

Abstracts

ACHIM ARBEITER

Bestattung und Kommemoratio n im frühchristlichen Hispanien

Materielle, ikonographische und inschriftliche Aspekte

Abstract The present contribution sets out to provide a panoramic overview of Hispanic funerary spaces and burial habits. Its chronological frame includes the whole of Late Antiquity (4th to 7th, but especially the 5th and 6th c. AD) and it takes into account a wide range of social groups, most of which were progressively christianized. The only painful lacuna in this panorama consists of the Visigothic royal tombs, as it is still impossible, unfortunately, to describe their local and formal characteristics. The most spectacular and earliest testimonies of the transition to Christianity are the City-of-Rome type sarcophagi with their figurative reliefs, followed by clearly autochthonous pieces and by other imported examples from North Africa and Gaul. Of course, all of these decorated sarcophagi are overwhelmingly outnumbered by (nearly) undecorated monolithic containers of local production. At the same time, mausolea continued to serve as accommodation for privileged burials. Although the old custom of celebrating funerary meals was censured by the Church, its traces can be detected at several places. Occasional efforts to prohibit interments within church buildings remained largely ineffective. The ancient prohibition to bury the dead within the urban *pomerium* gradually grew weaker, also on the Iberian Peninsula, from the 5th c. AD onwards. The materiality of the inhumations, which normally have a west-east orientation, tangibly illustrates the manifold levels of society, spanning from extreme poverty to noticeably elaborate constructions or even to the use of sarcophagi. Secondary burial was a common phenomenon. The inventory of personal outfits and dedicated depots ranges from many ordinary objects to some exceptionally rare findings of outstanding character. Beyond the individual case of a psalmic inscription found inside a tomb, which was restricted to the defunct person's 'privacy', there are countless epigraphic and iconographic messages. The most prominent may be the funerary mosaics, including figurative examples. The funerary mosaics, the tombs decorated with *opus signinum* or inscribed slabs, as well as the visible lids of sunken sarcophagi, raise a special question: did these funerary monuments preserve the general floor level, or did they extend above the surface? Sometimes, the latter seems to be the case, as the evidence from different monuments suggests. As an illustration of especially instructive Hispanic sepulchral inscriptions, examples from Mértola (*Lusitania*) are presented. The paper ends with a discussion of the Pascentius epitaph from Torrebaja (Badajoz), extraordinarily rich in content.

Keywords Late Antique *Hispaniae*, funerary monuments, iconography, epitaphs, commemorative practices, burial

STEFAN ARDELEANU

Materializing Death in Late Antique North Africa

Epitaphs, Burial Types and Rituals in Changing Funerary Landscapes

Abstract This contribution gives an updated overview of funerary habits and epigraphy in Late Antique North Africa. It covers a vast geographical area incorporating the provinces of *Africa Proconsularis*, *Byzacena*, *Numidia Militana*, *Numidia Cirtensis*, *Mauretania Caesariensis* and *Mauretania Sitifensis*. After Italy, North Africa has by far the highest number of preserved Late Antique epitaphs in the West, and in some regions (including rural areas) the abundance of epigraphic material can be taken as evidence for a veritable revival of written self-representation in funerary contexts. After a general decrease of epitaphs – still poorly understood – during the later 3rd and the 4th c. AD, many regions saw remarkable peaks in numbers in the 5th and 6th c. AD. This may be connected to general trends of economic and demographic stability, as well as to the spread of the popular martyr cults. At the same time, ‘interiorized inscriptions’ and ‘closed’ funerary spaces, but also ‘hidden’ epigraphic representation gained relevance, while the habit to express professions and offices was nearly totally abandoned (except for the military and the clerical milieu). Individual and familial funerary representation, however, was still practiced alongside the generally growing trend of collective representation in ‘homogenous’ epitaphs and funerary iconography.

The emphasis of this chapter is on the materiality of epitaphs, their integration in commemorative funerary rituals and the mutual interconnectedness between new developments in funerary customs, tomb types and epigraphic tomb signaling. The role of tombs as markers of social distinction in a period of transforming urban landscapes is analyzed by discussing several local case studies. Although many micro-regional differences in funerary practices can be traced, North Africa also shared multiple similarities with the Western and Central Mediterranean. Attentive analysis of the epitaphs’ materiality, their original spatial setting, their iconography and their visibility allows for reconstructions of social hierarchies, of liturgical movement and of their perception within these transforming funerary landscapes.

