marked as exceptional in their database were however included (Hübner 2005). In total, 26 graves overlap between Bourgeois/Kroon 2017 and the present dataset.

53 Hübner 2005, 747; pers. comm. Q. Bourgeois 2019; see also footnote 36. In the present study, all sites are treated as contemporaneous even though the CW period lasted c. 700 years (see also footnote 35). Further research incorporating chronology is necessary to determine to what extent the found patterns are related to contemporaneous diversity or chronological differences.

54 Fontijn forthcoming; Wentink 2020, 14, 229-32.

community with faraway contacts: the ('battle'-)axe may have been used to clear the land in order to plough and enable wheeled transport, while from the Early Neolithic onwards, axes were exchanged supra-regionally and deposited as valuables.[55] The supra-regional, 'non-gendered' beaker may have been essential in maintaining social contacts with other CW communities as a symbol of guest-host relationships.[56] As beakers occur in crouched left-flexed and/or biologically female burials in the present dataset, it seems this object was chosen to signify the CW community when a female was buried in a supra-regional burial style, thus implying a gendered distinction in which objects were considered appropriate. This may also explain why beakers and axes do not typically co-occur in crouched right-flexed burials. Mirroring the above, the local burial style (see table 6) does not necessarily convey a 'female' identity, but it emphasises local values. Bodily ornaments appear to be the supra-regionally accepted medium through which local identity may have been expressed. Lastly, the re-used megalithic graves in Jutland may have been 'convention-breaking' places, where these supra-regional and local identities came together and where the different rules for treating gendered bodies and supra-regional and local symbols were allowed to be broken.

Conclusion

CW gender was not necessarily binary in the (contested) Western sense of the concept. Instead, the binary symbolism recognised in CW burials may be related to a distinction between supra-regional and local depositional norms, by which gendered bodies had to be buried and supra-regional and local objects had to be deposited. Biologically male bodies were buried more often in a supra-regional style, with objects that could also be deposited in wetlands and which signified the larger CW community. Biologically female bodies, on the other hand, were buried more often in a local style, emphasising more personal, local identities through objects that were not typically deposited in contexts other than graves. Yet, this does not necessarily mean a strict binary gender distinction, an assumption that equates biological sex and gender. Instead, it seems that local expressions of gender may have differed throughout the CW regions: in Jutland, there may have been an additional ('male'?) way of burying (the supine

55 Fontijn 2002, 248; Wentink 2020, 125-6. For a later example see also Theuws 2009: in his re-analysis of 'warrior graves' from Gaul in the 4th and 5th centuries AD, he re-interprets axes, lances, and the bow and arrow as symbols of the landscape and as representing claims on land.

56 Wentink 2020, 239-47.

stretched body position), while there may have been a third, 'male and female' way of burying in Bavaria (the supine flexed position). Age may have played a part in these expressions as well, although more research on subadult and mature bodies is needed. Additionally, re-used megalithic graves in Jutland seem to have been 'convention-breakers', where the different treatments of supra-regional and local identities were allowed to come together. Finally, on a critical note, it is unclear to what extent these burial styles relate to chronological changes and other types of (fluid) identity, although both factors would have played a – likely important – role.

Further research is necessary to scrutinise these local expressions of gender as well as to determine whether these hypothetical rules of selective deposition apply to other CW regions. It is recommended to include typo-chronology in a future analysis rather than treating all sites as contemporaneous, as some of the found patterns may be related to changing practices throughout the CW period and in transition to the succeeding Bell Beaker culture. Nevertheless, this small study has shown that the grand narrative of the third millennium BCE needs to be nuanced. CW gender was more complex and contextual than a simple binary dichotomy, allowing for regional variability in a supra-regional CW context. The main value in CW graves does not appear to be gender at all, as suggested in the grand narrative posited by Kristiansen et al. Instead, following Bourgeois/Kroon and Wentink, CW gender may have been constructed through an interplay of supra-regional versus local norms. The abundance of supra-regional, male burials does not imply a 'male-dominant' martial society but emphasises the idealisation of the whole CW community rather than the own personal (and local) identity of the deceased. In contrast, women (and some men) were more typically buried in a style displaying personal and local significance.

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Appendix 1: Summary of the possibly gendered body positions in the dataset, from a purely gender-driven perspective (n=139)

Sex/age	F			M				probably F		probably M		unknown					Total
Body position	**adult**	**mature**	**unknown**	**adult**	**juvenile**	**mature**	**unknown**	**adult**	**child**	**infant**	**unknown**	**child**	**infant**	**juvenile**	**mature**	**unknown**	
crouched flexed											1		1			5	*7*
crouched left-flexed	2							1	1			1	2			5	*12*
crouched right-flexed				2		1				1		1	2		1	10	*18*
supine flexed				1												1	*2*
supine left-flexed	1	1		4												2	*8*
supine right-flexed	1			1	1	1	1									2	*7*
supine stretched												2					*2*
unknown			1	1		1						1	1	1		10	*16*
Total	*4*	*1*	*1*	*9*	*1*	*3*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*5*	*6*	*1*	*1*	*35*	*72*

Becoming Roman? Romanness, Non-Romanness, and Barbarity in Pacatus' Panegyric on Theodosius

Daan van Diemen

Abstract

This paper analyses the use of the stereotypical concepts of Romanness and barbarity in Pacatus' *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12), delivered in 389 AD. The Gallic panegyrist had to address the Eastern Roman emperor Theodosius' employment of Gothic troops against his Roman adversary, Magnus Maximus, who was stationed in the Western Empire, which could have been grounds for the Western elite to question his legitimacy. This speech is an early example of the deteriorating dichotomy between Romans and non-Romans, a trend which would continue in the fifth century. The speech provides us with a singular Roman perspective on the changing ethnic composition and hierarchy within the Empire.

By analysing Pacatus' descriptions of the Goths, it becomes clear that they are ascribed more positive, almost Roman traits, while at the same time still corresponding to the prevailing barbarian stereotype to some degree. Moreover, by simultaneously suggesting that Maximus' soldiers have lost their Roman identity, Pacatus problematises the distinctions between Romans and non-Romans, Goths and barbarians, and consequently the idea of civil war itself, even further. These conclusions are compared to E. S. Gruen's theory on the classical perspective on the 'Other', after which it is observed that despite the many inconsistencies in Pacatus' treatment of ethnic groups, the aims and conventions of panegyric insist on a strict distinction in ethnic terminology between Romans and 'Others'.

The systematic study of this speech's views on ethnicity thus provides a new perspective on the changing conventions of the genre of panegyric due to the inconsistent attribution of stereotypical ethnic characteristics, and a point of reference for later, even more complex views on Romanness.

Daan van Diemen has completed his bachelor and RMA Classics at the University of Amsterdam and the VU. In his research he focuses on ethnic identity in late-antique rhetorical texts, especially in panegyrics from the third to the sixth century. His main interest is the shifting Roman perspective on non-Roman peoples, depending on their role in imperial politics. He currently works as a teacher in Greek and Latin at a secondary school in Amsterdam.

▶ *Profile page*

Introduction

The last quarter of the fourth century was marked by great wars within the Roman Empire, both as a result of civil strife and conflicts with foreign enemies.[1] In 378, a war between the Romans and the newly migrated Goths led to the defeat of the Roman army in the Battle of Adrianople, after which Theodosius seized the Eastern throne.[2] Peace was established four years later through treaties between the Roman and Gothic leaders.[3] In 387, Theodosius marched with the Eastern army and a large amount of Gothic troops, many of whom had also been present at Adrianople, against the Western usurper Maximus, who was defeated, captured and executed on 28 August 388.[4]

One year later, a panegyric – *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12) – was read by the Gallic orator Pacatus in Rome before the emperor and the senate in celebration of this victory. The celebration of the triumph over a usurper was common practice in the fourth century to restore relations between cities and emperors and to secure their loyalty.[5] This panegyric, consisting of 45 paragraphs, starts with praise of Theodosius (4-22), followed by a portrait of Maximus as an inhuman monster (23-31).[6] Theodosius' campaign against Maximus itself comprises a relatively small part of the speech (31-45). Within the account of the campaign, a surprising amount of space (32.2-33) is devoted to the description of the non-Roman troops. As the conventions of the panegyric did not allow Pacatus to criticise the emperor, he had to justify the employment of men who had been responsible for the disastrous Roman defeat ten years earlier against a Roman enemy: after all, an Eastern emperor at the head of a largely non-Roman army defeated the ruler of the Western Empire, therefore his legitimacy would likely have been questionable in the eyes of the Roman elite.[7]

Keeping silent on such a controversial subject, which is usual in panegyrics, was not an option for Pacatus, as Maximus had presumably exploited criticism on his predecessor Gratian's fondness of his Alanic bodyguard during his usurpation, and had

1 All dates are AD, unless otherwise specified.

2 The group at Adrianople consisted of "Goths from many different backgrounds, as well as all sorts of provincial malcontents" (Kulikowski 2007, 136); Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* 31.16 mentions the inclusion of Alans and Huns after the battle, cf. *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).32.4. I will use the term 'Goths' to refer to this heterogenous group. For a historical overview of individual 'barbarian' peoples and their relationships with the Roman Empire, see Geary 1999.

3 Rather than through a single treaty (Halsall 2007, 180-185).

4 Kulikowski 2007, 153.

5 McCormick 1986, 80-83; Leppin 2015, 198-199, 211-214.

6 Pacatus closely follows the rules of the genre regarding structure and contents as formulated by Menander Rhetor in the third century, especially in the first half of the panegyric. With the invective against Maximus, Pacatus tries to disassociate Gaul from the usurper (Nixon/Rodgers 1994, 446-447). The account of the war is more topical for this celebration, as the panegyrics of Late Antiquity became instruments of propaganda, presenting a political situation in a specific way to a specific audience (MacCormack 1981, 3–10). 'Late Antiquity' indicates here the period between the mid–third and mid–eighth century AD.

7 Nixon/Rodgers 1994, 447.

succeeded in instigating revolts among sections of Theodosius' Gothic troops, which had to be supressed. These events caused criticism on Theodosius among the Roman elite, which Maximus likely used in his own propaganda against Theodosius.[8] Pacatus therefore had to address the issue in front of a sceptical Western audience. This firstly raises the question how Pacatus justified Theodosius' use of non-Romans against Maximus, and secondly, what role employment and complication of the ethnic stereotypes on the one hand, and acknowledgement and denial of Roman identity on the other play in this justification.

Recently, R. Stone has analysed Theodosius' shift in policy regarding the Goths as depicted in Orations 14, 15, and 16 by the Greek panegyrist Themistius, from 379, 381, and 383 respectively, using a similar approach as I will apply in this paper. In the first two panegyrics, Themistius dehumanises the non-Roman invaders through disaster metaphors.[9] Oration 16 marks a shift in Themistius' standpoint. As peace had been established in 382, Themistius had to justify Theodosius' decision to integrate the Goths into the Empire by assuring the audience of Theodosius' ability to 'tame' the barbarians, and comparing them with the historical, successful integration of the Galatians.[10]

While mainly focussing on the presentation of Theodosius' policy in Constantinople, Stone also compares Themistius' speeches with Pacatus' *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12), highlighting the comparable need to reassure the audience of the wisdom of Theodosius' decision by showing that the barbarians fulfilled Roman roles.[11]

However, I believe more nuance is required in Stone's conclusions that Pacatus and Themistius employ largely the same techniques to justify Theodosius' policy. As I will point out, the emphasis on the emperor as a transformer of people in Pacatus' panegyric is stronger with Maximus' men, who Theodosius seemingly transforms into Romans, than with the Goths, who do not turn into Romans.12 Moreover, Themistius' insistence on the positive precedent of the Galatians contrasts with Pacatus' exemplum of Antonius, which makes clear that this form of positive cooperation with barbarians is actually unprecedented. Stone's conclusion, that Themistius' continuation and development of certain themes throughout the speeches aided the audience in accepting the idea of Gothic settlement, fits the situation in

8 Ibid., 476, notes 76, 497; 117; Kulikowski 2007, 158-159.

9 Stone 2020, 239-244.

10 Ibid., 247-249.

11 Ibid., 250-251.

12 Ibid., 253.

Constantinople. In the West, however, where the Goths arrived with the invading Theodosius only one year before Pacatus' speech, the implementation of these ideas would be too sudden and alienating for the Western audience, something Pacatus had to avoid. His focus on the unchanged but controlled nature of the Goths fits his purpose better, namely to present Theodosius as a true Roman ruler, not as an Eastern invader leading an army of barbarians.

In this paper, I will analyse the use of ethnic identification and the characteristics ascribed to those identities in Pacatus' argumentation. I will also distinguish four different ways in which Pacatus defends the employment of 'barbarian' soldiers against the Roman adversary, complicating the traditional dichotomy between Romans and non-Romans, as described and discussed by B. Isaac.[13] To do this, I will compare these complications to E. S. Gruen's conclusions on the presentation of relationships between Romans and 'Others'. I will first explore Gruen's concepts of ethnic identity and stereotyping. Next, I will apply these concepts to the groups Pacatus mentions in the order in which they are introduced into his panegyric. These include first the Gothic soldiers of Theodosius, who are explicitly described as behaving in a Roman way, counter to the prevailing stereotype, due to Theodosius' influence. Next I will discuss the Egyptian troops of Antony in a historical exemplum. They are negatively compared to Theodosius' Gothic troops by Pacatus in order to distance his subject from an unwanted comparison, while at the same time emphasising the necessity of employing barbarians against the greater evil of Maximus. Finally, the followers of Maximus will be discussed, who are said to have lost their Romanness through their refusal to follow Theodosius, thus negating the notion of employing barbarians against Romans by Theodosius. However, they seemingly regain their identity once more after switching sides, as Theodosius "bade them become Romans".[14] Pacatus does not apply this shift in identity on the Gothic soldiers, despite their loyalty and Roman behaviour, therefore one wonders what it means to 'become Roman'. The inconsistent reliance on and employment of ethnic stereotypes will therefore prove to be the core element of Pacatus' argumentation in this matter.

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13 Isaac 2004; cf. Dench 2005, on Roman self-definition. However, Dench' study, like Isaac's, does not include Late Antique texts, in which the definitions and terminology of Roman identity differ, Dench 2005, 30-31; I use the term barbarian to refer to the Roman view on certain peoples, areas and concepts which they considered to be inferior and 'non-Roman' in certain ways, but, as this study will show, this term was not used in a consistent manner. When considering the peoples etc., which the Romans called 'barbarian', in historical context, I will refrain from using this term.

14 *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).36.3. Quotations and translations are taken from Nixon/Rodgers 1994.

ETHNIC STEREOTYPING IN PANEGYRICS

In order to understand the complex negotiation that Pacatus undertakes, it is important to establish the prevailing ethnic stereotypes in Antiquity. The Roman people presumed a common identity based on a certain kinship: *Romanitas* or 'Romanness'. This allowed them to distinguish themselves ethnically from others.[15] These 'others' usually exist in the form of a generalised idea characterised by particular stereotypes. These are described by Isaac, for instance, as 'the Easterners', such as Persians, Egyptians or Greeks, who allegedly suffered from *mollitia* ('softness'), luxury, effeminacy, and moral, physical, and military decay, and as 'the barbarians', often Germanic tribes, who are described as untrustworthy and brutish, but also as ferocious in battle.[16] While these stereotypes were developed centuries earlier, their employment remained common practice throughout Late Antiquity, despite their anachronistic nature due to changing practices of and relations with non-Roman peoples. There was only limited variation possible in the presentation of these stereotypes.[17]

The use of stereotypes supposedly emphasised Roman superiority over these peoples.[18] Among the explanations given for the characteristics that Isaac lists which are used in the sources, the classical 'environmental theory' is the most relevant for the present case study: this theory implies that group characteristics are influenced or determined by one's natural surroundings, for example, people from a harsh climate are by nature stronger than those from warmer climates.[19]

Gruen provides a more nuanced image of the relation between Romans and the 'Other', i.e., those who they are contrasted to, through many examples in which the adaptation of the 'Other' proved to be more important than creating an alienating dichotomy.[20] However, A. J. Quiroga Puertas analyses the attitude towards 'Others' in the works of another panegyrist from the fourth century, Libanius, as an example which contradicts Gruen's view. Libanius maintains a strict contrast between barbarism and (classical) civilisation, making the barbarians the antithesis of the

15 I follow the definition of ethnicity as given in Eriksen 2010, 16-17, as "a social identity (based on a contrast vis-à-vis others) characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship"; see also Pohl 2013, for an overview of the complexity of ethnic identification of late Antique and early Medieval groups.

16 Isaac 2004, on the Easterners: 285-286, 291-292, 305-308, 312-313, 405; on the barbarians: 430-431, 433-436.

17 Woolf 2011, 108-113.

18 Isaac 2004, 55-56.

19 Ibid.

20 Gruen 2011, 352.

ideal emperor.[21]

Likewise, the panegyric on Theodosius insists on the distinctiveness of the non-Roman troops, but at the same time downplays the alienating character of the Goths by ascribing an almost Roman behaviour to them and contrasting them with foreigners who are even more distanced from Romanness. Nonetheless, Gruen's conclusion that ancient authors often sought to reconcile the 'Other' with themselves does not fully apply here: Pacatus, as we will see, emphasises the barbarity of Theodosius' non-Roman troops, while at the same time providing certain elements in their behaviour that seemingly and paradoxically contradict with this view. This follows G. Woolf's notion that "[stereotypes] change constantly to suit the communicative and persuasive strategies of those who to employ them".[22] Combined with Quiroga Puertas' observations, this paper will show that Gruen's conclusions are seemingly often not applicable to panegyrics, in which the stark contrasts with the stereotypical barbarian allow the author to place his subject in a more positive light.[23]

Throughout these complex and contrasting views, Pacatus maintains the suggestion that the dichotomy between barbarian and Roman prevails. His argumentation and motives for this contradictory presentation of things will be compared to Gruen's conclusions. This will provide a new perspective on the changing conventions of the genre of panegyric regarding the negative depiction of non-Romans amidst the rigid rules given by the rhetorical handbooks, and serve as a point of reference for later, even more complex views on Romanness.

The 'loyal barbarians' of Theodosius

In the first part of the panegyric, the non-Romans are seldomly mentioned. Although Pacatus recalls the state of the Empire at the time when Theodosius became emperor, saying that "barbarian peoples had flooded over Roman territory like a kind of flood", after this the Goths and other tribes are hardly mentioned in the description of Theodosius, thus downplaying their role as enemies in earlier wars.[24] Their destruction of the countryside is only

21 Quiroga Puertas 2013, 61, 65.

22 Woolf 2011, 112.

23 In accordance with Woolf 2011, 113.

24 *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).3.3. Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus' *Res Gestae* 31.5.12 for a similar flood-metaphor for invading peoples (Burgersdijk 2016, 122). Stone 2020, 252 states that Pacatus, like Themistius' *Oration* 16, does not dehumanise the Goths through disaster-metaphors, but as this simile refers to earlier wars instead of the contemporary situation, his conclusions that Pacatus and Themistius depict the allied Goths in a more positive way than in the earlier panegyrics holds; see *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).11.4-5; 22.3 for the other mentions of the Goths before the narration of the campaign.

touched upon, and Adrianople is left out altogether. Pacatus makes sure he does not dwell upon the wrongdoings of their enemies-turned-allies.