Keywords North Africa, funerary epigraphy, commemorative rituals, Late Antique tomb types, social hierarchies

CLAUDIA NAUERTH

Traditionelle Elemente in der christlichen Grabkultur Ägyptens

Abstract This paper presents an interpretation of some Late Antique grave stelae from Egypt, in particular from the Fayyum. There are signs of remarkable changes in the funerary culture of Late Antique Egypt. This contribution focusses on traditional elements of funerary iconography and their transferal to a Christian context. Prime examples include the Egyptian 'Anch', the hieroglyph for 'life' consisting of a T surmounted by a loop, reused as a form of the cross; the 'Orans' figure; and the mother-and-child-group, serving as a model for both the goddess Isis lactans with Harpokrates and for Maria as mother of Jesus.

Keywords Late Antique burial habits, Fayyum, funerary stelae, iconography and epitaphs, anch, orans, mother-and-child-group

DAVIDE BIANCHI

Funerary Customs in Sacred Spaces

Privileged and Monastic Burials in the Provinces of *Palaestina* and *Arabia*

Abstract The aim of this paper is to reflect on the relationship between burials and sacred spaces in the provinces of *Palaestina* and *Arabia*. Some peculiar case studies in monastic and rural contexts will be analysed, taking into account their typology, their arrangement in the built environment and their relation with the surrounding architectural space. Moreover, the key patterns of funerary customs in the regions under examination will be defined, considering the number of people buried in individual or collective tombs, the funerary objects and the epigraphic records.

A holistic approach, involving many disciplines related to funerary research, will therefore be undertaken. Particular attention will be paid to the results of bio-archaeological analysis of skeletal remains found in the burials of the *coenobia* of Mt Nebo and St Lot at Deir 'Ain 'Abata, in order to better understand the identities of the deceased. Epigraphical analysis of mosaic epitaphs in the monastery of Kyria Maria at Scythopolis-Beth Shean will be used to study familial burials in the Palestinian ecclesiastical context. A reflection on funerary goods will be applied to the tombs found in the churches at Umm er-Rasas in order to define the sepulchral habits of the local elite and the commemorative practices for their deceased.

Keywords Privileged burials, monasticism, funerary goods, bio-archaeological analysis, funerary epigraphy, *pellaikon* tombs

PIERRE-LOUIS GATIER

L'épigraphie et les pratiques funéraires dans la province protobyzantine d'Arabie (IV^e–VII^e s. apr. J.-C.)

Abstract During the Early Byzantine period (4th–7th c. AD) the funerary epigraphy of the *Provincia Arabia* saw a very strong decrease in terms of quantity and content, in contrast to developments further south (in *Palaestina Tertia*, the country of Moab, Zoora and the Negev). First of all, stelae became rare in *Arabia*. Subsequently, in the course of the 4th and at the beginning of the 5th c. AD, inscriptions of foundation or ownership of tombs diminished in number. This is particularly obvious in the Hauran, the northern part of the province, where funerary epigraphy had been flourishing during the Roman Imperial period, and where epigrams were still frequent on 4th c. AD tombs. Although a slight revival of funerary stelae apparently took place in the 6th c. AD, this downward trend continued until the complete disappearance of Christian funerary epigraphy in the Early Islamic period. All of the scarce funerary inscriptions from the Early Byzantine period we possess are christianized, either by engraved crosses or by Christian formulas. New practices also appeared. Anepigraphic stelae, simply decorated with crosses, became common in necropolises; offerings were made to Christian shrines for the rest of the deceased, while the rest of the dead were usually buried elsewhere; privileged tombs, finally, were built in or next to certain churches, the clergy and elite families being the main beneficiaries of these privileged tombs.

Keywords *Provincia Arabia*, Jordan, Syria, Hauran, Early Byzantine period, Greek inscriptions, Aramaic inscriptions, tombs, funerary epigraphy, Christianization

SYLVAIN DESTEPHEN

The Funerary Epigraphic Landscape of Late Antique *Asia Minor*

Abstract The conversion of *Asia Minor* to Christianity is a long-lasting process spanning several centuries, from the 1st to 6th c. AD. As written sources only provide episodic and fragmentary evidence, the spread of the new religion, albeit thoroughly studied, is still a complex phenomenon. Fortunately, however, we have a large amount of funerary inscriptions at our disposal, preserved throughout *Asia Minor* (especially in inner Anatolia, but also in some coastal necropoleis). Although less abundant than in the early Roman period, Late Antique epigraphic material in *Asia Minor* clearly reveals how Christianity influenced the phrasing, decoration

and, above all, self-representation of individuals and families, who displayed and claimed a denominational affiliation.