In contrast, when the narration of the campaign itself begins, the Gothic troops receive more attention. In the description of the preparations for war (32.3-4), Theodosius' decision to employ the "onetime enemies of Rome", as Pacatus calls them, is presented as serving multiple goals: sparing the Roman population by recruiting non-Romans, defeating the usurper, and strengthening the borders by neutralising "forces of dubious loyalty". With the treaties of 382 there was peace with the Goths, but that did not mean they were to be trusted. In order to contain the problem, the borders had to be heavily defended to prevent more hostile peoples from crossing the Danube, which a force of Greuthungi had attempted in 386 without success.[25] The Romans could not risk a Gothic revolt because of a sudden increase in their troops, and so they had to be kept away from the border.

However, the rest of 32.3-4 does not exhibit any signs of this "dubious loyalty": Pacatus points out that for barbarians, they are uncharacteristically loyal, showing discipline, following orders and being "afraid of being marked down as absent without leave. There was no disorder, no confusion and no looting, as is usual among the barbarians." He continues by saying that they even decline any form of compensation, except that their loyalty should be recognised. It is emphasised that the barbarians under Theodosius do not plunder the Roman countryside, as they had done before the treaties were made and as the audience might have expected. Pacatus is having it both ways in his argumentation: the mention of their "usual behaviour" reinforces the stereotype, whereas the surprising lack of this behaviour emphasises the exceptionality of the situation.[26] Pacatus therefore both confirms the barbarian stereotype and downplays it: the Goths appear loyal before Theodosius, but he keeps them where he is able to control them. They are not Roman, and therefore their loyalty to Rome is not fixed. This is strengthened by Pacatus' statement that Theodosius granted the allied non-Roman peoples "the privileged status of fellow soldiers", for which he uses the uncommon word *commilites*.[27] The choice for this word is striking, as a commonly used word was available: *commilitones*, which is often found in military speeches to emphasise the comradery between the

25 Curran 1997, 106.

26 A common technique of panegyrists: Maguinness 1933, 121-123.

27 I follow Mynors 1964 and the manuscripts in reading commilitum; Baehrens 1874 suggests commilitii, which is adopted by the TLL. The only other place commiles occurs in classical Latin is Caesar, Bellum Civile 2.29, but this passage is badly corrupted and virtually intelligible.

commanders and soldiers.[28] Pliny uses this word five times in his *Panegyricus* to accentuate Trajan's military character and his affinity with the troops. Since Pacatus often echoes this text, it is clear that he must be familiar with this more common word, and his choice for *commilites* is likely a conscious one.[29] With it, he implicitly rejects the connotations of comradery and equality between a general and his soldiers, which would have inevitably been called to mind through its intertextual relation with especially Pliny, and introduces a more neutral term: the Gothic troops are fellow soldiers, not comrades to the emperor.[30]

The positive depiction of Germanic peoples is not without precedent: Tacitus' *Germania* had ascribed many positive, Roman aspects to the Germans, diminishing their 'Otherness', while not denying their barbarian vices.[31] Ethnic stereotypes are often adapted to fit the agenda of the author, but these adaptations were limited, as the stereotypes were derived from earlier texts from which they assumed authority.[32] Pacatus could not deny the barbarian nature of the Goths by presenting them as unambiguously good: this would have seemed absurd in the eyes of his audience. Instead, he states that despite their nature, the Goths act in a miraculously acceptable manner because of Theodosius' influence. The stereotype remains intact, but its negative aspects are neutralised.

The 'inferior barbarians' of Mark Antony

In the passage following the one discussed above, a complex comparison is made between Theodosius' cooperation with non-Roman peoples, and the alliance of Cleopatra and Mark Antony in the Battle of Actium in 31 BC. This, too, was a war in which Roman troops fought together with foreigners, namely Egyptians. It seems that Pacatus inserts this reference to a war from four centuries earlier because it is an obvious comparison to make, albeit not a flattering one: both Theodosius and Antony were Roman rulers of the eastern half of the empire and both challenged the ruler in Rome whilst being allied to a non-Roman army. Pacatus aims to undermine existing or potential criticisms by using this

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28 Oxford Latin Dictionary: *Commilito*.

29 Rees 2013a, on the influence of Pliny's *Panegyricus*, which precedes the panegyric on Theodosius within the sequence of speeches in the *Panegyrici Latini*, on Pacatus. See especially his conclusion (258): "Anthologised at the head of the collection, the *Panegyricus* enjoys a canonical and originary status; juxtaposition with it, and lexical and tropical echoes of it in the speech to Theodosius invite—even demand—comparison."

30 Stone 2020, 251, takes this notable choice of words not into account, stating that Pacatus, like Themistius, presents Theodosius as "the catalyst for the transformation of barbarian soldiers into true Roman soldiers."

31 Gruen 2011, 165-168, 172-174.

32 Woolf 2011, 111-115.

comparison for his own interest, as he denies explicitly that the conquered Antony is an equal to Theodosius, and goes on by comparing Cleopatra's Egyptians, negatively depicted as stereotypical Easterners, with the Goths, whom he presents as their counterparts (33.4-5).[33]

In 33.4, Pacatus points out the differences in character and behaviour between the two peoples: the Egyptians travel by ship and make use of comfortable but unwarlike clothing and instruments, while the Goths use military instruments and wear armour. He explains these differences by emphasising the environments from which they came, in line with the ‘environmental theory’ as described by Isaac.[34] Pacatus says that the Egyptians "were sent forth by enervating Pharos and effeminate Canopus, and the Nile, nursemaid of fickle peoples". The Goths, on the other hand, "menacing Caucasus, icy Taurus and the Danube, which hardens mighty bodies, had poured forth". Pacatus refers to *mollitia* in *mollis Canopus*, the "effeminate Canopus", and its direct contrast with *durator Hister*, the Danube that hardens.

Next, in the same passage, he contrasts the two groups' motives to go to war: the Egyptians are driven by their queen, suffering from "a foreign passion", the Goths "by love of praise and a concern to share in your [=Theodosius’] glory", a stereotypical Roman motivation for war. Pacatus ends this comparison by concluding that the Goths strived to liberate Rome from a pretender, whereas Cleopatra and Antony are presented as having attempted to take it from the rightful ruler, Augustus.

The purpose of this passage is somewhat confusing on multiple levels, as the alliance between non-Roman troops and Theodosius, victor in a civil war, is presented as legitimate and positive for Rome, whereas the alliance of Antony, defeated in a war against another Roman, is not. C. E. V. Nixon and B. S. Rodgers explain that this passage distracts the audience from questioning Theodosius' claim to loyalty after employing non-Romans.[35] However, as I stated above, this passage serves as more than just a distraction: it overrules a possibly more negative comparison between Theodosius and Antony. In Augustus' propaganda, Antony's alliance with Cleopatra is presented as explicitly non-Roman, causing Antony's Romanness to be questioned.[36] This allowed Augustus to present the conflict as a foreign rather than a civil war,

33 Maguinness 1933, 134, describes this as the panegyrist’s technique of "contemptuous acquiescence", a possible objection described in such terms that it sounds absurd to the audience.

34 Isaac 2004, 439.

35 Nixon/Rodgers 1994, 499, note 121.

36 Eder 2005, 20-22, on the propaganda war between Augustus and Antony.

as the latter would reflect negatively on the military accomplishment.[37] If Antony had lost his Romanness because of his association with foreigners, then why would the same principle not apply to Theodosius? Pacatus answers this question by claiming that there are various degrees of foreign peoples: Cleopatra's weak, decadent, Eastern troops are clearly inferior to Theodosius' robust, militant barbarians, whose desire to serve Theodosius and to free Rome makes them almost, but not quite, Roman. The use of stereotypes is important in both historiography and political writing, as "stereotypes of barbarism and civilization [...] might provide frames of reference against which historical events or political actions acquired significance."[38] Pacatus denies this significance of a historical precedent through a distinction within the barbarian stereotype. By comparing both peoples, Pacatus shows that they are nothing alike, and neither are Theodosius and the former-Roman Antony.

This negative association of a Roman ruler with barbarians might also call into mind a more recent precedent, namely Gratian's closeness to his Alanic troops. The main point the Western audience had to be convinced of was that Theodosius' relationship with the non-Roman troops was not comparable with that of Gratian, but as Pacatus could hardly be critical on Gratian, whose death Theodosius avenged by killing Maximus and who had been acknowledged as legitimate emperor in the West in Theodosius' propaganda, this had to be implied by using an earlier precedent.

In a last complicated point in 33.5, Pacatus points out that employing barbarian troops is not normal: "and so it seemed the more unworthy to you, O Emperor, that anyone could be found to be a partner in a sin of which the barbarian would act as avenger." The fact that barbarians are needed to defeat Maximus enhances the negative characterisation of the usurper, rendering the positive description of the Goths he made earlier somewhat obsolete. The notion of 'good barbarians' would be too strange for Pacatus' audience, and the orator had to remind them that neither he nor Theodosius considered the Goths to be as such.[39] The Goths are merely 'better barbarians' compared to those of Antony, and a lesser evil compared to Maximus, but as barbarians they are an evil nonetheless.

37 Salerno 2018, 153-156, on the characterisation of Antony as Eastern ruler.

38 Woolf 2011, 113.

39 Cf. ibid., 114, on a description of Gauls by Ammianus Marcellinus, who are depicted as if little had changed since Caesar described them, four centuries earlier: "The utility of these myths [of ethnography] set limits on their revisability. Ammianus' Gaul could not become unrecognizably un-Gallic."

The 'former-Roman soldiers' of Maximus

In the rest of the panegyric, the orator talks about Theodosius' collective troops of both Roman and non-Roman soldiers. However, Pacatus shifts his focus to the Roman troops by emphasising their Romanness in these passages: despite the non-Roman auxiliaries, the army remains Roman.[40]

In the battle narrative that follows, Maximus' men are depicted as his partners-in-crime, who receive well-deserved punishment (34.1-2). Theodosius' soldiers fight while being "mindful of their ancient valor, their Roman name, and last but not least their Emperors"; the enemies, knowing that "they had sold their services for money and torn Italy apart", fight and die desperately.[41] Theodosius' (Roman) men remember that they are Roman, whereas this does not apply to Maximus' men, who have lost their Romanness, as shows from the following passages.[42] In 36.1–4, Pacatus tells us that when Maximus' men are defeated, there are those who repent in their dying moment, as they "poured out their last breath in admiration of your [=Theodosius'] name and denunciation of their own leader". Too late these traitors realised their crimes, but others begged Theodosius for forgiveness, of which Pacatus says: "You [=Theodosius] did not spurn them arrogantly as vanquished men, nor angrily, as offenders, nor carelessly, as if they were of little use, but treating them with kindness and generosity you bade them become Romans."

In their sincere humiliation and remorse, Maximus' men receive forgiveness, and through it *Romanitas*. In this text, as in other panegyrics, the Roman identity of those born within the Empire is linked to the leader they follow.[43] Those who served Maximus could not be Romans until they changed their allegiance and this statement therefore emphasises Theodosius' own Roman identity as the only path towards Romanness, as well as the legitimacy of his claim to the throne.

Conclusion

There are four methods to be distinguished which Pacatus uses to justify the employment of non-Romans in a civil war: first, he

40 Stone 2020, 251-252 suggests that this lack of differentiation between Romans and non-Romans implies, from this point of the speech on, their equation in Pacatus' eyes, but he does not discuss the negative note on the necessity of the lesser evil in *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).33.5, which makes this implication to me seem unlikely.

41 *Panegyrici Latini* 2(12).35.4.

42 Rees 2013b, 51-53, argues furthermore that the presentation of Maximus' forces as non-Roman enhances the *Romanitas* of Gaul, which Pacatus presents as a victim of Maximus, not as an accomplice.

43 Cf. van Diemen 2018, on the alienisation of Maxentius' men in *Panegyrici Latini* 12(9).

shows that Theodosius is more than capable of handling these untrustworthy barbarian troops, keeping them under control in order to withhold them from doing more evil. Secondly, the Goths are described as Roman-like barbarians who behave counter to the prevailing stereotypes. Although they exhibit characteristics based on the environment from which they derive, these characteristics are presented in a positive way compared to those of other non-Romans employed in the distant past, with the implication that the cooperation with the Goths under Theodosius was more positive than Gratian's criticised fondness of non-Romans. Thirdly, Pacatus briefly mentions the fact that Maximus necessitates the lesser evil of enrolling the Goths. Finally, by following the wrong leader, Maximus' men cannot be considered Romans, and therefore the notion of civil war is not applicable on this conflict.

Gruen's conclusions that "the expression of collective character in antiquity [...] owes less to insisting on distinctiveness from the alien than to postulating links with, adaptation to, and even incorporation of the alien" sheds an interesting light on this text, but cannot be adopted in its entirety.[44] Pacatus is inconsistent in his application of the hard dichotomy between Romans and 'Others', as the distance between Theodosius' Roman subjects on the one hand and the Goths and Maximus' men on the other changes to fit the argument. However, he keeps insisting on an absolute distinction between the groups, as the genre of panegyric does not allow any grey areas. The inconsistencies in this panegyric and the deteriorating dichotomy that Pacatus tries to uphold are a trend which can be observed to be developed in later panegyrists, such as Claudian and Sidonius Apollinaris.[45] Analysis of ethnic stereotypes within these authors will add to this discussion.

It is significant that despite their Roman-like behaviour and motives, the non-Roman troops explicitly do not receive a Roman identity: the "privileged status of fellow soldiers" mentioned in 32.3 is all they are able to obtain. They become more virtuous following Theodosius, as the lack of barbarian behaviour shows, but it seems that for them, in opposition to Maximus' men – who were born in the Empire –, virtue and following the right leader is not enough. They are not born in the Empire, and remain "forces of dubious loyalty", neither losing their barbarity, nor obtaining *Romanitas*. This way, Pacatus reassures the audience of Theodosius' good intentions towards Rome: the non-Roman troops are subject to true Roman rule, as it has been for centuries, and their own *Romanitas* remains exclusive and unthreatened by these

44 Gruen 2011, 352.

45 See also Von Rummel, 2013, esp. 373-378, on the complication of the Roman-barbarian dichotomy in Late Antiquity and the early Medieval period.

new inhabitants of the Empire. Or, at least, that is how Pacatus presents it and it is what the audience would like to believe.

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‘Mixing roses with milk’:
Recovering the Tradition behind the *Ekphrasis* of Niketas Eugenianos’ *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158

Emma Huig

ARTICLE

Abstract
This article discusses similarities between a passage from Niketas Eugenianos’ novel *Drosilla and Charikles* and the poem *anacr.* 16. Although connections between Eugenianos’ novel and the Anacreontea poems have been discussed in modern scholarship, this particular resemblance has not yet been discussed. Notable similarities between the passages are, first, a painter that supposedly contributed to the creation of the girls, and second, the use of the metaphor of a mixture of milk and roses to describe the girls’ skin colour. This article firstly aims to analyse these similarities and discuss the possibility that Eugenianos retrieved inspiration from *anacr.* 16. As *Drosilla and Charikles* contains many references to ancient texts, the Anacreontea poems are not the only possible source of inspiration. Therefore, this article secondly aims to compare the passage from Eugenianos’ text with similar descriptions of beautiful people from other ancient and Byzantine novels.

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▶*Profile page*

Introduction
In 12th-century Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, four stories about love and adventure were written by Theodore Prodromos, Eumathios Makrembolites, Constantine Manasses and Niketas Eugenianos.[1] These texts have in modern scholarship been defined as Byzantine novels, to distinguish them from the later, 14th-century Byzantine romances, which contain similar themes. The novels are clearly modelled after the ancient Greek novels from the Second Sophistic and also contain many references to other ancient texts.[2] It has been shown in modern scholarship that the novel *Drosilla and Charikles* by Eugenianos

1 See the following publications on the 12th - century novels: Hunger 1980; Agapitos 1992; Beaton 1996; Nilsson 2001; Roilos 2005; Jeffreys 2012. See on possible connections with western medieval romances: Jeffreys 1980; Jeffreys 2013.

2 Burton 2004, xi.

contains references to the *Anacreontea* poems.[3] These are a collection of poems written in the style of the archaic Greek poet Anacreon and have only survived as an appendix to the *Anthologia Palatina*. They are generally thought to have been written roughly between 300 BC and the sixth century AD, however, their exact dating remains a subject of discussion in modern scholarship.[4] The passages *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158 and *anacr.* 16 seem to bear a resemblance, as they contain similar elements and metaphors.[5] This article aims to analyse similarities between said passages.

Both texts contain a description of an exceptionally beautiful girl, which can be categorised as an *ekphrasis*.[6] The girls are described using a technique called *eikonismos*, where a body is broken up into different components.[7] Some tools and metaphors used to describe the girls are alike, suggesting that Eugenianos might have been inspired by *anacr.* 16. These are, first, the usage of a painter as a supposed creator of the girls and, secondly, the metaphors of milk and roses to describe their skin colour. At the same time, however, descriptions of the physical appearance of main characters seem to recur in ancient and Byzantine novels and follow certain conventions. This raises the question whether the resemblances between *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158 and *anacr.* 16 are unique or rather a product of ancient and contemporary tradition. Therefore, in this paper, I aim to answer the following question: did Eugenianos model his description of Drosilla specifically after *anacr.* 16, or is this *ekphrasis* rather a result of Eugenianos' knowledge of a wider literary tradition?

To answer this question, I will discuss three aspects from the

3 Jeffreys 2012, 349; Rosenmeyer 1992, 229-230.

4 For an elaborate introduction on the *Anacreontea* poems, including their dating, see Campbell 1988, 4-18. The poems have survived in the tenth-century manuscript of the *Anthologia Palatina* (AP xv). However, they are thought not to have been part of the collection of the tenth-century compiler Constantine Cephalas, but to have been added later. On the *Anthologia Palatina*, its scribes and the survival of the *Anacreontea* in this manuscript see, Cameron 1993, 97-159; 298-328; Lauxtermann 2003, 86-89; 107-118.

5 Jeffreys 2012, 349; Rosenmeyer 1992, 229-230. Both authors discuss similarities between *Drosilla and Charikles* and the *Anacreontea*, but the possible connection between the description of Drosilla and *anacr.* 16 is not mentioned.

6 Scholars have argued that it is not possible to give one definition of *ekphrasis*, as the definition was much broader in antiquity than it is in modern times. In Byzantium, the ancient definition by rhetoricians such as Aphthonius was used (Webb 1999, 9-10). An *ekphrasis* can therefore describe a wide range of topics, such as persons, landscapes, settings and works of art in the Byzantine definition. Scholars have further argued that the essential characteristic of an *ekphrasis* is the connection between written words and visual imagery caused by the vividness (ἐνάργεια) of the descriptions that makes the verbal description come alive (Koopman 2018; Webb 1999). See for scholarship on Greek *ekphrasis* and its definition Koopman 2018; Allan et al. 2017; De Jong 2014; Schaefer/Rentsch 2004; Webb 1999.

7 Hatzaki 2009, 11.

texts and compare these with relevant literature. After providing background information about Eugenianos and the context in which he lived and wrote, I will first analyse the recurring motif of a painter as a supposed creator of the described girls and, next, the metaphors of milk and roses used to describe the girls' skin colour. Finally, I will assess the different body parts, which are described in the *ekphraseis*. By focusing on these aspects, I aim to analyse possible similarities between these descriptions. The passages from *Drosilla and Charikles* and *anacr.* 16 will then be compared to passages from the ancient novels by Longus, Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, and the Byzantine novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* by Theodore Prodromos (born ca. 1100, died ca. 1156/58).[8] The passages used from these texts are all similar *eikonismoi* depicting girls. We can assume that Eugenianos knew and used these texts when writing his own novel, as will be explained further in the next section. In this study, I aim to offer an example of how the novels should be viewed as a product of the context, in which they were produced, and to show that Eugenianos' *ekphrasis* can be placed in this context. I thereby hope to contribute to the understanding of the 12th-century novels.

Eugenianos' life and work in Constantinople

The Byzantine author Niketas Eugenianos (active during the mid-12th century AD) was from a high class or elite background and would therefore have received the education required for an intellectual career. Imitation of and allusion to ancient and contemporary texts formed a fundamental part of the Byzantine school curriculum. The imitation of stylistic models was practised through rhetorical exercises called *progymnasmata*. Students also read ancient texts such as Homer, Demosthenes, tragedies, and comedies.[9] Eugenianos in this way would have become acquainted with ancient texts and style. For this essay, I will presume that Eugenianos only read Greek and would not have been acquainted with Latin literature.[10] Therefore, the studied corpus in this article will be limited to Greek literature.

The preceding 11th century was characterised by an increased

8 Jeffreys 2012, 4-6.

9 See for a more extensive description of middle-Byzantine education Wilson 1983, 21-27; Markopoulos 2008; and Bernard 2014 for the organisational structure of middle-Byzantine schools.

10 Although knowledge of the Latin language is generally assumed to have faded during the seventh century AD, there is evidence for increased contact with and knowledge of Western culture from the late 11th century onwards, which required bilingualists and interpreters. These are thought to have been Westerners that had learned Greek. Byzantines, and especially people born in Constantinople, are generally thought to have only spoken Greek. See R. Browning/A. Cutler 2005 for a more elaborate overview of the Latin language in the Byzantine Empire and Suarez in Suarez/Bucossi 2016.

engagement with ancient Greek literature amongst Byzantine *literati*.[11] This was continued in the 12th century. In the late-11th and 12th century, members of the imperial circle started to act as patrons for intellectuals. Imperial patronage could be gained by self-promotion through writing. The exact meaning and scope of this patronage remain a topic of debate in modern scholarship.[12] Moreover, the 12th-century intellectual circles have been connected to performative contexts, where writers could present their work orally. It has also been argued that an element of competition was involved.[13] These spaces are often referred to as theatra (θέατρα) in modern publications, where gatherings could be hosted by an imperial patron. However, the exact meaning of the word *theatron* and the physical space in which these performances would have taken place, have recently been discussed by modern scholars. It has been argued that the word *theatron* is used in 11th- and 12th-century texts for a variety of spaces and should not be thought of as referring to one specific type of gathering place.[14]

Although the concepts of patronage and literary performance in *theatra* remain topics of debate, we can analyse the texts from the 12th century in these contexts. A performative and possibly competitive context requires appropriate rhetorical skills. An intellectual seeking to improve his social status and gain imperial patronage would need the right education to produce appropriate texts for elite audiences. Additionally, an author would need to promote and distinguish himself from other authors. Therefore, apart from producing texts within the existing traditions and norms, he would seek to innovate and experiment with genre, form, and themes. The performative and competitive literary context of the 12th century could therefore explain the (re-) introduction of genres such as the Greek novel.[15] In short, writing in imperial circles in 12th-century Constantinople required a balance between recognisable rhetoric on the one hand, and innovation and originality on the other.

Eugenianos most likely formed part of the intellectual elite of Constantinople. After his education, he continued to work in imperial circles, possibly as a tutor of Stephanos Komnenos, who was a member of the imperial Komnenoi family and had received

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11 Wilson 1983, 148-179; Papaioannou 2013. The ancient Greek novels also enjoyed the attention of intellectuals. See for example Michael Psellos' essay on Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus in Dyck 1986.

12 Nilsson 2020, 59-84 and Mullett 1984.

13 Bernard 2014, 98-99, 165-173, 211-212.

14 Bernard 2014; Short/Huig 2020, 3-5; See for a full discussion of *theatra* Marciniak 2007; Magdalino 1993, 335-355.

15 See Zagklas 2019 for an overview of these topics and writing of poetry in the 12th century.

the high military rank of *megas droungarios* in 1156.[16] Another person of special significance is Theodore Prodromos (c. 1100-1156/58). Prodromos may at some point have been Eugenianos' teacher and the two grew to become good friends.[17] It has also been shown that Eugenianos followed Prodromos' example when writing his novel.[18]

The previous considerations suggest that we can expect Eugenianos' work to fit into the existing tradition and at the same time to show innovation. We can also presume that Eugenianos was familiar with both the *Anacreontea* poems and the ancient and Byzantine novels. Next, I will turn to the texts to see if and in what way we can find this familiarity in Eugenianos' description of Drosilla.

Comparing the motif of painter as creator between texts

The first similarity between *anacr.* 16 and verses 1.147-149 of *Drosilla and Charikles* is a painter that features as a supposed creator of the girls. In *Drosilla and Charikles* we find this element towards the end of the *ekphrasis.*

> "ἔοικεν ὡς ἔμιξε γάλα καὶ ῥόδα,
> καὶ συνδιεχρώσατο καθὰ **ζωγράφος**
> ταύτης τὸ σῶμα λευκέρυθρον ἡ φύσις˙"
>
> "It looked as if Nature had mixed milk and
> roses and, just as a painter,
> had dyed her body white and red;"[19]

In *anacr.* 16 we find a painter in the first couple of verses. The anacreontic narrator starts with an address to the painter, which is used as a tool to build the whole description.

> "Ἄγε, **ζωγράφω**ν ἄριστε (...)
> **γράφε** τὴν ἐμὴν ἑταίρην"
>
> "Come now, best of painters
> paint my girl"[20]

16 Stephanos Komnenos (1127/31-?), grand-nephew of emperor Alexios I Komnenos (reigned 1081 -1118), was married to Eudokia Doukaina-Axouch, daughter of the *megas domestiko*s Ioannes Axouch. For the connection between Stephanos and Eugenianos, see Jeffreys 2012, 342. For biographical information about Stephanos, see Varzos 1984, 288-291.

17 Eugenianos wrote monodies on Prodromos, Jeffreys 2012, 342.

18 Zagklas 2019.

19 Greek: Conca 1994; translation: author. See for an English translation of the whole novel Jeffreys 2012, and for an Italian translation Conca 1994. Here, I use my own translation to enhance that ἡ φύσις can be taken as the subject of both ἔμιξε and συνδιεχρώσατο.

20 Verses 1 and 5, Greek and translation: Campbell 1988.

In the anacreontic poem, the painter is instructed by the narrator to paint a girl (verses 6-32). The narrator gives the painter detailed instructions for each body part.[21] Two possible suggestions are that an actual painter simultaneously paints the girl, or that the narrator mentally pictures the girl and the details of her body. In any case, the utterance "Enough-I can see her! Soon, wax you will be talking too" (verses 33-34) seems to suggest that either the painting or the mental image of the narrator are complete to such a level that the narrator can see the girl in front of them.[22]

Eugenianos uses the same word for painter, ζώγραφος (verse 1.148).[23] There are however differences between the two passages. The anacreontic internal narrator-focaliser addresses the painter directly, as if the painter is standing next to him, using an imperative as an incitement, γράφε τὴν ἐμὴν ἑταίρην. The imagined painter stays present in the whole poem and thus forms a prominent or even essential feature of the poem. The narrator in the passages from Eugenianos' text is external. Consequently, the painter is not addressed directly, as the narrator describes how *it seems as if* nature *like* a painter has painted Drosilla. Moreover, the act of creating Drosilla is attributed more to nature than to the painter. The similarities between the two passages are restricted to the word ζώγραφος and to the theme of beautiful girls being imagined to be painted by artists, thus making them into works of art.[24] A connection with the painter in *anacr.* 16 is thus not evident in this case. At the same time, none of the studied *eikonismoi* in the novels by Longus, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus and Prodromos feature a similar painter. This suggests that Eugenianos may have indeed taken the element of a painter from *anacr.* 16.

Another notable feature in this passage is nature, which Eugenianos mentions as the creator of Drosilla's skin colour. This element does not occur in *anacr.* 16. However, as noted by Jeffreys, there is a connection with verses 2.246-250 of Prodromos' novel

21 Here, the term narrator is used to refer to the focaliser of the poem. I use this term to indicate that narrator and author are not always the same entity, and therefore we must distinguish between them. The narrator-focaliser in this poem is internal, which means that the story is focalised from the perspective of a character within the narrative (De Jong 2014, 48). An external focaliser tells the narrative from an outside perspective. During the research for my BA-thesis I analysed the difference in focalisation between different passages, assessing whether a difference in focalisation is reflected by differences in the body parts that are mentioned in the *eikonismoi*. For theoretical studies on focalisation see Bal 2017; De Jong 2014.

22 The completeness and vividness of this mental image is an essential aspect of *ekphraseis* and is called ἐνάργεια, see above note 6.

23 This word is specifically used for someone who 'paints from life or nature', Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon Online.

24 Jouanno 1998, 90; Hatzaki 2009, 28.

Rhodanthe and Dosikles.[25] Here, Dosikles describes Rhodanthe's complexion as follows:

> "Rhodanthe's complexion is beautiful;
> for it is not possible to remove or add anything
> from its excellent and perfect composition,
> for the *geometer* Nature (ἡ γεωμέτρις Φύσις) has constructed it
> beautifully and according to the rules."[26]

Both narrators in the novels of Prodromos and Eugenianos refer to nature as a personified creator of a beautiful body. This topos is discussed by Cupane, who writes that nature as a personified creator of beautiful things is a rhetorical device that occurs in antique literature since Statius (second century AD).[27] Presuming that Eugenianos did not read Latin, it is unlikely that he was aware of this usage in Statius.[28] Interestingly, the topos of nature as a creator (*Natura Formatrix*) is less commonly used in Greek literature. Cupane only mentions the *Anthologia Graeca*. The next occurrence is in the 12th-century novels, leaving a significant chronological void.[29] Presuming that the novelists mainly read Greek literature, the topos must have been transmitted through its usage in the *Anthologia Graeca*.[30]

Both Prodromos and Eugenianos use the topos of *Natura Formatrix* in the studied passages from their novels. In these passages, however, nature does not feature as the creator of the whole body.[31] In both instances, it is applied to one aspect of the body only; Rhodanthe's face and Drosilla's skin. Moreover, in *Drosilla and Charikles* nature is presented as a metaphor by the external focaliser, as the narrator describes how *it seems like* nature *like* a painter has painted Drosilla. In the description of Rhodanthe by the internal focaliser Dosikles, an elaborate description of the genius of nature's perfect creation is offered.[32] This is less the case in the description of Drosilla. Still, the topos is clear and the similarity between the two passages is evident.

25 Jeffreys 2012, 356 note 11.

26 Greek: Conca 1994; translation: Jeffreys 2012.

27 Cupane 1984, 38.

28 There is evidence, however, that bilingualism did exist in 12th-century Constantinople. See above note 10, R. Browning/A. Cutler 2005 and Suarez 2016.

29 Cupane 1984, 47.

30 The fact that Nature as a personified force, as a representative of God, does not occur frequently in Byzantine literature is in Cupane's view difficult to explain: "sei es, dass die strenge orthodoxe Theologie das Aufkommen solch häretische Phantasie im Keim erstickte, sei es, dass ein solcher Mythos an sich nicht in die Denkkategorien und zum literarischen Geschmack der Byzantiner passte." (Cupane 1984, 45).

31 Cupane 1984, 47.

32 See on the geometrical perfection described by Prodromos Hatzaki 2009, 28.

These considerations suggest that Eugenianos retrieved inspiration for the verses 1.147-149 from two possible sources. The first is the painter in *anacr.* 16, the second is nature as creator from Prodromos' novel. This would mean that Eugenianos was inspired by two literary predecessors: one being ancient and the other a contemporary Byzantine source. The latter is of special significance, as Eugenianos was inspired by Prodromos' novel. The fact that he indeed has combined two topoi could indicate that he did this consciously, as he has not merely copied the elements, but reapplied them in a creative way.

Metaphors of milk and roses for skin colour in Medieval and Ancient texts

Besides the painter, both passages in *Drosilla and Charikle*s and *anacr.* 16 feature the metaphor of a mixture of milk and roses to describe the girls' skin colour. The phrase in Drosilla's description is ἔμιξε γάλα καὶ ῥόδα (verse 1.147). In *anacr.* 16, the same words are used, although with a different syntax: ῥόδα τῷ γάλακτι μίξας (verse 23). In both passages, the metaphors are used to describe the girls' skin colour apparently as white with a pink or red flush. The exact combination of three words is a notable similarity, pointing towards a possible allusion to *anacr.* 16.

Roses as a metaphor for a rosy complexion occur quite frequently throughout ancient Greek and Byzantine literature, so my focus will remain on the combination of milk and roses.[33] In the ancient novels, only one other parallel for milk can be found, in 1.17.3 of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe:* "her face truly whiter (λευκότερον) even than goats' milk (γάλακτος)."[34] Here the word γάλα is similarly used to describe the white colour of the heroine's face. The same passage contains another simile with Drosilla's description. The passage "Her lips are softer than rose petals (ῥόδων) and her mouth is sweeter than honeycombs (κηρίων)"[35] from *Daphnis and Chloe*, although using different words, resembles verses 1.128-129 from *Drosilla and Charikles*: "her lips were a pursed bud (κάλυξ), an opening hive (σίμβλον), / pouring out the pleasant honey (μέλι) of her speech."[36] Given Eugenianos' literary knowledge and considering the fact that within the same description two similarities can be found, it is plausible that Eugenianos was familiar with Longus' text and used it as an

33 See for example *anacr.* 17 verse 18; Chariton. *Callirhoë* 1.1.5; Achilles Tatius. *Leucippe and Clithophon* 1.4.3-4; Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 18.1.

34 Longus. *Daphnis and Chloe* 17.3; translation Henderson 2009.

35 Longus. *Daphnis and Chloe* 18.1; translation Henderson 2009.

36 Eugenianos. *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.128-129; translation: J. effreys 2012. Burton 2004 translates verse 129 as "they poured forth the sweet honey of her speech".

inspiration for his own work. Despite these similarities, the topoi of milk and roses to describe a person's skin colour do not specifically occur as a pair in the ancient novels, which makes it likely that Eugenianos retrieved these metaphors from *anacr.* 16. Something can be said, however, about beauty ideals in Byzantium and the position of the white-and-red colours within that ideal. According to Myrto Hatzaki, a typically beautiful body in the Byzantine definition is built up from the following beautiful parts (complying with the technique of *eikonismos*): golden or dark hair, a strong and tall build, a rosy and white complexion, radiant skin and dark and bright eyes.[37] Hatzaki, describing these beauty ideals in Byzantium, also discusses the description of Drosilla. She argues that this description indeed agrees with the general Byzantine beauty ideal, which appears from both historical and fictional works. The significance of the white and red colour is illuminated by Eugenianos' description of Drosilla as he uses compound words to describe this specific colour combination: λευκερυθρόχρουν ('whitish red skin') in verse 1.133 and λευκέρυθρον ('whitish red') in verse 1.149. The same combination of white skin with rosy cheeks is also used in ancient personal descriptions.[38]

Anacr. 17, which follows *anacr.* 16 in the *Anthologia*, contains a similarly detailed description of a boy. The colour of his skin is compared to roses, apples, and ivory: "Make his downy cheek as rosy (ῥοδέην) as an apple, and, if possible, add a blush (ἐρύθημα) like that of Modesty. (...) After his face make an ivory (ἐλεφάντινος) neck finer than that of Adonis."[39] In the passage 1.4.3-4 of Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, the contrast of the white skin with rosy cheeks is again described. Moreover, Achilles Tatius compares Leucippe's lips to a rosebud, a comparison similar to that made by Eugenianos.

> "(...) pale cheeks (λευκὴ παρειά), the pallor shading in the centre into a ruddy hue (πορφύραν), like that stain wherewith the Lydian women tint ivory;[40] and a mouth that was a rose (ῥόδων) – a rose-bud (τὸ ῥόδον) just beginning to uncurl its petals."[41]

The blush on one's cheeks as a beauty ideal also appears in

37 Hatzaki 2009, 8-9, referring for example to Drosilla's description in *Drosilla and Charikles*, Michael Psellos' description of a young Michael IV and emperor Constantine IX Monomachos in *Chronographia* 3.18 and 6.126, and Anna Komnene's description of the Norman leader Bohemund in *Alexiad* 13.10.

38 For beauty ideals in Greek poetry, see Jax 1933.

39 *Anacr.* 17 verses 18-21; 27-29, translation: Campbell 1988.

40 This is a reference to *Iliad* 4.141-142, see Winkler in Reardon 1990, 208 note 10.

41 Achilles Tatius. *Leucippe en Clitophon* 1.4.3-4; translation: Gaselee 1969.

Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* 1.21.

> "Eventually she looked Thyamis full in the face. Her beauty dazzled him even more now, for her reflections had brought a special blush (πεφοίνικτο) to her cheeks, and there was a fire in her eyes."[42]

These examples indicate that a white skin and blushed cheeks were part of the beauty ideal in ancient times and were used as such in contemporary Byzantine texts. By highlighting this feature of Drosilla's appearance, Eugenianos conforms to this convention. Nevertheless, the exact combination of γάλα καὶ ῥόδα does not occur in any of the ancient or Byzantine novels. It does, however, appear in a passage from Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*.[43] In III.1.3 Komnene describes the appearance of the young Constantine Doukas, using similar metaphors to those in Drosilla's description.

> "He was blond, with a skin as white as milk (γάλα), his cheeks suffused with red like some dazzling rose (ῥόδα) that has just left the calyx."[44]

It cannot be ascertained beyond doubt if Eugenianos read Komnene's work as she might not have formed part of the imperial court during the years in which she wrote the *Alexiad*.[45] However, both authors enjoyed a similar education and worked in the same intellectual circles, in which they will have been familiarised with the same literary traditions. Whether or not Eugenianos read this description, the *Alexiad* passage confirms the existence of such a tradition, which, as shown by Hatzaki, prescribes the description of a person's skin as white and rosy, potentially using the metaphors of milk and roses. Similarly, the difference in genre is not relevant here, as Byzantine histories could contain the same rhetoric as fictional texts.

By describing Drosilla's skin colour as a combination of white and roses, Eugenianos conforms with beauty ideals as represented

42 Heliodorus *Aethiopika* 1.2; translation: Morgan 1989.

43 This history was written between 1143 and 1153 (Sewter 1969, xiv) by Anna Komnene, daughter of emperor Alexios I Komnenos (reigned 1081-1118) and empress Eirene Doukaina. Utilising elements of panegyric, the text covers Alexios' reign and his dealings with internal and external business and conflicts, including the First Crusade. See for an introduction on this text the introduction by P. Frankopan in Sewter 1969.