Keywords epitaphs, epigraphic habit, Late Antiquity, Christianisation, funerary *formulae*, *Asia Minor*

JON C. CUBAS DÍAZ

Burying between *Lamos* and *Kalykadnos*

The Many Faces of the Late Antique Funerary Landscapes of Eastern Rough Cilicia

Abstract This paper deals with the funerary culture of Rough Cilicia in Late Antiquity. The settlements discussed offer an insight into the multifaceted funerary landscapes of Late Antique Rough Cilicia, which present a strongly nuanced diversity. Furthermore, these settlements clearly show the potential of combining archaeological and epigraphic approaches when analysing evidence of mortuary practices.

The Jewish and Christian communities of *Korykos* obviously shared similar ideas regarding the conception, use and function of funerary monuments. The epitaphs produced for Christian and Jewish citizens were similar in format, structure, content and design; so were the funerary monuments and their spatial setting. Also, iconographic representations of religious motifs were an integral part of funerary monuments of Christians and Jews alike.

In many necropoleis, proximity to the street remained a decisive factor in the spatial organization and design of funerary spaces. Under the influence of Christianity, church buildings became another central factor in the spatial layout of funerary monuments. This supra-regional phenomenon is clearly noticeable in Rough Cilicia: burial zones in Late Antiquity were often accentuated by church buildings, exercising great power in attracting burials. At the same time, commemorative structures change through spatial relocation of practices to church buildings and the new role of the entire community as the primary target group.

Contemporaneously, alternative concepts for funerary spaces, following standards of their own, were developed and practiced in other settlements in the region, like Karakabaklı. The inhabitants of this affluent, but also quite modestly sized community built their funerary monuments in the immediate vicinity of their houses, far away from the main road. A comparison with contemporary findings from the nearby settlement of Işıkkale is particularly noteworthy in this context, since radically different concepts were pursued there in more than one instance.

Keywords burials, mortuary practices, epitaphs, epigraphy, funerary monuments

JEREMY OTT

Burying at Corinth in Late Antiquity

Evidence from the Late 5th to the Early 7th Century

Abstract Corinth possesses one of the most extensive bodies of archaeological evidence for Late Antique burial practices within the territory of modern Greece. This paper examines the burials of the late 5th to early 7th c. AD, a time of major urban and religious change. Throughout much of this period, land near Corinth's old northern cemetery remained in heavy use for burial, while a new, contracted Late Antique city wall drew graves, often in small clusters, to its periphery. Two 6th c. AD cemetery basilicas attracted burials of the Christian elite, while additional holy sites might be associated with the graves of a broader spectrum of society. Elements of the mortuary sphere of the 5th c. AD endured, with modifications, to the early 7th c. AD. Ceramics, which are usually to be associated with the graveside anointing of the body, were deposited in less than half of graves, and in the 6th c. AD the lekythos became one of the most frequently deposited vessels alongside pitchers. Lamps continued to be widely employed at the funeral and in subsequent commemoration. Vaulted chamber tombs, constructed using masonry or rock-cut, became a popular, and costly, tomb type from the 6th to early 7th c. AD, joining the cist and tile graves already in use. Corinth's epitaphs, which were usually produced for built or rock-cut tombs, are distinctive in the details of tomb purchase sometimes included, and served largely as statements of ownership of mortuary real estate. For epitaphs and, to a lesser degree, the use of rock-cut tombs, a Corinthian influence is visible within the northeast Peloponnese. More broadly, Corinth compares well in its mortuary traditions to cities throughout the province of *Achaëa*, while standing apart from most smaller communities in the wide range of its tomb types and the presence of an upper level of highly ornate tomb construction.