44 Anna Komnene. *Alexiad* 3.1.3; translation Sewter 1969.

45 Leonora Neville has recently argued that Anna was in fact not isolated from the court at that time, see Neville 2015, 133-140.

in ancient and Byzantine literature.[46] The metaphor of milk for a white skin occurs in two other passage other than *anacr.* 16 and Drosilla's description. The exact element of 'mixing milk and roses' however only occurs in *anacr*. 16 and Eugenianos' novel. This leads to the conclusion that the used colours and themes are not unique, but the exact combination of the three words could have been retrieved from *anacr.* 16 specifically.

Comparing body parts in Medieval and Ancient *eikonismoi*

The previous section shows that certain conventions and beauty ideals existed in ancient and Byzantine times and that beautiful people are described in roughly similar terms.[47] We have also seen that Eugenianos complies with these conventions in his description of Drosilla. However, Eugenianos mentions more body parts than the convention prescribes. Analysing how many and which body parts form part of the descriptions is another way to examine the potential inspiration from *anacr.* 16 for Drosilla's description.

In *Drosilla and Charikles*, the narrator mentions the following body parts consecutively: hands, lips, cheeks, eyes, cheek, nose, hair, lips, neck, eyebrows, cheeks, hair, jaw, neck, lips, breast, nose, teeth, eyebrows, fingers, ears, hands, and feet. The rest of the body is covered by a white and purple cloak.[48] Notable is how some body parts are mentioned more than once. For example, Drosilla's cheeks are mentioned three times in verses 124, 126 and 134, respectively. Moreover, no clear order of description can be determined.

In *anacr.* 16, the following body parts are mentioned: hair, cheek, brow, eyebrows, eyes, nose, cheeks, lips, neck (Appendix 1). A few similarities with Drosilla's description can be identified. The description is reasonably detailed, focusing on all features of the girl's face. Secondly, like Drosilla, the girl in *anacr.* 16 wears a light purple gown, covering most of her body. There are however a few differences between Drosilla's description and *anacr.* 16. Firstly, the description in *anacr.* 16 is limited to the head alone. Secondly, the description seems to roughly follow a top-to-bottom order. Finally, except for the cheeks and eyes, all other parts are mentioned only once.

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46 A passage similar to 1.147-149 of Eugeniaos' novel can be found in the Life of St. Elias the Younger, section 11: "How did the art of painters (ζωγράφον τέξνη) let his face gleam, and in such a way that you would say that it was touched by milk (γάλακτι κεχρίσθαι), that a rose bloomed (ῥόδον δὲ ἐκφυῆναι) on his cheeks, and that his eye flashed with spirit" (Greek: Rossi Taibbi 1962; translation: author). This text was written by an anonymous author in the tenth century in the monastery of Saline (Rossi Taibbi 1962, xvii-xviii). This passage will not be incorporated in this paper but should be considered in further studies on this topic.

47 Hatzaki 2009, 9.

48 In the appendix, the Greek words and the corresponding verses are laid out.

In Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, the story is told from the perspective of Clitophon. When he sees Leucippe for the first time in 1.4, he is astonished by her beauty. He describes her appearance as follows: first her hair, then eyebrows, cheeks, and finally mouth. This description is thus limited to the head and seems to roughly follow a top-to-bottom order. Regarding the mentioned body parts, the description complies with the supposed tradition. In Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* 1.17, Daphnis becomes aware of Chloe's beauty for the first time. A short description of her face follows: hair, eyes, and the colour of her face. Again, the description only refers to the face, although later in the story Daphnis also looks at Chloe's full body, while she is bathing (1.32). The body parts mentioned comply with tradition. The description is however too short to discuss its order accurately.

In the Byzantine novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, the extensive *eikonismos* of Rhodanthe is told by the external narrator.[49] This description is quite elaborate and detailed. After her full figure, Rhodanthe's skin and limbs are described and next her eyebrows, nose, cheeks, mouth, elbows, arms, fingers, and ankles (1.39-60). This description is significantly more detailed than those in ancient novels. Moreover, the description is not limited to the face as Rhodanthe's figure and limbs are also mentioned. The narrator proceeds systematically, first describing Rhodanthe's general appearance before moving on to different body parts in detail, starting with her eyebrows and gradually making his way down to her ankles.

Following these considerations, a few things stand out. Firstly, descriptions in Byzantine novels differ from those in ancient novels, describing more than just the face. Moreover, they are focalised by external narrators, rather than an internal admiring character.[50] Additionally, the Byzantine *eikonismoi* are much more elaborate than those in ancient novels. In that respect, they resemble the ekphrasis of both *anacr.* 16 more.

Drosilla's description resembles those in *anacr.* 16 and *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*. It also complies with the traditional way in which beautiful bodies are described in Byzantine literature, picturing the different body parts in a way that resembles contemporary descriptions. A few aspects of Drosilla's description, however, are notable and different from the other analysed passages. It is more elaborate than Rhodanthe's description and

49 Later, in 2.246-250, a second, shorter description of Rhodanthe is given from the perspective of Dosikles. As this is not an *eikonismos* I do not include this description in my analysis.

50 During the research for my BA-thesis, I have found evidence that an admirer, or internal focaliser, gives a detailed description of the head, whereas an external narrator gives a more general description of the whole body. I suggest that further research on the perspective and focalisation of the descriptions could be done.

anacr. 16, as it describes seemingly unusual body parts like teeth, nose, and feet. Furthermore, an order of description cannot be detected. The narrator's eyes move all over Drosilla's body.[51] The fact that Eugenianos' description differs significantly from the other passages suggests that he tried to innovate the structure of his *eikonismos*, rather than keeping to the traditional order. Finally, and potentially adding to the disorder of the description, some parts are mentioned multiple times. This suggests that Eugenianos has partly used the tradition as it was displayed by his ancient and contemporary predecessors, but at the same time added new features. This means that he was most likely aware of the existing tradition but has chosen to innovate by changing and adding elements of the description. This can be explained by the literary context in which Eugenianos worked, as outlined in previous sections.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have shown that Eugenianos, in his description of Drosilla, has indeed adopted certain elements from *anacr.* 16. These include firstly the painter, which is mentioned by both narrators as a supposed creator of the girls described in the poems. A difference between the passages is caused by a difference in narrator-focaliser, which is internal in *anacr.* 16 and external in the description of Drosilla. Consequently, the anacreontic narrator is able to address the painter directly, whereas Eugenianos' narrator is not, referring to the painter only as a metaphor. The second element which both passages have in common, are the metaphors of milk and roses. Generally, Eugenianos' *eikonismos* resembles other descriptions within the studied corpus, but at the same time contains features that seem less conventional. In this way, the description complies with existing literary tradition on personal descriptions, whilst also varying and innovating upon existing conventions. This can be explained by reference to the context of 12th-century Constantinople. As described by Zagklas, authors enjoyed education in ancient and contemporary literary tradition during this time, whilst also being encouraged to innovate and experiment. In future research, I hope to develop this idea, aiming to uncover further why Eugenianos might have added new features to his *eikonismos.* Interestingly, verses 1.126-132 of Drosilla's description are identical to verses 67-73 in a wedding poem, attributed to the same author. This poem was written for and

51 The order, or lack thereof, of a description could influence the mental image the reader creates on reception of the text. A clear head-to-toe description might leave the reader with a more complete mental image than a chaotic *eikonismos* such as Drosilla's. On 'completeness' in this sense, see Baumann 2014.

possibly performed at an actual wedding between a Komnenos man and a Doukas woman.[52] The similarities between these passages are a potential starting point for further research on why Eugenianos has added new characteristics to his *eikonismos*.

52 Kazhdan 1993. The *Epithalamium* is published in Gallovati, 1935, 'Novi Laurentiana codicis analecta'. *Studi bizantini e neoellenici* 4. 233-236. Kazhdan suggests that the Komnenoi man was the *Megas Droungarios* Stephanos Komnenos, a great-nephew of Alexios I and Eugenianos' tutee, while the woman was his wife Eudokia Doukaina-Axouch.

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APPENDIX 1: BODY PARTS MENTIONED IN *ANACR.* 16 AND EUGENIANOS' DESCRIPTION OF DROSILLA

verse	*anacr*. 16	Body part	Eugenianos	verse
6, 11	τρίχας, χαίταις	Hair	κόμη, βόστρυχος, πλοκαμίδες	126, 136, 136
10, 22	παρειῆς, παρειάς	Cheeks	παρειὰς, παρειά, παρειῶν,	124, 126, 134
12	μέτωπον	Brow	-	-
13	μεσόφρυον	Eyebrows	ὀφρύες, ὀφρύων	132, 145
17, 18	βλεφάρων, βλέμμα	Eyes	ὀφθαλμὸς	125
22	ῥῖνα	Nose	ῥὶς, ῥίς	126, 143
24	χεῖλος	Lips	χείλη, χείλη, χεῖλος	124, 128, 140
26	γενείου	Chin	-	-
27	τραχήλῳ	Neck	τράχηλος, τράχηλος	131, 139
-	-	Jaw	γνάθος	139
-	-	Breast	στέρνον	141
-	-	Teeth	ὀδόντων	143
-	-	Fingers	δάκτυλοι	152
-	-	Ears	ὤτων	152
-	-	Hands	χεῖρες	155
-	-	Feet	πόδες	156

The Early Medieval Augustus:
An Analysis of Orosius' Influence on Charlemagne's Reception of Augustus

Ingmar Hof

Abstract
Augustus, the first Roman emperor, left a legacy that was used and abused by many political actors well after his death, even up to the present day. During the decline of the Western Roman Empire in the early fifth century AD, a Spanish priest named Orosius created a new, ingenious concept of Augustus as the emperor who, as God's divine instrument, had facilitated the early rise of Christianity. For the next thousand years, this concept was the dominant interpretation of Augustus. One of the most renowned medieval rulers who used Augustus' legacy for his own purposes, was Charlemagne. This paper will examine the extent to which the two so-called 'pillars of Carolingian reception', the imperial coronation of 800 AD and Charlemagne's biography written by Einhard, were based on this 'Orosian' perception of Augustus. By doing so, this article aims to contribute to the ongoing debate concerning Charlemagne's reception of Augustus. It will conclude that Charlemagne and his contemporaries were not as interested in any Christian aspects of Augustus' legacy as, given the dominance of Orosius' perception of Augustus in the Middle Ages, might be expected.

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▶*Profile page*

Introduction
After his death in 14 AD, Augustus' extensive *nachleben* began. Augustus' image and legacy would take on a life of their own, with many monarchs, theologians and politicians using it for their own ends.[1] The first great post-antiquity monarch, who invoked the legacy of Augustus for his own political purposes, was the Frankish king Charlemagne (*rex* 768-814), supported by his inner circle consisting of the most renowned scholars of his age. Charlemagne was the first medieval ruler, who had been able to conquer a realm

1 For example, medieval monarchs and 20th-century fascists regarded Augustus as a powerful role model, while Renaissance- and Enlightenment thinkers often cited him as a negative example of the absolute monarchy they loathed (Goodman 2018, 1-18, 22-23).

that could rival the old Roman Empire in size. To legitimise his unequalled power he needed a historical precedent, which he found in the first emperor of ancient Rome: Augustus.[2] The extent of Charlemagne's knowledge of the first Roman emperor was mainly formed by one of the Christian interpretations of Augustus constructed by the fifth-century Spanish priest Orosius, which became the prevalent image of Augustus throughout the Middle Ages, and several ancient pagan texts.[3] As this paper will demonstrate, the Roman historian Suetonius (*floruit* 97-122 AD), emperor Hadrian's (*rex* 117-138 AD) private secretary, was the main source for Charlemagne's biographer Einhard. Suetonius' approach of Augustus was very different compared to Orosius' interpretation of emperorship, which is the central topic of this study.

In this paper, a reception study of Augustus is presented, focusing on the appropriation of his legacy by Charlemagne, and, in a broader sense, the Carolingian intellectual elite. The main question posed is, whether the Carolingian reception of Augustus was mainly influenced by the Christian ('Orosian') perspective on Augustus or by Augustus' non-Christian legacy. It is important, however, to remember that the Carolingians lived in a completely Christianised society and everything they did, thought or wrote, originated from a Christian mindset. The dichotomy between Christian and non-Christian perspectives that this article explores therefore only concerns Charlemagne's ruling ideals (and Augustus' influence on it), and not his religious convictions. Charlemagne surely was, just as about everyone in his realm, a devout Christian.

By answering the posed question, this study aims to add to the debate on the Carolingian reception of Augustus by focusing on a subject that has not been explored to its fullest potential, although it has already briefly been touched upon by several scholars.[4] However, most scholars only focus on Suetonius' impact on the Carolingian perception of Augustus and do not discuss Orosius in their studies. The only ones, who go into more depth regarding Orosius' influence, are M.C. Sloan and J. Strothmann. While M. C. Sloan briefly hypothesises on the possible influence of Orosius on, for example, Charlemagne's imperial coronation,[5] J. Strothmann's contribution to P. J. Goodman's edited volume *Afterlives of Augustus* (2018) is the first attempt to actually present fully-fledged research on the position that the concept of 'Augustus'

2 Lokin/Zwalve 2014, 255; Bennett 2011, 80-81; Wolf 1972.

3 Goodman 2018, 7-10.

4 E.g. Sloan 2018; Bagge 2012; Innes 1997.

5 See Sloan 2018, 117-121.

held in Carolingian thinking.[6] Although Strothmann acknowledges the primacy of Orosius' perception of Augustus in the Carolingian period and notes that Charlemagne and his intellectual inner circle were therefore definitely aware of the Spanish priest's interpretation, the only real influence he attributes to Orosius is that through him it was known to early medieval scholars that Augustus was the first 'real' Roman emperor.[7] Otherwise, Strothmann, like most historians before him, disregards any possible influence that Orosius may have had on the Carolingian reception of Augustus. It is this lacuna that I intend to fill in this study.

This article therefore starts with an in-depth analysis of Orosius' concept of Augustus as a 'Christian hero'.[8] Subsequently, I will analyse Charlemagne's reception of Augustus, using two – what I would like to call – 'pillars of reception': Charlemagne's imperial coronation in 800 AD and his biography, Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni.* Although written after the emperor's death, *Vita Karoli Magni* offers historians insight into how one of the scholars closest to Charlemagne projected Augustus' legacy on him. By comparing these two pillars to Orosius' Christian perception of Augustus, I intend to determine to what extent the Carolingian reception of Augustus was based on Augustus' Christian qualities. Which aspects of the Orosian image of Augustus were appropriated by Carolingians? Which were not? And most importantly, why?

Orosius' Christian perception of Augustus

Paulus Orosius (ca. 375-420), a priest from Bracara in the Roman province Hispania (modern-day Braga, Portugal), wrote his *Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri VII* (*Seven Books of History against the Pagans*; hereafter *Historiae Adversus Paganos*) in the early fifth century AD in response to the anti-Christian sentiment that prevailed among the intellectual elite of the Roman Empire. Even several decades after emperor Theodosius I established Christianity as the official state religion, the elite remained

6 Strothmann 2018.

7 Ibid., 148-150.

8 As I will discuss in further detail below, I have chosen the term 'Christian hero' because the core essence of Orosius' concept is the idea of Augustus kickstarting early Christianity by facilitating the birth of Christ, which one could, from a Christian perspective, describe as a heroic feat.

predominantly pagan.[9] They blamed the (in their eyes) soft-hearted Christians for the Empire's political and moral decline, especially after the horrendous Sack of Rome in 410, and Orosius tried to divert these sentiments by writing a universal work of history to show that Rome's conversion to Christianity was predestined since the beginning of (pagan) history.[10] Orosius is therefore regarded as one of the early Christian apologists, writers who defended Christianity against accusations from non-Christian thinkers.[11] In recent historiography, Orosius' *Historiae Adversus Paganos* is mostly addressed in relation to Augustine of Hippo's *City of God* (426).[12] Both works were directed at the fifth-century Roman pagans, each in its own way. Whereas Augustine tried to undermine the authority of the old Roman gods and classical philosophy, Orosius' goal was to appropriate the renowned status of classical antiquity and Roman literature by emphasizing its Christian origins.[13]

In Orosius' Christian retelling of Roman history, Augustus plays a crucial part. By incorporating the first emperor of Rome, whose reputation was, even in late antiquity, immense, Orosius hoped to facilitate his persuasion of the pagan elite.[14] According to Orosius, world history contained three 'climactic moments', events he viewed as the most important moments in history: the Nativity, the Passion and the Second Coming. Since Augustus was the most powerful man in the Western world during the first of these, the Nativity, Orosius gave him a key role in his *Historiae Adversus Paganos*.[15] Sloan articulates this role aptly: "Orosius is challenging the pagans not to recognise God over and against Augustus, but rather to recognise God through Augustus."[16]

In Orosius' version of history it was Augustus, who paved the way for Christianity's inevitable victory. His greatest merit lay in creating the perfect and necessary conditions for the birth of

9 There is still a lot of scholarly debate about the degree to which the intellectual elite remained pagan after Theodosius' reign. For a long time, historians assumed that most intellectuals continued to carry-out pagan rituals half-way through the fifth century. A. Cameron, however, argues that paganism in the Western Roman Empire ended much earlier than previously thought. Many activities, which historians considered to be exclusively pagan, he says, in fact played a big part in the lives of Christian Romans as well, and therefore do not imply a widespread continuation of Roman paganism in the fifth century. There is no question, however, that the Sack of Rome (410) evoked many anti-Christian reactions, to which Orosius responded (Cameron 2010, 3-4).

10 Sloan 2018, 103, 114; Ward 2014, 495; Eigler 2006.

11 Pellegrino/Heid 2014, 186. See also Eigler 2006.

12 Ward 2014; Formisano 2013; Van Nuffelen 2012.

13 Ward 2014, 495-496; Van Nuffelen 2012, 15-18. See also Pollmann 2009.

14 Simonis 2015.

15 Sloan 2018, 104-105, 114.

16 Sloan 2018, 114.

Christ. Augustus accomplished this in both a direct and indirect way. According to Orosius, by bringing peace to the Roman Empire, Augustus had created the required socio-political conditions for the birth of Jesus.[17] It was, after all, Augustus, who had ended the civil wars that had ravaged Rome for most of the first century BC, and it was he, who would usher in a continuous period of peace, the *pacis signum praetulit*, commonly known as the *Pax Augusta*.

Traces of the direct role Augustus allegedly played in preparing the Nativity can be found in the New Testament. Luke 2:1-5 describes how Augustus ordered the Census of Quirinius, which compelled everyone in the Empire to return to their birthplace. This caused Joseph and Mary to return to Bethlehem, where Jesus was subsequently born. This made Augustus a small but indispensable link in the fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy, which predicted the birth of a messiah in Bethlehem.[18] This initially very brief mentioning became a cornerstone in Orosius' portrayal of Augustus as a Christian peace-bringer.[19]

Although he played a pivotal part in preparing the Nativity, it should be noted that Orosius makes it abundantly clear that Augustus did not play an active role in this first climactic moment of history. He was only a passive instrument of God, with whom lies the exclusive agency. Orosius leaves no doubt that it was God, who had chosen the Roman Empire to be prepared by Augustus for the birth of the messiah, and that Augustus did not establish the peace, into which Christ was born on his own.[20] Orosius thus seeks to contrast Augustus' passive role with God's active role. In a broader perspective, Orosius wants to make it clear that the power of historical change is God's prerogative, not Rome's or her greatest emperor's or, indeed, any man's. Orosius' portrayal of Augustus is primarily intended to demonstrate the higher power of God.[21]

But even if Augustus was 'only' an instrument of God, God did choose the person deemed most worthy for this fundamental task. Orosius emphasises this with multiple odes addressed to Augustus. He calls him the "bravest and most merciful of all men" and an emperor, "whom nearly every race honoured with a just mixture of

17 Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.20.8.

18 This prophecy can be found in Mica 5:2 and was later cited in Matthew 2:5-6.

19 Historically, the existence of this census is highly debatable, but the reason for mentioning it in the New Testament is clear: Jesus, who, according to Christian tradition, had grown up in Nazareth, had to be connected to Bethlehem to fulfil the Old Testament prophecy (Goodman 2018, 7; Rist 2005; Thorley 1979). Orosius mentions the census in *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.22.6-6.22.8.

20 Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.20.4.

21 Van Nuffelen 2012, 151-152. See also Goetz 1980.

love and fear".[22] This rhetorical trick suited Orosius' primary objective perfectly. After all, it enabled him to embrace the glory of Augustus, but still attribute it entirely to God. There was no need for him to deny the glory this great emperor still possessed in the eyes of the pagan elite, to which *Historiae Adversus Paganos* was addressed. He could simply use it for his own ends.[23]

It is clear that Orosius went to great lengths to mould Augustus in the role he needed him to play. He used two literary methods to accomplish this.[24] First of all, Orosius makes selective use of classical texts to portray Augustus (or Octavian, as he was called before 27 BC) as honourable as possible by downplaying his violent actions, exaggerating his almost non-existent military accomplishments and omitting any material that could possibly undermine his vision of Augustus as a Christian hero.[25] Secondly, because Augustus had to be perceived as an emperor, who was virtuous enough to be chosen by God, his life had to be directly linked to Christian events. Orosius does this by synchronising important events from the emperor's life with events from the New Testament. To accomplish this, Orosius uses what would become typical medieval exegetical practices, such as the changing of dates of known historical events.[26] For instance, Orosius makes both Augustus' triumphus and his adoption of the name *Augustus* occur on the 6th of January in 29 BC, thus synchronising two of the most glorious events of Augustus' life with a holiday directly associated with the birth of Jesus: the Epiphany.[27] This Christian perception of the first Roman emperor, forged by Orosius, became widely accepted by the *literati* and would remain the dominant image of Augustus throughout the Middle Ages.[28]

22 Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.1.7.

23 Sloan 2018, 106-107.

24 In fact, Orosius also employed a third literary strategy, namely the citing of authoritative pagan writers like Vergil (most notably in *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.22.7, which is a word-by-word replication of *Aeneid* 1.282), but because of its relative insignificance to the reception of Augustus by Charlemagne it will not be discussed in this article (Sloan 2018, 116-117; Rees 2004, 11).

25 For example, Orosius significantly reduces Octavian's leading role in the proscriptions of the Second Triumvirate (43 BC). He also portrays Octavian as a great tactician in the battles of Philippi (42 BC) and Actium (31 BC), while, thanks to Pliny the Elder, it is well known that Octavian was anything but a military genius. Lastly, as Sloan remarks, the assassination of Caesarion ordered by Octavian went completely unmentioned by Orosius (Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.18.9-10, 6.18.14, 6.19.5; Pliny, *Historiae Naturalis* 7.45; Sloan 2018, 112-113).

26 Sloan 2018, 115.

27 See Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.20.1. Octavian's *triumphus* actually took place in August of 29 BC, while he was granted his revered name by the Senate on 16 January 27 BC.

28 Orosius' *Historiae Adversus Paganos* was one of the most used books by medieval students. Until the 16th-century Reformation, it was seen as one of the most important Spanish historical sources (Torres Rodríguez 1985, 81-82).

THE FIRST PILLAR OF RECEPTION: THE IMPERIAL CORONATION OF 800 AD

Charlemagne was, without a doubt, the most powerful man of his generation. He had conquered an empire stretching from Francia, Lombardy and Germania in the west, to the Byzantine border in the east. His literal crowning achievement followed in 800 AD, when Pope Leo III (*rex* 795-816) rewarded him with the Roman emperorship. On Christmas day, in the old St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Charlemagne was crowned "*Charles augustus*, crowned by god, great and peace-bringing emperor of the Romans, life and victory",[29] an event, which, according to his biographer Einhard, greatly moved Charlemagne.[30]

This explicit titular imitation of Augustus is why I labelled the coronation of 800 a pillar of Augustan reception. Why Charlemagne was crowned emperor, why he adopted the abovementioned title and whether it was in fact Charlemagne who initiated this coronation, is still heavily debated by historians. As early as the coronation itself, several different motives and interpretations were attributed to it.[31] Most scholars agree, however, that the imperial coronation of 800 was the result of both political and religious motives.[32] I have analysed both sides of the argument in search for a possible Orosian influence.

It has been widely accepted that both Charlemagne and Pope Leo III had major political interests in an imperial coronation.[33] Strothmann cites Charlemagne's imperial aspirations as the main motive for his coronation.[34] The immensity of Charlemagne's *imperium* meant his royal titles – he was *King of the Franks* (since

29 *Annales Regni Francoru*m 801, translation by Strothmann 2018, 144.

30 Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* 28. Charlemagne's dismay is usually explained from the fact that he was so overwhelmed with his 'sudden' coronation that, at first, he did not want to accept the emperor's crown. P. Geary, however, argues that Charlemagne was displeased with what he considered to be an overly active role of the Pope during the coronation. Charlemagne had preferred to see the Pope taking a backseat (Geary 1983, 110).

31 Palmer 2011, 1313.

32 For scholars who emphasize political motives, see Strothmann 2018, 140-143; Palmer 2011, 1313-1315; Bennett 2011, 92; Nelson 2007, 10; Collins 2005, 68; Mayr-Harting 1996, 1128-1129. For scholars who emphasize religious motives, see Sloan 2018, 118-120; Alberi 2010, 3-5.

33 This scholarly consensus can be derived from some of the most influential encyclopaedias and other reference material on the Middle Ages. See Clauß 2017, 82; Bennett 2011, 92; McKitterick 2008, 115-116; Chazelle 1995a, 370; Geary 1983, 110. Besides Charlemagne, Pope Leo III had strong political ambitions of his own too. J. M. Bennett argues that the imperial coronation was Leo's ultimate attempt to restore his damaged authority – Leo had been suffering violent threats from aristocratic factions in Rome. By crowning Charlemagne, the pontiff intended to place his authority above that of the mighty emperor, which he hoped would result in the Carolingian Empire always bearing the papal mark. Charlemagne's awareness of this possibility is shown by the fact that he made sure his son and heir, Louis the Pious, was crowned not by the Pope, but by Charlemagne himself in 813 (Bennett 2011, 92; Lokin/Zwalve 2014, 163-164).

34 Strothmann 2018, 140-143.

768) and *King of the Lombards* (since 774) – were no longer proportionate to the vast power he had amassed. Therefore, he may have wanted a title that, on the one hand, was reminiscent of the Roman Empire, in whose tradition he placed his Frankish Empire, and, on the other hand, was familiar to the Pope, the Franks, and the Byzantines.[35] Charlemagne's search within the Mediterranean memory of *imperium* could have led him to the traditional title of the ancient emperors of Rome.[36] Such imitative policy is also visible in the construction of his Palace Church in Aachen. By using antique materials imported from Rome and Ravenna and by emulating the latter city's Basilica of San Vitale, Charlemagne was consciously trying to place himself in the imperial Roman tradition.[37]

Religious motives have been proposed as well. An interesting attempt to interpret the coronation from an Orosian point of view is undertaken by Sloan.[38] He hypothesises that Charlemagne initiated his own coronation as an act of piety. Sloan argues that Charlemagne, strongly influenced by Orosius' concept of Augustus as the God-chosen architect of the first climactic moment of world history (the Nativity), thought he himself would play a fundamental part in the third climactic moment (the Second Coming), which he and his intellectual circle believed to be imminent.[39] Alcuin of York (*floruit* 781-804), theologian, abbot and renowned scholar, thought that Charlemagne, as *rector populi christiani* (leader of the Christian people), had a duty to reform and purify the Church before the end of time.[40] Thus, purely motivated by the sacred belief that he was able to fulfil his duty during the inevitable eschaton only as emperor, Charlemagne must have decided that he needed to be coronated. Therefore, Orosius' concept constituted a theological justification for Charlemagne's

35 After all, the Byzantines were considered to be the official heirs to the Roman Empire. Therefore, it was no coincidence that Charlemagne, even though he had been in a position of power for years, waited until 800 for the coronation to be held. By then, the Byzantine Empire, his only competitor for the imperial crown, found itself in the midst of a succession crisis. The emperor's mother, Irene, had seized power by crippling her son, which led Charlemagne (and Pope Leo) to declare her rule illegitimate. Therefore, by becoming Emperor of the Romans, Charlemagne only filled a vacancy (Lokin/Zwalve 2014, 207; Bennett 2011, 92; Nelson 2007, 10; Collins 2005, 10).

36 H. Mayr-Harting, in addition, views the consolidation of Charlemagne's conquests of the Saxons and Avars as a direct impulse for the coronation (Mayr-Harting 1996, 1128–1129).

37 Rollason 2015, 447; Bennett 2011, 92.

38 Sloan 2018.

39 Sloan's theory is based on G.B. Blumenshine's reading of F. C. Scheibe's, E. Dalaruelle's and G. Hocquard's research on Carolingian scholarly sources such as Alcuin's *Liber Contra Haeresim Felicis*. See Blumenshine 1983; Scheibe 1959; Dalaruelle 1953; Hocquard 1952.

40 Alcuin, *Epistolae* 257. Alcuin's letters are numbered according to the classification in Dümmler 1895.

appropriation of the name Augustus as his imperial title.[41] To conclude in Sloan's own words: "Just as the first Augustus prepared the way for the incarnation of Christ, a second Augustus may usher his return!".[42]

The strongest indication for Sloan that Charlemagne's theological beliefs and political acts were influenced by Orosius is the date of his coronation. It is plausible that Charlemagne held a sacred belief that the most important events of Augustus' life had some sort of divine meaning because they allegedly occurred on the same day as important Christian holidays. Sloan presumes this is the reason Charlemagne chose Christmas day for his coronation, to legitimise his ascendency by making it coincide with one of the most holy Christian days, just like Augustus, who was granted his revered title on Epiphany. The fact that this never actually happened on Epiphany – this was after all a fabrication by Orosius – was completely unknown to Charlemagne, as it was to all Orosius' medieval readership.[43]

Interesting as this theory may be, it cannot serve to demonstrate Orosius' impact on the imperial coronation. First of all, the apocalyptic world view Sloan propagates was only created in Adso of Montier-en-Der's *Antichristi* (ca. 950) – thus, well after Charlemagne's coronation.[44] This makes the theological background, against which Sloan places his Orosian reading of events, highly unlikely. Secondly, although the historical context does not totally exclude theological motives – the Carolingians were in fact highly skilled in exegetical practises – I deem the political motives discussed above more likely and more profoundly grounded in the historical evidence.[45]

Although the historical evidence seems to suggest that Charlemagne's imitation of Augustus at his coronation was not explicitly impacted by Orosius, it is of course impossible to disregard all Christian influence. After all, as mentioned before, a religious (i.e. Christian) reading of events does not necessarily imply an Orosian interpretation. In accordance with Strothmann, I think it is very possible that Charlemagne's choice for *Augustus* as his imperial title could stem from a ceremonial perspective: Charlemagne chose *Augustus*, and not *Caesar* or *imperator* (alternative Roman imperial titles), because Luke 2:1, which includes the Census of Quirinius, was an integral part of the Pope's

41 Sloan 2018, 118-119. See also: Blumenshine 1983, 227.

42 Sloan 2018, 119.

43 Ibid., 119-120.

44 Adso, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi* II; Palmer 2011, 1314-1315; McGinn 2002, 4-13; Geary 1994, 74-76.

45 Sloan 2018, 121.

Christmas liturgy. Strothmann argues that the presence of an *Augustus*, while the story of how Augustus had – indirectly – prepared the birth of Christ was read, gave Charlemagne's newfound emperorship an extra divine layer.[46]

It is apparent that none of the commonly accepted explanations for Charlemagne's coronation explicitly reflect any Orosian influence. For a deeper understanding of the Carolingian perception of rulership and Orosius' possible influence on it, it is useful to take a closer look at Alcuin. The renowned abbot left no doubt that he saw Charlemagne as a Roman emperor: in a letter to bishop Theodulf of Orléans (written ca. 801-802) he addressed the Frankish king with 'Carolus' – instead of his common pseudonym 'David' – while he referred to the ancient Roman emperors as Charlemagne's forebearers (*antecessores*).[47] In another letter written in 800 to Charlemagne himself, Alcuin actively tried to persuade his king to accept the imperial crown.[48] Alcuin's reasoning is interesting. He connected Charlemagne to the Roman emperors by ascribing both a fundamental role in God's plan. According to Alcuin, the emperors of Rome had played a pivotal part in the rise of Christianity and he believed Charlemagne did too. God had elected the Frankish king to become supreme ruler in Christendom, in order for him to spread orthodox Christianity throughout Europe by expanding his empire. One could say that Charlemagne continued the work that was started by the ancient emperors. His ascension to the imperial throne would therefore provide his expansionist policy with a historical precedent as well as legitimation. Orosius' thinking is clearly visible in Alcuin's stance towards Carolingian concepts of rulership. Whilst there was no directly detectable influence of the Orosian perception of Augustus on Charlemagne's coronation, Alcuin's thoughts mirror Orosius' larger framework of the Roman emperors facilitating the rise of Christianity.[49]

In conclusion, I believe that the imperial coronation of 800 was above all the result of politically charged motives. Charlemagne primarily turned to Augustus' legacy of the powerful ruler of an immense Western European *imperium* – who happened to be named in the Bible. Charlemagne did appropriate the pagan title of *Augustus*, but seemingly left the first emperor's image as a Christian hero untouched. Although political motives are

46 Strothmann 2018, 143-144.

47 Alcuin, *Epistolae* 246.

48 Alcuin, *Epistolae* 178.

49 Moesch too recognizes that Alcuin might be influenced by the concept of the ancient Roman emperors facilitating the rise of Christianity, however, she attributes this to the writings of Augustine of Hippo. Since Augustine focused more on undermining the Roman emperors' pagan authority instead of appropriating it, Alcuin's stance reflects Orosius rather than the famous Church Father (Moesch 2020, 82-86).

supported by actual historic events – Charlemagne had indeed amassed immense political power and probably possessed imperial aspirations – some degree of religious influence cannot be discounted. After all, the omnipresence of the Christian faith in socio-political decision-making left an unmistakable influence on Charlemagne's policymaking. My research, however, has not uncovered any concrete evidence pointing to the Orosian perception of Augustus directly impacting his coronation. Nevertheless, Orosius' larger framework of interpreting Roman imperial history as facilitating the rise of Christianity was reflected in Alcuin's letters and might have influenced the abbot's – and therefore, Carolingian – thoughts on emperorship. On the whole, however, Orosius' impact on the imperial coronation of 800 seems to have been marginal at best.

The second pillar of reception: Einhard's *Vita Karoli magni*

The second pillar of the Carolingian reception of Augustus is the most important written source on Charlemagne's life: his biography *Vita Karoli Magni*, written shortly after his death (somewhere between 814-830) by the Frankish poet Einhard.[50] Although it was produced after the emperor had died, *Vita Karoli Magni* must still be regarded as an integral part of Charlemagne's reception of Augustus because, as this article will demonstrate, the book explicitly mirrors Charlemagne to Augustus. Einhard's work therefore constitutes one of the most important transmitters of the Carolingian reception of Augustus and simply cannot be overlooked when examining this episode of Augustan reception. After all, as is important to note, the Carolingian reception of Augustus is larger than just Charlemagne himself. The way members of the Frankish intellectual elite like Alcuin and Einhard dealt with Augustus' legacy provides valuable insight in the Carolingian reception of Augustus as well.[51] In this part, I will examine to what extent Orosius' perception of Augustus played a part in Einhard's portrayal of Charlemagne.

Einhard's famous book has been subjected to extensive research and scholars agree that *Vita Karoli Magni* was in fact heavily influenced by Suetonius' biography of Augustus, *Vita divi Augusti* (121), something that must be understood in terms of the

50 The debate on when V*ita Karoli Magni* was written is ongoing. M. Innes and R. D. McKitterick argue that Charlemagne's biography must be written before 821, probably in the years immediately following the emperor's death. S. Patzold and T. F. X. Noble, on the other hand, believe that *Vita Karoli Magni* was not written until 829-830. I concur with the latter, because I believe it is plausible that events from 822 and 829 (treated in this article below) may have incited Einhard to write his biography of Charlemagne (Innes/McKitterick 1994; McKitterick 2008, 11-14; Noble 2008, 9; Patzold 2013, 193-195).

51 Pausch 2012; Chazelle 1995b, 601; Firchow 1984, 412.

classicist revival that took place at Charlemagne's court.[52] Suetonius' position in the imperial bureaucracy gave him access to the imperial archives, which contained the documents he used as groundwork for his biographies of the first emperors.[53] By contrasting Orosius' perception with Suetonius' portrayal of Augustus, I will argue that the latter had a much bigger influence on Einhard than the former.

Einhard wrote his *Vita Karoli Magni* during the reign of Charlemagne's son and successor, Louis the Pious (*rex* 813-840). Einhard's biography is first and foremost understood by historians as a response to Louis' tumultuous reign.[54] In his book, Einhard offered implicit criticism of the emperor by mirroring him to the image of the perfect ruler, Charlemagne. Furthermore, Einhard also may have wanted to react to Louis' penance of 822, where the Frankish emperor discredited his father by condemning the latter's immoral conduct.[55]

Therefore, Einhard intended to write a book in which the focus was on one secular ruler, his accomplishments and his personality. For such a biography, however, Einhard could not find any medieval precedent. The only early medieval literary genre that showed any biographical traits was the hagiography. The lives of secular people, like kings, on the other hand, were never chronicled, apart from incidental references in more broadly oriented works on complete dynasties, peoples, or countries. Neither suited Einhard's needs and therefore he resorted to one of the few precedents from antiquity: Suetonius' biography of Augustus. Einhard, after all, wished to write a biography that placed his emperor in the centre, not the almighty God, as was usual in early medieval writings such as *Historiae Adversus Paganos.* The absence of the Christian God in Suetonius' work provided Einhard with the perfect reference framework.[56]

Suetonius' *Vita divi Augusti* influenced *Vita Karoli Magni* on two separate levels: structure and content. Einhard composed his work roughly the same way as Suetonius by copying his use of a *divisio*, which is the subdividing of different aspects of the subject's life in

52 Pausch 2012; Bennett 2011, 88; Chazelle 1995b, 601; Firchow 1984, 412.

53 Pausch 2012.

54 Su 2018; Kempshall 1995, 30.

55 Su 2018, 88-89.

56 Bagge 2012, 50; Noble 2012, 14; Ganz 2005, 39-40; Innes 1997, 267; Beumann 1951, 340-341, 345. In addition, M. Su argues Augustus was an appealing role model, because both, he and Charlemagne, were the second generation of a ruling house without a proper legal claim to the throne and both had brought unsurpassable prosperity to their empires (Su 2018, 78).

different categories.[57] The content of Einhard's biography also exhibits various similarities with Suetonius. While Charlemagne's physique is a word-for-word replication of several sections from *De Vita Caesarum*, his most important resemblance with Augustus was his depiction as a bringer of peace.[58] Although Charlemagne's glorious conquests are definitely not withheld from the reader, Einhard explicitly stressed that the Frankish emperor's greatest merit was that he had resolved most conflicts without bloodshed.[59] Bringing his large realm to peace was, according to M. Su, Einhard's main reason for mirroring him to Augustus. He was, not in the least through Orosius, known to the Carolingians as the emperor, who had procured peace for the Romans.[60] Emphasizing Charlemagne's ability to establish peace was mainly meant to criticise his son's inability to do just that. Louis' reign was indeed infested with many wars – a significant amount of them ending in defeat – most notably a revolt of his sons led by Lothar (829).

It should be noted however, that Einhard was not unique in his efforts to attribute features of illustrious predecessors to Charlemagne. The depiction of early medieval kings was to a large extent subject to certain conventions, one of which was the mirroring of a king's physical attributes to those of his heroic predecessors. The goal was to further legitimise a king's position. The degree, to which Einhard's literary strategies are a reflection of this tradition, is still a topic of ongoing debate among historians.[61]

57 Although Einhard followed Suetonius' structure of *divisio*, he implemented it in a slightly different way. *Vita divi Augusti* consisted of two central sections ('affairs of state' and 'mores'), preceded by an introduction on the emperor and his family and concluded by an epilogue on his death. *Vita Karoli Magni*, by contrast, was divided in three sections ('conquests', 'everyday life', and 'care for the Empire'), supplemented by a short introduction on the emperor and his family and a long epilogue on Charlemagne's death. For a more detailed comparison of the structures of both works see Innes 1997, 267-268.

58 For example, Charlemagne and Augustus had their temperance, perfect body proportions and modesty in clothing in common. The Frankish king is also attributed specific characteristics from Julius Caesar, Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, and Titus. See Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni* c. 22-24; Suetonius, *Vita divi Augusti* 79.

59 Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 16.

60 Su 2018, 80-87.

61 J. Contreni argues that Einhard's description of Charlemagne's physical appearance should be explained as a typical manifestation of these early medieval conventions and therefore he views Einhard's choice for the powerful emperors of ancient Rome as self-evident. M. Innes, on the contrary, argues that Einhard's use of Suetonius was anything but self-evident. Suetonius was, in fact, virtually unknown in the Early Middle Ages. Probably very few copies of his *De Vita Caesarum* had survived in early medieval Francia (including the so-called *Fulda-manuscript*) and Suetonius stood – like all other classical authors – in the shadow of Cicero, whom early medieval intellectuals viewed as the greatest author from Antiquity. Innes therefore views Einhard's literary strategy as a deliberate choice to distance himself from the early medieval literary conventions (Contreni 1995, 737; Innes 1997, 268-270. See also Pausch 2012; Morse 1991, 145).

Within this debate, I position myself next to M. Innes, who views Einhard's literary strategy not as a subjection to the early medieval literary conventions, but as a deliberate choice to distance himself from it.[62] Due to Suetonius' marginalised status in the Early Middle Ages, it is rather implausible that any medieval author like Einhard referenced him, which indicates that Einhard must have had a specific motive in mind: this motive must have been his desire not to portray Charlemagne as any ordinary king, but as an extraordinary model emperor, contrasting his struggling successor.

So Einhard relied upon Suetonius with regards to the layout of his portrayal of Charlemagne and occasionally to the content as well, but what does this imply for the Carolingian reception of Augustus? S. Hellmann believes that the similarities between the two works suggest not only that Einhard modelled the composition of his biography on Suetonius, but also that he was consciously trying to present Charlemagne as a Roman emperor.[63] However, as S. Bagge has pointed out, there are not enough details directly drawn from Suetonius and not enough similarities between Augustus' and Charlemagne's characteristics to corroborate the assertion that Einhard's principal objective was to place Charlemagne in the tradition of the Roman emperors. After all, personality was one of the central motifs in Einhard's biography, not the 'Romanness' of his emperorship. While Augustus' character was described by Suetonius as somewhat cold, calculating and cynical, Charlemagne is presented as a glorious warrior-king, but at the same time as a humble, cultured, and intellectual family man. Another notable difference between the two writers is their respective position in relation to their subject: Suetonius is a neutral bystander who observes Augustus from a distance – both in time and social status – while Einhard, who is part of Charlemagne's court, tries to portray *his* emperor as virtuous as possible.[64] Although his main goal was to show Charlemagne's greatness, he also tried, by including many personal details, to give his audience a concrete impression of the man behind the emperor.

While Suetonius' influence on Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni* is evident, this is somewhat harder to determine for Orosius' *Historiae Adversus Paganos.* In emphasising Charlemagne's role as peace-bringer, Einhard clearly resembles Orosius' portrayal of

62 Innes 1997, 268-270.

63 Hellmann 1961, 182, 189.

64 Bagge 2012, 53-54. See also Dutton 2008, 29-31. In Dutton's view, Einhard embellishes Charlemagne's behaviour and omits his flaws deliberately. Therefore, Dutton considers *Vita Karoli Magni* to be historically inaccurate.

Augustus as the divinely ordained bringer of peace.[65] Nevertheless, Orosius did not influence Einhard to the extent that Suetonius did. As opposed to Suetonius' *Vita divi Augusti*, Orosius' work did not offer the right foundation for what Einhard tried to achieve: while Einhard wanted to focus on the emperor's human side, his virtues and characteristics, Orosius' emperor in *Historiae Adversus Paganos* constituted a divine instrument that, by playing a fundamental part in the birth of Christ, heralded the ultimate victory of Christianity. This perception of Roman emperorship was of no use to Einhard. Charlemagne was to be the centre piece of *Vita Karoli Magni*, while in *Historiae Adversus Paganos*, Augustus was only a glorified means to Orosius' end game – the conversion of the pagan elite of the late Roman Empire.

Clearly Einhard had no interest in Augustus' Christian aspects. In contrast, Einhard and the other scholars in Charlemagne's intellectual circle were actually very intrigued by Augustus' pagan heritage. This was part of a broader movement of classical interest known as the Carolingian Renaissance.[66] The appreciation for the classical elements of Augustus' legacy is reflected in the way Charlemagne and his court identified themselves with classical Augustan literature. They gave each other aliases based on famed Augustan poets, and Charlemagne was praised in several poems as if he were Augustus himself.[67] For example, in Alcuin's *Carmina*, Charlemagne is addressed in the same manner as Octavian in Ovid's *Fasti*.[68] Einhard's application of Suetonius can also be understood in terms of this Renaissance: when narrating Charlemagne's life, he was merely doing so from within the classical tradition the emperor had established at court during his lifetime.[69] This widespread fascination only strengthens the notion that Orosius' Christian Augustus was not the popular view that the Carolingians had of the first Roman emperor.

Therefore, I conclude that the fundamental differences in respectively Orosius' and Einhard's motives for writing their works explain why Einhard did not use the influential Orosian interpretation of Augustus. It is true that in stressing

65 See Orosius, *Historiae Adversus Paganos* 6.20.5.

66 McKitterick 2005.

67 Alcuin named himself Flaccus (Horace's *cognomen*), while the poet and future bishop Modoin of Autun named himself Naso (Ovid's *cognomen*). Charlemagne's son in law, the diplomat and poet Angilbert, called himself Homer, and archbishop Riculf of Mainz, the Eastern-Frankish count Audulf and Charlemagne's treasurer Meginfried derived their aliases from Vergil's *Bucolica*.

68 Alcuin, *Carmina* 21, 25, 27, 82; Ovid, *Fasti* 2.127. See also the anonymous epic *Karolus magnus et Leo papa* v. 14, 92-94 (ca. 802), in which Charlemagne is mirrored to the Carthaginian queen Dido, Aeneas' lover in Vergil's *Aeneid*. Note: *Karolus magnus et Leo papa* and Alcuin's *Carmina* are numbered according to the classification in Dümmler 1881.

69 Innes 1997, 280.

Charlemagne's role as peace-bringer, Einhard seems to reflect Orosius' interpretation of Augustus. But the differences are more striking than the similarities: Einhard specifically portrayed his emperor as a *man*, who had achieved peace through his hard work and sublime qualities, while Orosius perceived Augustus as an unwitting, divine instrument used by God to establish peace and prosperity. This passive role ran counter to everything Einhard tried to achieve. Suetonius offered him a better model. After all, Einhard was in demand for a character-based biographical model, and the absence of any suitable medieval literary traditions in combination with the classicist revival sentiment of the Carolingian Renaissance led him to draw on the Roman secretary, instead of the late-antique Christian priest or contemporary writers. Although Einhard also borrowed part of his content from Suetonius, this happened far too inconsistently to support the argument that it was Einhard's main goal to portray Charlemagne as a classic Roman emperor. In the end, it was the layout of Suetonius' work, not the content, which influenced Charlemagne's biography the most.

Conclusion

This study aimed to provide more insight into the reception of Augustus by Charlemagne and his intellectual circle. The main question posed was, whether this reception was predominantly influenced by the Christian ('Orosian') interpretation of Augustus or by Augustus' non-Christian legacy. After analysing primary sources and secondary literature, I have concluded that the Orosian perception of Augustus, despite being the prevalent image of Augustus throughout the Middle Ages, only marginally impacted Charlemagne's appropriation of Augustus.

This was reflected in what I referred to as the two pillars of Carolingian reception of Augustus. The first pillar, Charlemagne's imperial coronation in 800 AD, made extensive use of Augustus' secular legacy. After all, Charlemagne and his intellectual circle of scholars were looking for a precedent for his *de facto* position as ruler of a large Western-European *imperium* that could compete with his imperial Byzantine neighbours, not that of a divine puppet. By appropriating Augustus' legacy, he was able to claim the proper title for his unparalleled power. Some influence of Orosius' perception of emperorship, however, can be detected in Alcuin's thoughts on rulership, which might have incited Charlemagne to have himself crowned. While the prominence of Charlemagne's political motives makes this highly unlikely, Alcuin's letters show that Orosius' Augustus was at the very least present in Carolingian political thinking.

The second pillar of reception, Charlemagne's biography written by Einhard, did not leave much room for the Christian interpretation of Augustus either. Einhard primarily turned to Suetonius' biography of Augustus as inspiration for the composition of his *Vita Karoli Magni*. In absence of any contemporary examples, Suetonius' *Vita divi Augusti* was the only source that could pose as a model for what Einhard wanted to achieve: a biography which focused on Charlemagne's human side, in particular on his deeds, talents and traits. It was only in stressing Charlemagne' ability to procure peace without fighting that Einhard seemed to adhere to Orosius' Augustus. But overall, Orosius' perception of Augustus did not yield the desired particular qualities and as such was of no use to Einhard.

Therefore, as my research has pointed out, no immediate traces of this Orosian perception can be found in Charlemagne's two main forms of reception. Only a marginal presence of Orosius in Carolingian thought has been uncovered. This leads me to the only plausible conclusion, namely that Orosius' direct influence on Charlemagne's reception of Augustus was negligible. On the one hand, because of Orosius' medieval prevalence, this is surprising, but on the other hand, it can be reasonably explained by Charlemagne's need for a political precedent, not a spiritual one. In the end, Orosius' popular conception of Augustus was definitely not on Charlemagne's mind when he looked back at the renowned first emperor of Rome. Instead, he saw the perfect role model of a powerful monarch in a Christian context.

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Climbing on Culture: The Public Opinion on Archaeological Heritage Management through *Assassin's Creed Origins* and *Assassin's Creed Odyssey*

Marijke van Kempen

Abstract

The use of video games is a relatively new method in researching archaeology, history, and archaeological heritage management. In this paper, the results of a survey on this subject in regard to the franchise Assassin's Creed are discussed in order to examine what the opinions of players are on the way in which video games can be used for archaeological heritage preservation. Although the educational value of video games has been researched as early as 2002, it is not clear what the public thinks of this and how it differs from the opinion of experts. Moreover, it might be advantageous to understand how the educational value of games has developed in the last decade, and if points made by K. Squire (2002) and A. A. Leonard (2008) can still be implemented. The main opinion of the participants in this survey is that Ubisoft portrays archaeological heritage accurately and that games like Assassins' Creed could be useful as educational tools. However, many partakers also noted that game developers could have a more active role in archaeological heritage management, and that this must be done critically and ethically. Experts are even more critical, as they note that the violence in video games might overshadow the educational use, and that the way in which game developers portray the past might be anachronistic. It is clear that some points made in the last decade are still applicable today, yet many new problems have also developed.

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▶*Profile page*

Introduction

Archaeologists, historians, and archaeological heritage specialists continuously try to connect the past with the present. The way in which video games portray the ancient world is a relatively new topic of interest. Some investigation has been performed on how the past and its authenticity are represented, on the ethics

Figure 1
Screencap of a sim analysing an Omiscan artefact (The Sims 4 Jungle Adventure: Official trailer, 0:09; ▶https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZTgUlEZqgk).

involved, and how video games can help preserve the past.[1]

This can, of course, only be done if game developers take interest in archaeological, historical, and patrimonial topics. For instance, archaeology is presented as a skill in Sims 4 (2014). In the expansion pack Jungle Adventure (2018), the player can visit Selvadorada, a fictional holiday location based on South American cultures. The virtually simulated persons (sims) that the player controls have the ability to dig for 'Omiscan' artefacts in the jungle and learn about the local culture by talking to locals, thereby increasing their 'Archaeology' and 'Selvadoradian Culture' skill. When a sim reaches a high level in this skill tree, the sim can write a skill book on archaeology, establish dig sites, and give archaeology lectures. A sim could be asked to authenticate artefacts too, establishing whether they are real archaeological artefacts or fake duplicates (figure 1).

Another good example is the *Tomb Raider* franchise, where the player plays as Lara Croft, a (pseudo)archaeologist (figure 2). In the video games, the player travels to various destinations searching for 'lost' artefacts. The video games mainly focus on solving puzzles, exploring tombs and temples by climbing, and fighting enemies with the use of guns rather than portraying what an archaeologist might actually do.

Lastly, in games like Minecraft (first release 2009; continuously updated since), the player is able to rebuild archaeological sites. The game is a survival sandbox, a genre in which the player explores their creativity to complete tasks, often set in an open world with no linear storyline.[2] In the game, the player is able to collect raw materials and is encouraged to build items or construct

1 Bembeneck 2013; Salvati/Bullinger 2013; Mir/Owens 2013; Fothergill/Flick 2017; Hughes 2017; Glas et al. 2017.
2 Breslin, 2009.

Figure 2
Lara Croft exploring a tomb in Japanese Yamatai in Tomb Raider (2013) (image from ►https://www.mixedgrill.nl/recensie-tomb-raider/).

a house.[3] While playing in 'survival mode', the player encounters enemies, however when playing in 'creative mode', the survival aspect of the game is not present. Players are able to create buildings by generating the raw materials they need instead, such as stone or wood. This is often done in an online server, where multiple people can build in one world at the same time. Because players are able to build whatever they want, Minecraft has been implemented in education and public outreach. In the Netherlands, RoMeincraft was set up by the VALUE Foundation of Leiden University in cooperation with the Province of Zuid-Holland. In this project, children were able to learn about the ancient Roman civilization in their own country and were invited to reconstruct Roman forts in the game.[4]

Archaeology and archaeological heritage can be implemented in video games in various ways. Two more recent examples of the entwinement of archaeology, education and entertainment are Ubisoft's acclaimed titles *Assassin's Creed Origins* (2017) and *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* (2018). The adventure and action-driven games are set in late Ptolemaic Egypt and Classical Greece. The player can fight, sneak, or climb, and even enter buildings in the digital environment. The player is able to take part in historical events or meet notable historical characters and can even encounter creatures from Egyptian and Graeco-Roman mythology.[5]

Video games like *Assassin's Creed Origins* and *Odyssey* take years to make partly because of the intricate research. The video game developer Ubisoft employs historians and archaeologists to digitally recreate ancient worlds. According to franchise historian Maxime Durand, the games are based on research and plausible.[6]

3 Ashdown, 2012.
4 Schenk 2019.
5 Benden et al. 2019.
6 Durand in Nielsen 2017.

Figure 3
Screencap of the game Assassin's Creed Origins (image by author).

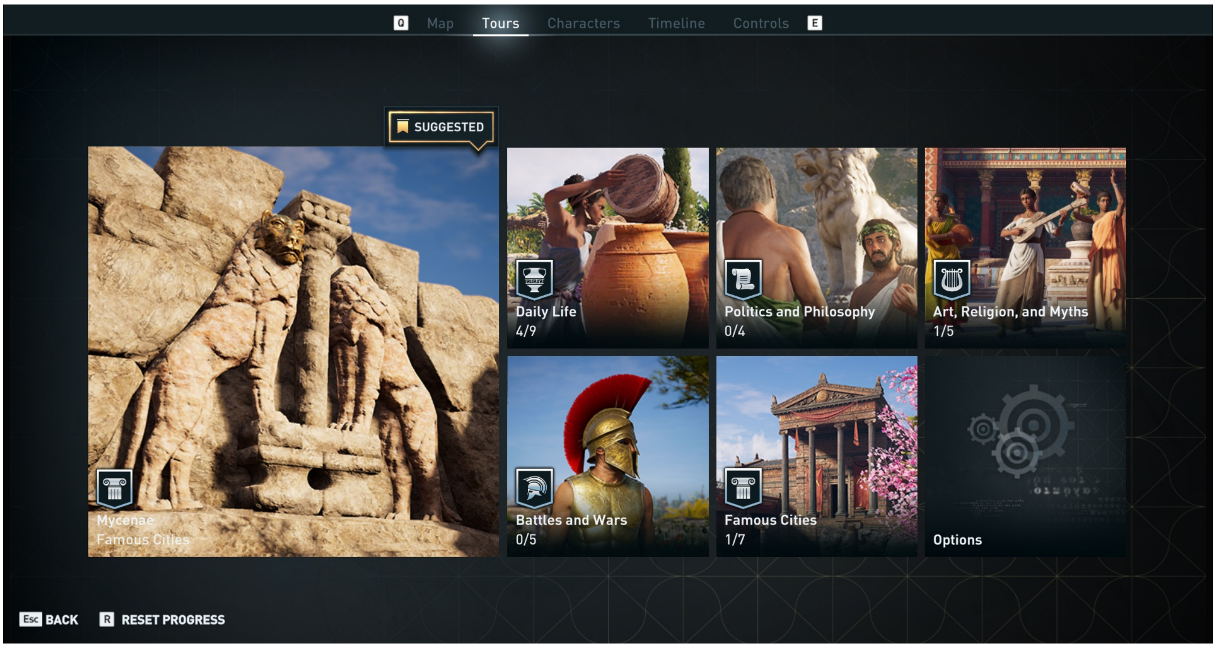

Figure 4
Screencap of the types of Discovery Tours in Assassin's Creed Odyssey (image by author).

He explains that for *Assassin's Creed Origins*, Ubisoft consulted Egyptologists, such as renowned archaeologist Jean-Claude-Golvin and other specialists to include as much accurate information as possible. However, Ubisoft stresses that they do not want to replace history books and that their main goal is to encourage people to visit museums more often.[7]

The company tries to achieve this goal through the inclusion of the so-called 'Discovery Tours', featured in both *Assassin's Creed Origins* and *Assassin's Creed Odyssey*. In this mode, the player is unable to fight and is encouraged to take a closer look at the history of sites and buildings. The player, for example, learns about the ancient education systems, the role of women in society and pottery production (figure 4).[8] An archaeological object may be featured, together with find numbers and information on where

7 Nielsen 2017.
8 Mol 2018; Walker 2018; Benden et al. 2019.

Figure 5
Information given in the Discovery Tour on the acropolis in Assassin's Creed Odyssey (image by author).

the item is currently displayed (figure 5).

It is clear that video games can present the past in an interesting and entertaining way. Yet, the debate whether people can learn from video games has been going on for a long time. One of the first articles on the use of video games as educational means was written by Squire (2002). In his paper, he argues that many issues around the value of video games have been overlooked. He stresses that people should study how gaming is part of a person's life, and notes that the pedagogical aspects should be examined. He agrees that games might be able to teach players certain things, yet he also states that games should be used as tools that might aid people, rather than full-fleshed out teaching methods, as video games cannot always portray absolute reality. Squire concludes that in the future video gamesshould better transfer information and help individuals with the ability to solve problems.[9]

Leonard (2008) also lists how he wants video games to be used in education. He highlights how video games mainly focus on sight and sound and hopes that more might be possible in the future. Contradictory to Squire, he argues that video games might be able to replace textbooks. He argues that distance education and virtual schooling are important, noting that games might be able to put an instructor and students in the same digital environment.[10]

Since these two publications, the gaming industry has taken massive steps, not only graphically, but also in terms of production

9 Squire 2002

10 Leonard 2008, 234–237.

and public perception. By examining looking beyondthe opinion of experts, this paper seeks to understand what the broader public think of the potential use of video games in education and archaeological heritage preservation, something that has been lacking in previous research. Moreover, it might be interesting to compare the results with the ideas presented more than a decade ago, and whether people from different backgrounds and genders have different opinions. As Ubisoft also states that intricate historical research has been done for the games Assassin's Creed Origins and Assassin's Creed Odyssey, these games function as useful case studies.

Methodology

Public opinions on the engagement with antiquity in *Assassin's Creed Origins* and *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* and how video games preserve archaeological heritage was gathered through a survey. In total, 33 questions were asked.[11] Participants were encouraged to write down what they would like to see or do in video games that are partly focused on antiquities. This was done to understand whether the opinions of experts differ from the opinions expressed by a more general public.

In total, 256 useful responses were gathered. In order to reach a broad public, the survey was posted on social media (Facebook pages and groups, Instagram, Twitter). Of the total number of participants, 196 responses were of people born in the Netherlands. This means that the survey largely focused on how Dutch people feel about the use of archaeological heritage in video games. Moreover, mainly young adults participated in this survey. The two youngest age-groups (19-24 and 25-30) comprised a total of 213 reactions, responsible for 81.9% of all responses. The age category <19 was not chosen by the participants, meaning that it is unknown how teenagers might have thought about archaeological heritage in video games. Of the total, there was a more or less equal gender division: 120 men and 128 women participated. Six other responses did not fall into either male or female categories whilst two responses excluded their gender identity.

In order to see whether the distribution of responses was statistically significant, Chi-Squared tests were performed. These types of tests are performed to research whether two or more distributions differ from each other and if these differences between those groups are of any statistical significance. A statistical significance means that two or more distributions differ so much, that the difference cannot be a coincidence. If results of a Chi-Square test are not statistically significant, distributions are

11 See appendix 1 for an overview of the questions.

relatively even or similar to each other. By creating a contingency table of the various groups (gender, age, agree, disagree), Chi-Square ($\chi 2$) can be calculated, as distributions are put opposite to one another.[12]

Survey results and discussion

The first questions were concerned with the participant's archaeological heritage and that of other social groups (Fig. 3, Appendix 1). A total of 225 participants answered that they were interested or highly interested in past societies. Of these, 107 were women and 110 were men. The distribution of answers between genders, as shown in Table 1, was not statistically significant when a $\chi 2$ test was performed (χ=0.3772, p=.539119, n=1030). As the 'other' category was greatly underrepresented, performing $\chi 2$ tests was redundant, because comparing these groups could result in a skewed image of how the responses were distributed.

In regard to the participant's archaeological heritage, 137 of 196 people born in the Netherlands agreed that Dutch archaeological heritage is of interest. Of the people born within Europe, but outside of the Netherlands, only 11 out of 43 people (25.6%) were uninterested in their own archaeological heritage. Of the people born outside Europe, 5 out of 16 people (31.3%) responded as being indifferent about their archaeological heritage or finding it uninteresting. All in all, it seems that most participants (70.3%) agreed that their own archaeological heritage, in the most general sense, is interesting.

Moreover, 210 out of 256 respondents (82%) agreed that people need to act in preserving the archaeological heritage of others. Responses were more divergent in regard to the statement that archaeological heritage was presented in an uninteresting way to the public (Table 2), as 76 respondents were neutral on the subject. When χ was calculated for the Netherlands and rest of Europe between the people who greatly disagreed or disagreed (categories 1+2) and those who agreed or greatly agreed (categories 4+5), the result was not statistically significant (χ=0.6508, p=.419834, n=168). The same result was present when ? was calculated for the Netherlands and Other categories (χ=0.2964, p=.586121, n=150). Between the categories of Rest of Europe and Other, testing the different categories also resulted in no statistical significance (χ=0, p=1, n=42). This suggests that the majority of all participants disagree that archaeological heritage is currently presented in an uninteresting way, and agree that it is important to preserve the archaeological heritage of other civilizations and people.

12 Fletcher/Lock 1991, 129.

	Positive responses to questions on archaeological heritage	Negative responses to questions on archaeological heritage	*Total responses*
Man	110+99+84+101+21=415	1+9+7+7+66=90	*505*
Woman	107+114+89+103+26= 439	3+4+14+4+61=86	*525*
Other	6+4+5+5+2=22	0+4+0+0+2=6	*28*
	876	*182*	*1058*

Table 1
Contingency table distribution of responses in different gender categories (image by author).

Taking action	1 – greatly disagree	2 – disagree	3 – not agree, not disagree	4 – agree	5 – greatly agree	*Total Responses*
Netherlands	45 (23%)	57 (29%)	58 (30%)	32 (16%)	4 (2%)	*196*
Europe excl. NL	10 (23%)	10 (23%)	13 (30%)	6 (14%)	4 (9%)	*43*
Other	3 (18%)	5 (29%)	5 (29%)	1 (6%)	3 (18%)	*17*
Total	*58*	*72*	*76*	*39*	*11*	*256*

Table 2
Contingency table distribution of acting in archaeological heritage preservation between nationalities (image by author).

The questions on archaeological heritage concluded that the participants are generally content with how archaeological heritage is currently portrayed, that they are interested in past societies, and that they agree that active preservation is of importance. There was no difference in opinion between the genders and nationalities of the participants in this survey.

Archaeological heritage in videogames

Of 256 responses, 161 people answered that they often played videogames (62.9%). Of these, 137 agreed that video games could prompt people to care more about their own archaeological heritage. Moreover, 125 responses agreed that video games could interest people in other cultures. Of the people that regularly played videogames, 121 people agreed that they could be of use in high-school history classes. At the same time, 130 individuals also agreed that video games could play an active role in digitally preserving archaeological heritage. These are important findings, as not all game developers employ experts when actively promoting archaeological heritage in their game. For example, no specialists are mentioned in the credits of *Rise of the Tomb Raider*. The only steps that were taken in using archaeological heritage was to serve as inspiration for tombs that are featured in the game, which was expressed by the game's art team.[13] Artifacts and sites have little to no educational value. In another game, *Ryse: Son of Rome*, Rome also serves more as a historical backdrop than an environment in which a player is able to learn about Roman civilization. Although the developer Crytek argues that the team

13 Corriea 2015.

went to Rome in order to see the architecture and archaeology, it is also clear that the game was a mash-up of different events, because only the favorite events from team members were selected and put into the game.[14]

Not all participants were gamers, however. 59 responses indicated that they did not often play video games. Only eight individuals had never played or seen a play-through of a game that features archaeological heritage. So, it is clear that this survey mostly attracted people who played video games. The implication is that people might have had a biased opinion on how video games can help in preserving archaeological heritage. In order to understand whether this was indeed the case, the responses of people that did not often play video games were examined.

Of the group that disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that they often played video games, 34 out of 59 (57.6%) participants answered that video games could be useful in the preservation of archaeological heritage. Moreover, 42 individuals (71.1%) also answered that video games could help people care more about the archaeological heritage of other societies, while 31 participants (52.5%) agreed that video games could cause people to care more about their own archaeological heritage. A total of 35 participants (59.3%) agreed that video games could be of use in history classes at high schools, as well as 33 responses (55.9%) indicating video games could encourage people to become archaeological heritage specialists. Lastly, of the people that do not often play video games, 48 participants (81.4%) agreed that more video game companies should employ specialists in order to portray archaeological heritage accurately. The questions where the response was around 50%, most respondents (n=16 in the question on enthusing people's own archaeological heritage and n=10 for the use of video games in history class) felt indifferent. This high number could have occurred as this group has indicated they do not often play video games, and therefore may not have a strong opinion on the matter, or simply did not know how to respond.

When asked how the video game industry could preserve archaeological heritage and what players would like to be able to do and see in-game, more than 50 people wrote that the accuracy and 3D rendering of sites is essential for the preservation. They also agreed that this could enthuse people to care more about their archaeological heritage and encourage younger generations to become more aware. A couple of participants also stressed Ubisoft's role in the rebuilding of the Notre Dame in Paris, which

14 Hall 2013; Freeman 2013.

was partly destroyed in a fire in April 2019.[15] One participant noted the following:

> "It would be interesting to play with the idea of various stages of a site, so the original state and the later decay and how it is situated now. That way people become more familiar with the archaeological work and circumstances. This might be more a more accurate way to show people what archaeologists deal with."

Several important points were raised by others, including that commentary in the Discovery Tours could provide the player with real facts instead of glorifying the past. Someone noted:

> "It'd be better if videogames made the archeological elements something you are involved with rather than mere decoration. Give it a purpose, make it a part as important as the characters themselves. Not something you loot/destroy (looking at you Lara Croft) but something to care about. Although I do think that videogames have done huge improvements lately towards the representation and use of archaeological heritage."

Participants were also critical of how antiquity is presented in video games. For example, ten people mentioned that games need to include non-male and more People of Colour,[16] and needed to focus less on Western history. Moreover, many also agreed that the use of archaeological heritage as a political tool within the video game industry needs to be taken into account and that video game might strengthen thinking in stereotypes (for example by means of Orientalism):[17]

> "Before thinking of "preserving" archaeological heritage, the game industry should first reflect on how presenting archaeological heritage is inherently political, and its own role in politicizing the past. What narratives are created, reinforced or suppressed by the representation of

15 A previous game in the franchise, Assassin's Creed Liberation, focused on the French Revolution in Paris and contained a digital representation of the cathedral of Notre-Dame.

16 Note to a comment: Capitalized because of a recent trend to avoid biased language. See ▶https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/racial-ethnic-minorities.

17 Orientalism, a term coined by Edward Said, is the definition given to the way in which Western countries or civilizations perceive the East, often connected with inequality. This kind of 'othering' causes that the East is perceived by Western eyes as sensual, primitive, mysterious and even feminine, while the West is seen as rational and civilized in other to strengthen Western culture and Western identity. For more on this subject, see Said 1978.

archaeological heritage in video games?"

Many responses show that video games can be of use in educational settings, but they should not replace textbooks altogether. More attention is given to what kind of information is presented rather than how video games can be of use in education. Participants also are critical of how these games are created and want a more 'immersed' way of playing games in an educational way, as many noted that more VR should be used in the development of video games that feature archaeological heritage.

Archaeological heritage in Assassin's Creed Origins

A total of 166 participants had either played or seen someone else play Assassin´s Creed Origins. In regard to architecture, 82 people answered that the buildings in-game looked accurate, while only three people disagreed with this. Concerning whether weapons and armour looked accurate, more people disagreed (N=28). However, 43 responses still agreed that these materials looked accurate. Only a few people (N=7) disagreed that the layout of cities was accurate, while the majority (N=60) agreed that the cities were planned out accurately. This reflects the ideas that were presented at the start of the paper, namely that Ubisoft tries to portray weapons and armour as accurately as possible.

Moreover, regarding the Discovery Tours featured in-game, the majority (N=52) agreed that the information on these tours was accurate and agreed (N=75) that these Discovery Tours could be of use in high schools. The vast majority also agreed that the game had enthused them to visit sites in real life (N=78) and museums that feature material culture similar to that featured in-game (N=65).

Yet, in a recent paper, Araújo de Lima and De Paiva Bondioli question whether Discovery Tours in *Assassin's Creed Origins* are useful for education as a kind of virtual museum.[18] The problem that they have observed lies in details, namely that the nudity of classical statues that are visible in-game is censored in the 'normal' gaming mode. Genitalia and female breasts are namely covered by seashells, it is not exactly clear why the developers chose to censor these.[19] However, Ubisoft's audience is largely based on the North American market, and this might explain why they adhere to cultural specificities that are based on Judeo-Christian ideas in which nudity is linked with sex. This results in an anachronistic attitude towards antiquity, which could result in students missing out on scientific, but also aesthetic decisions that may have been

18 Araújo de Lima/De Paiva Bondioli, 2019.

19 Ibid.

important in antiquity.[20]

At face value, therefore, the Discovery Tours in the game seem to be of good use in educational settings according to the participants of the survey. When inspecting more closely however, it is clear that there is an underlying problem. The culture that surrounds us might implicate how we perceive the ancient world, resulting in anachronistic thinking. It might prove to be difficult to evade cultural bias in the creation of a video game, yet educators could introduce their students to these problems. In this way, games could still be useful for education, but the way in which we could perceive the past is also considered.

Archaeological heritage in Assassin's Creed Odyssey

Of the total of 256 people, 110 individuals had played *Assassin's Creed Odyssey*. The majority agreed that the game accurately portrays architecture (N=84) and materials (N=47). Concerning city layout, 64 individuals agreed that the game accurately portrays cities in Classical Greece and its islands. A total of 62 people agreed that the Discovery Tours in the game gave accurate information, and 78 participants agreed that these tours could be used in history classes at high schools. The majority also agreed that the game excited them to visit the sites presented in the game (N=77), and that they were enthused to visit a museum with similar material culture (N=64).

Even though the public is positive, experts have expressed that the Discovery Tours are non-interactive museum visits where the player only passively receives information about the ancient world. Moreover, in the story, violence quickly overshadows what the player learns about the ancient world and its historical characters. As the player is tasked to kill unnamed characters, they are often disconnected from historical reality.[21]

When studying academic opinions, it seems that *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* is less anachronistic than *Assassin's Creed Origins*. However, this game in the franchise also has some problems in the sense that the Discovery Tours are not interactive for the player, as they only go from station to station and passively gain information by listening to a narrator. Lastly, it is clear that to get the entertaining and the educative aspect, one needs to play both the story line and the Discovery Tours in the game, which not everyone might decide to do. In regard to the opinion on accuracy between the studied games, a $\chi 2$ test was not statistically significant (Table 3; χ=0.0336, p=.854592, n=373). This was also the same for the opinion on the Discovery Tours (Table 4; χ=0.008, p=.928903,

20 Ibid., 318.

21 Benden et al., 2019.

Accuracy	Positive responses	Negative responses	Total Responses
AC Or.	66+35+45= 146	3+21+6= 30	176
AC Od.	69+40+53= 162	4+24+7= 35	197
Total responses	*308*	*65*	*373*

Table 3
Contingency table response distribution in regard to accuracy between studied games (image by author).

Discovery Tours	Positive responses	Negative responses	Total Responses
AC Or.	45+61= 106	9+4 = 13	119
AC Od.	55+ 63 = 118	4+11 = 15	133
Total responses	*224*	*28*	*252*

Table 4
Contingency table response distribution in regard to Discovery Tours between studied games (image by author).

Enthusiasm	Positive responses	Negative responses	Total Responses
AC Or.	62+50= 112	10+12= 22	134
AC Od.	61+ 52 = 113	9+13 = 22	135
Total responses	*225*	*44*	*269*

Table 5
Contingency table response distribution in regard to evoking enthusiasm between studied games (image by author).

n=252), and the games ability to evoke enthusiasm (Table 5; χ=0.0007, p=.97849, n=269). According to the public, one game is not better than the other. This means that the public might also not see the underlying problems visible to experts.

Questions and Conclusion

Through a survey, this paper has tried to gather information on people's views on video games and how they aid the preservation of archaeological heritage. The survey also wanted to understand how the general public thinks how games could excite people to get to know more about archaeological heritage.

In general, people are excited about archaeological heritage. An overwhelming majority of people answered that they enjoy interacting with their past or the past of others. Many people had also played games where archaeological heritage was featured in or had played *Assassin's Creed Origins* and *Assassin's Creed Odyssey.* Participants were overall quite happy with the way in which Ubisoft employs archaeological heritage specialists and portrays archaeological heritage in-game. Many people agreed that other game developers should follow this example, as well as emphasizing that there should be more focus on non-Western civilizations. Specialists and public, opinion agreed that some improvements could also be made. Specialists especially noted that that the ancient world is perceived through modern, Western eyes and that cultural ideas might influence what people learn about archaeological heritage in games. Violence can overshadow the educational use of video games and it may be necessary to point this out to the public.

The concept on how video games can be used in classes to educate people on archaeological heritage has greatly developed in the last decade, although some of the initial ideas still persist, Many participants of the survey note that 3D renditions may help in displaying the ancient world in video games. This is already done in the Scottish Minecraft group Crafting the Past, a group visualizing local archaeological heritage in Minecraft.[22] By interacting with these organizations at gaming conventions, more people could come into contact with their own archaeological heritage and might even participate in related events. Moreover, in the wake of social distancing due to COVID-19, video games may have a role in teaching people about history and archaeological heritage in an entertaining way, while staying safely indoors. This has been considered in publications a decade ago.[23] What these articles have not discussed lies in how video games will develop in correctly using archaeological heritage and if the wishes of the survey's participants can ever be fulfilled. However, by calling out game-developers and bringing attention to the issues, a step can be taken in the right direction.

22 See ▶https://www.craftingthepast.co.uk/, last accessed on 13/09/2020.

23 Leonard, 2008; Squire, 2002.

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APPENDIX 1: FORM QUESTIONS

Question type	Questions regarding archaeological heritage
Scale (1 – 5)	I am interested in past societies.
Scale (1 – 5)	Visiting museums bores me.
Scale (1 – 5)	My own archaeological heritage is interesting and enthuses me.
Scale (1 – 5)	People need to take more action in preserving the archaeological heritage of others.
Scale (1 – 5)	I think the presentation of archaeological heritage and how people are taught about it is uninteresting.

Question type	Questions regarding archaeological heritage and videogames
Scale (1 – 5)	I often play video games.
Yes/No	Have you ever played or seen a playthrough of a game that features archaeological archaeological heritage? (such as *Skyrim*, *Tomb Raider*, *Civilization*, *Age of Empires* etc.)
Scale (1 – 5)	Video games could cause people to care more about their own archaeological heritage.
Scale (1 – 5)	Video games could cause people to care more about the archaeological heritage of other people or other countries.
Scale (1 – 5)	Video games could be of use in history classes in high schools.
Scale (1 – 5)	The way in which the videogame industry presents archaeological heritage specialists in-game (researchers, archaeologists, historians) could aid in people wanting to work in this field.
Scale (1 – 5)	Like Ubisoft, more videogame companies need to employ archaeological heritage specialists in order to accurately portray archaeological heritage.
Scale (1 – 5)	Video games could play an active role in preserving archaeological heritage digitally.
Open	How do you think the videogame industry could preserve (archaeological) archaeological heritage? What would you like to see or be able to do?

Question type	Questions regarding archaeological heritage in AC Origins and Odyssey (same questions were asked for both games).
Scale (1 – 5)	The game accurately shows what architecture looked like in the past.
Scale (1 – 5)	The game accurately shows what weapons and armour looked like in the past.
Scale (1 – 5)	The game accurately shows what cities looked like in the past.
Scale (1 – 5)	The information given in the Discovery Tours is accurate.
Scale (1 – 5)	The incorporation of the in-game Discovery Tours could be of use in history classes in high schools.
Scale (1 – 5)	The game has enthused me to visit the sites featured in the game in real life.
Scale (1 – 5)	The game has enthused me to visit museums where the material culture similar to that featured in-game is presented.

Question type	Question regarding recommendations or comments
Open	Any recommendations, comments or questions? Drop them here!

Climbing on Culture:
A Response

Aris Politopoulos

In this piece, Marijke van Kempen performs a survey to gauge the interest of the public on archaeological heritage in relation to video games. Her research comes to reinforce a growing body of studies.[1] Having as point of reference the responses to the survey, Van Kempen explores a number of other aspects related to video games, archaeological heritage, history, and archaeology (the last three of which I will collectively be referring to as 'the past') that I would like to comment on in this response.

Before continuing with the topic, however, I think it is important to recognize the power that lies within video games as a medium. One could reasonably wonder, why do video games matter in the discussion about the past? Video games are currently the leading entertainment medium globally with a gross income that surpasses the music and film industry combined, giving it an incredible reach to a very wide audience.[2] In addition, despite the stereotype that gamers are predominantly young males "living in their mother's basement", data show that the gender distribution among gamers is almost equal, something that is reflected in Van Kempen's survey as well, while the average age of a gamer is around 33 years old.[3] The growth and reach of video games, alongside their impact on a wide and diverse audience makes them worth studying and understanding their societal implications.

At the same time, the past, as Van Kempen demonstrates, is already very much present in video games. Historical games are widely popular, with titles such as the *Assassin's Creed* series and the Sid Meier's *Civilization* series selling millions of copies as early as the first weeks of their release. So then, people are interested in games, people are interested in historical games in particular, and there exist popular games that include the past at their core. Let us explore these two points further.

Dr. Aris Politopoulos is a lecturer for the Archaeology of the Near East at the University of Leiden. Besides his study of the phenomenon of imperial capital creation and the archaeological study of imperial capital cities, Politopoulos has done research on the archaeology of play, both through the study of ancient play (e.g. ancient board games), as well as through the study of contemporary video games that deal with the past. Currently, Politopoulos runs the Past-at-Play Lab together with prof. dr. Sybille Lammes and dr. Angus Mol, an experimental project that focuses on the study of the past in and as play.

▶*Profile page*

1 Mol et al 2016; de Lange 2018; Boerboom 2019; Tibboel 2020; Mol et al (forthcoming).

2 Stewart 2019.

The pasts that people play

Starting with the fact that people are interested in games that deal with the past: this can be easily demonstrated simply by looking at the success of historical games. But how or why are they interested in these games? This requires further exploration that can be done with studies such as the one performed by Van Kempen. Her findings are consistent with the results of other surveys: participants are interested in the past, enjoy the past being portrayed games, and value the experience of playing in and with the past. Participants also seem to agree that video games can be a positive force and have a positive effect on the way people perceive, learn about, and experience the past.

The next question to ask then is what are the pasts that people value in video games? Well, one can argue that the existing representation of pasts in games is already being highly valued. The Assassin's Creed series for example enjoys critical acclaim for its 'authentic' representations. Van Kempen, however, interestingly highlighted a number of critical remarks in the surveys. It is noted, for example, that participants found the histories present in historical games too focused on the west, a point that has been noted in other studies about historical video games as well.[4] In addition, responses focused on how the pasts are being (intentionally or unintentionally) politicized in games. So, it can be argued that people do want to experience the past through games, but the lack of diverse pasts present in games is a point of concern. To put it simply, people want to play with the past, but people also want to play with diverse pasts.

The pasts that people make

Let us move on now to the second point, which deals with the way pasts in video games are being produced. For that, let us return to the point about the politicization of the past. There is a growing discourse in the video game community, among both players and developers, as to whether video games are political. It is my strong position that video games are indeed very much political. As a form of art that aims to create and re-create worlds and human experiences, it becomes, by necessity, political. While a growing number of gamers seem to agree with this idea, video game companies, and particularly large video game corporations seem to want to distance themselves from the fact. To quote Ubisoft (the company that makes Assassin's Creed) COO Alf Condelius:

> "People like to put politics into [our games], and we back

3 ESA 2020.

4 Mol et al. 2017.

away from those interpretations as much as we can because we don't want to take a stance in current politics. It's also bad for business, unfortunately, if you want the honest truth ... ".[5]

Sid Meier, the creator of the Civilization series, holds a similar position. In an interview he argued that:

> "[O]ne of our fundamental goals was not to project our own philosophy or politics onto things. Playing out somebody else's political philosophy is not fun for the player".[6]

As I have demonstrated elsewhere, however, the histories that the Civilization series portrays are very much political.[7] Developers might want to distance themselves from politics because "it is bad for business", however the games will always be political, and as demonstrated also in Van Kempen's survey people are interested in the political aspect of games, by asking for more diversity.

Can we make better games?

This brings me to my last, probably most critical point in regard to Van Kempen's paper. A fact that must not be ignored is the fact that historical video games are already hugely successful. Whether they are political or not and with or without the consultation of archaeologists, historians, and heritage experts, historical games will continue to be made and be popular. Van Kempen points out that "not all game developers employ experts when including archaeological heritage in their game", which is indeed true. The reason they do not do this, in my opinion, is because they do not necessarily need to do it. The Rise of the Tomb Raider which is mentioned as an example was extremely popular, despite the fact that no experts were included in its creation.

At the same time, even when experts are included in games, it needs to be questioned as to how this expertise is being included. The Assassin's Creed series does employ historians for its reconstruction of the past. This has helped the company sell the games as much more historically accurate. But it begs the question, despite the aesthetic value of authentic representations, how does the employment of experts help shape a better game? It is true that in Assassin's Creed: Odyssey, for example, we have one of the best, most aesthetically pleasing reconstructions of classical Athens we have seen. But is this authenticity integral to the game,

5 Taylor 2018.

6 Tharoor 2016.

7 Mol et al. 2017; Mol and Politopoulos (forthcoming).

or does historical authenticity become a backdrop to a game that is, in the end, about violence?[8]

The Discovery Tour exemplifies this sense of historical accuracy as a backdrop. The Discovery Tour in the latest Assassin's Creeds does offer the opportunity to become a tourist in the pasts it represents and enjoy the scenery without all the violence and the killing. In order to do so, however, it removes the play aspect. It becomes a tour in a museum and not a game.

Despite these issues, such games remain hugely successful. So, what are we to do about it, if the developers do not really need us to produce these games? Van Kempen notes that specialists and the public highlight that improvements can be made, indeed, but how? I think that the answer lies with action. We, specialists in the sciences of the past, need to go out there and seek game developers and demonstrate that we can, in fact, offer positive change to their games. That science of the past is not about being picky, pointing out all the flaws and saying, "this is not accurate". Because accuracy is not necessarily what makes a good game that offers diverse and insightful views of the past.

Some of the most insightful games about the past actually are quite far away from the historical authenticity of games like Assassin's Creed. *Valiant Hearts*, a game about World War I, offers such an example. Despite its cartoony graphics, and its relatively simple gameplay, it offers great insights in the histories of the people who lived during World War I, histories that are often ignored. *Never Alone* shows that you do not need to be a large studio to create impactful and engaging archaeological heritage experiences of indigenous populations.[9] On the contrary, I would argue, it is precisely these smaller gaming studios that have the most care about the histories they place in their games.[10]

To achieve this, we are the ones who must reach out to developers. We are the ones who need to create bridges with a gaming community that craves to learn about the past. It is crucial to get out of the academic ivory tower and engage with play, play creation, and players. Listen to what they have to say and value what game development has to offer to the sciences of the past. The best way to create authentic, impactful, and respectful archaeological heritage experiences through games is by working together with developers, not against them.

8 Politopoulos et. al 2019.

9 CITC 2017.

10 This is not to say that individual developers in larger gaming studios do not care about the games they make, but to argue that smaller gaming studios do not have the same monetary concerns as larger corporations, and enjoy a larger degree of creative freedom.

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Climbing on Culture:
Final Thoughts

Marijke van Kempen

The initial research in the article 'Climbing on Culture, The public opinion on archaeological heritage management through *Assassin's Creed Origins* and *Assassin's Creed Odyssey'* focused on understanding how people thought video games help preserve archaeological heritage and generate enthusiasm. Although the majority of the participants agreed that they enjoyed the interactivity with cultural archaeological heritage through a gaming experience, many also agreed that there is room for progress. Moving away from the survey itself, it is useful to reflect on the relationship between the gaming industry, scholars, and archaeological heritage in a more general sense. In doing so, archaeological heritage may be represented in a better way through means of video games. Two main points will be briefly discussed, namely what the contribution of academics and specialists could be in the production of games and how to achieve cultural diversity in video games.

The contribution of academics in video game production

In the article and the response from Politopoulos, the point was raised as to whether or not academics are needed in the development of video games. Ubisoft, to name one example, is a game developer that already consults archaeological heritage specialists as well as ancient historians and archaeologists. This is especially necessary in the current age. Nowadays, an increasing number of people have access to information and are able to travel to archaeological sites. Academics need to realize that archaeological heritage can be used outside of academia in many different ways. Scholars are not the only ones that can spread historical information, and many voices and opinions can be heard in reflections of the past. In the digital age that we currently live in, it has never been so easy to obtain information and spread it amongst the public.[1] This is not only through video games but also

1 Rigney, 2010; Kleinberg, 2017.

through movies, documentaries, blogs, podcasts, and YouTube videos: the list truly does go on and on.

The fact that knowledge can spread very quickly means that many members of the public can be educated on archaeological or historical subjects. Even though this might be good for the understanding of one´s own archaeological heritage, it can also have an adverse effect when the wrong information is spread. After all, fake news spreads six times faster than real news.[2] The result is that this could have a big impact on how people see the past and the archaeological heritage of others.

Game franchises like Assassin's Creed can help in distributing real facts or ideas about the ancient world. Games with a historical setting have the potential to educate people in a fun and interesting way about the past, while combating misinformation at the same time. This is why the implementation of video games in high school history curricula could be of great use as a supplement to learning from the history books.

However, games cannot replace books completely as their main goal is to entertain. Gaming professionals may make certain choices based on entertainment or even present-day values. An example of a decision which reflects the present-day situation, rather than the historical reality is the player's ability to play as a female protagonist in Assassin's Creed Odyssey: they are able to attend Pericles' symposium as a guest. This would obviously not have been the case in Classical Greece, where female attendees were often either servants, musicians, dancers, or prostitutes. This is not necessarily an example of 'fake news', it just does not reflect the 'real' standards ancient Greeks had. Similarly, the player is able to have lovers from either sex. As a result, players might believe that same sex relationships were also tolerated in antiquity. Subsequently, players may not realize that homosexual relationships were bound by many rules in antiquity.[3] However, the decision to not steer players in a certain direction on the basis of what is known about relationships in the ancient world, might be made because a game-maker wants to let the player make choices that offer them the possibility to let their characters resemble themselves. The game could in that way become more entertaining to play or be more inclusive following present-day values.

A happy medium is therefore most favourable: games should be entertaining and informative at the same time. Including

2 Vosoughi et al. 2018.

3 See for example the erastes-eromenos relationships in Classical Greece, where an older man that took on a younger lover and often taught him as well. For more information, see for example Percy Jr. (1996), Pederasty and pedagogy in Archaic Greece; Ormand, K. (2018), Controlling Desires: sexuality in ancient Greece and Rome.

archaeological heritage specialists in the production of a video game helps in making a video game focusing on archaeological heritage fun to play. Simultaneously, it helps in spreading the 'right' information to the consumers. This is also reflected in the survey, where many participants wrote that they enjoy how Ubisoft portrays the ancient world and that the game does positively affect their enthusiasm of visiting sites and museums to see similar objects to the ones presented in game. The inclusion of the more 'educational' Discovery Tours also results in players being happy to learn and to play in a digital environment that reflects the ancient world and ancient archaeological heritage.

Furthermore, the survey's results show that, if the past is presented in a way that is more or less recognizable, people might become more interested in knowing about the past. For this reason, it is important that specialists in ancient history, archaeological heritage and archaeology also realize that a video game should be as accurate as possible from an entertainment standpoint, instead of it exactly following academic standards. If games are not recognizable at all and only rely on academic knowledge, a consumer might not develop an interest in archaeology or ancient history, as it then becomes near impossible for the player to relate with the surroundings of the game. A too-academic impetus behind creating the game then might even hinder archaeological heritage preservation. By presenting games as both informative and entertaining, consumers may get more involved in the conservation of archaeological heritage. Therefore, even though academics are definitely able to contribute to a large degree in video game production, it should be noted that the entertaining value of video games and the creative liberty of video game developers to make a game interesting, are equally important.

Diversity and the West

The article and response also pointed out that the current game industry still focuses largely on Western archaeology and history. In the survey, participants mentioned that they wanted more diversity. How can the game industry move forward towards a more inclusive space, where not only Western culture is explored and celebrated? Some small steps are being taken in using video games and in studying the culture of minorities. Although not really a true 'game', virtual reality for example has helped the Native American tribe of Tejon in reconnecting with their past. The rock art that has been painted by this tribe is found on sandstone structures or in caves and are badly visible and highly fragile. Virtual Reality allows these people to see the cultural footprint their ancestors have left and helps preserving these rock paintings for future generations.[4] These forms of digitalization could also prove to be useful in other remote regions, bringing them to the attention of other people outside of this culture, as is done with the Tejon rock art. This could be done for example by introducing these technologies to archeology and anthropology students.[5] If these inventions were to be accessible to all (and possibly through video games!), a larger audience may get into contact with a culture of which they were previously unaware.

However, waiting for this to happen might not be the right approach: consumers and archaeological heritage specialists need to take on a pro-active attitude and openly stress the fact that video games are largely based on 'white' history when developers use the past in their productions. Actively calling out these developers to become more inclusive might speed up the process, because games presenting ancient far-from-home cultures already appear to be seen as interesting. This can be attested by considering the quantity of copies the game *Tomb Raider* has sold. Games where people can play as non-Western individuals and explore far-away countries are popular, such as Sid Meier's *Civilization*, where one could play as the Inca king Pachacuti. The game *Assassin's Creed: Liberation*, in which the player enters the world of Aveline, an Afro-American woman that fights the Spanish in Louisiana prior to the American Revolution, has also been well-received. By studying the number of sales, these kinds of stories seem to interest large audiences.[6] Actively showing support in using these histories might encourage game developers to branch out to other cultures when considering using archaeological heritage for the development of a video game.

Academics could help in preserving archaeological heritage by using digital methods and making them public. By providing information that is accessible to all by means of open access, people could be able to get more in touch or become more familiar with their own culture or the culture of the 'other'. Moreover, by implementing non-Western or minority cultures in university curricula that focus on archaeological heritage, such as archaeology, anthropology or history, future academics might become interested in these cultures and provide accurate information through the research they carry out. This, in turn, can help when working together with game developers, as cultures might be represented more accurately than when, for instance, Western academics mainly do research on Western archaeological heritage.

4 Cassidy/Robinson 2017.

5 Ibid.

6 Sledge 2016; Makuch 2017.

Another way of moving away from a Western worldview in the current game industry is simply by studying how non-Western cultures could be portrayed in a video game, and how these archaeological heritages can be digitally preserved. Moreover, these cultures would not be understood as strange or weird. This is apparent when the East is viewed in an Orientalist way. This is a prejudiced viewpoint in which the West is perceived as superior, and the East is seen as inferior. The idea took shape in the 18th and 19th century, in the form of prejudiced Western attitudes of European imperialist missions towards indigenous cultures.[7]

The media industry does, in some cases, move away from an Orientalist viewpoint. An example in which entertainment producers have introduced a minor culture to a large audience, while also speaking with communities of a certain culture to understand a non-Western culture prior to the production phase, was the development of Disney's film *Moana*. This animation film focusses on the journey of a girl from Polynesia.[8] Implementing this stage of production could be of use in game development as well. Academics could help in finding the right resources or could invite game developers to visit museums or sites with them, as the living population of a certain ancient culture might obviously not be alive anymore. After all, academic knowledge reflects the most up-to-date understanding of culture.

Conclusion

Two things can be taken away from this discussion piece. Firstly, by opening a discourse with game developers, academics are able to provide the most reliable information about the past to these developers, who then can reiterate this knowledge in the form of a video game. However, it is important to keep in mind that game developers are creators who also want to entertain their audiences. For this reason, the goal is not presenting a digital world that reflects the ancient one in full detail, but to create a digital environment that might reflect the ancient world as accurate as possible. It is important to keep in mind that it should be somewhat relatable to the audience in order to entertain and educate them at the same time. Academics can, through their research, help in reconstructing the past accurately. Due to the symbiosis of academic research and creative output by game developers, games can be educational and entertaining at the same time. Secondly, both game developers and academics should move away from a Western viewpoint. Game developers should move out of their comfort zone and talk with minorities that are

7 Said 1978.

8 Deitchman 2016, 32–33; Giardina 2016; Sarto 2016.

not much represented in media, and they need to be pressured to do so. Academics could help in diversifying the ancient world and popularize it. This is not a process that can happen in one day, but it is much needed to show non-Western cultures in popular media, so that members from these cultures might feel more represented. A way to excite academics in researching these cultures might be to diversify student curriculums, but also to introduce research on non-Western cultures through symposiums, monographs or through museum collections.

By popularizing archaeological heritage, people might become engaged in protecting certain aspects of archaeological heritage. In addition, games could preserve a part of a culture when this is an integral part of (the development of) video games. Video games, then have the ability to connect people from different cultures. They can get players interested in learning more about non-Western civilizations when they enter mainstream media in an accurate way. We live in a world where people come from many different backgrounds: it is time that this is reflected in video games as well.

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