Keywords Corinth, Greece, Early Byzantine cemeteries, mortuary archaeology

JULIA VALEVA

**Architecture and Decoration of Late Antique Tombs
in the Diocese of *Thracia* and Eastern *Illyricum***

Abstract The aim of this article is to present a survey of the funerary monuments commissioned by the members of the well-to-do strata of Late Antique society in the Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire, with regard to both architecture and decoration. While this scope may prove ambitious, an attempt to give an idea of the cultural phenomena and developing ideas, ideals and art forms in this broad region of the empire, which has its general idiosyncrasy notwithstanding inevitable local peculiarities, seems nevertheless well-timed. The monuments are innumerable,

and the relevant publications countless as well – mostly summaries focused on the monuments in a specific modern country. In this article the emphasis is laid on the evidence from Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and North Macedonia. The funerary monuments of Hungary are also discussed because of the shifts in the administrative policy of the Empire, and, importantly, because of their intermediary place between the funerary customs and art of Rome/Italy and the Balkans. Therefore, the chosen method is to describe some main architectural types and iconographies of the funerary monuments, rather than to comment on the achievements and the shortcomings of their publication and interpretation. This contribution, brief as it may be, should be considered as an invitation to scholars working in the field of funerary contexts to consider the evidence from the Balkan provinces, recognizing its characteristics and differentiating, if possible, between the local traditions and the influences coming from both East and West.

Keywords Balkan provinces of the Roman Empire, Late Roman funerary architecture, Late Antique iconography, Roman mausolea, mausolea in private estates, *martyria*.

DONATELLA NUZZO

Le iscrizioni sepolcrali della provincia *Apulia et Calabria* in età tardoantica (IV–VII s. d.C.)

Abstract The aim of this paper is to survey the funerary epigraphic landscape of *Apulia et Calabria* in Late Antiquity (here a ‘long’ Late Antiquity) until the middle of 7th c. AD. As in the other Eastern and Western provinces, the quantity of attested inscriptions drastically decreased compared to the 1st and 2nd c. AD. In addition, the Late Antique epigraphic documentation in *Apulia et Calabria* appears to be concentrated only in some cities of the middle and central area of the *provincia* (especially *Luceria*, *Canusium* and *Venusia*), while in rural areas it seems to be totally absent. Most of the Late Antique funerary inscriptions collected in *Apulia et Calabria* are Jewish, and were found in the important Venosa catacombs; but there are also a lot of epitaphs by Christians. In the paper some aspects of these inscriptions are considered: distribution, chronology, epigraphic supports, *formulae*, language and associated funerary contexts. The use of the epigraphic medium in the funerary habit appears to be related only to the local *élites* – both Christian and Jewish – that were able to equip their tombs with epitaphs. The qualitative level, however, is not always high: a lot of inscriptions are carved into local stone slabs, rather than – only in very rare cases – on marble. *Tituli picti* constitute the most numerous category within the epigraphic documentation.

Keywords Funerary inscriptions, Late Antique cemeteries, *provincia Apulia et Calabria*, Christian and Jewish communities, hypogaea

NORBERT ZIMMERMANN

Die römischen Katakomben

Überlegungen zu Besitzverhältnissen, zur räumlichen Nutzung
und zur Grabtypologie anhand der Katakomben Domitilla,
SS. Marcellino e Pietro und Randanini

Abstract This contribution about the funerary landscapes of Rome's catacombs seeks to introduce the reader to some general characteristics of the catacombs, and to draw attention to the archaeological framework in which inscriptions were embedded in this particular type of funerary monuments. The paper will discuss the juridical and economic preconditions that led to the development of the funerary system of catacombs. Who were the owners of the catacombs? Who owned the tombs within the catacombs, and how were they purchased? How was tomb ownership articulated (or not articulated)? In order to answer these questions this contribution will first address general issues concerning ownership in the Roman catacombs (plots, funerary spaces, tombs), use of space within sepulchral areas and different burial types. Depending on certain local preconditions in a given catacomb, such as the quality of the tufa and the different working traditions of the *fossore*s (gravediggers), it is possible to identify archaeological evidence for several hardly known characteristics of funerary practices within the catacombs. On the one hand, the comparison of certain catacombs allows us to trace some general developments in the evolution from early, small-scaled complexes of the 3rd c. AD to huge necropoleis of the 4th c. AD. On the other hand, significant differences can be observed between *coemeteria* predominantly used by Christians and those predominantly used by Jews. The examples discussed in this contribution include the Christian catacombs of Domitilla and SS. Marcellino e Pietro, as well as the Jewish catacomb of Vigna Randanini. The paper will focus on the characterization of these catacombs from an explicitly archaeological perspective, which includes the positioning and materiality of funerary inscriptions, largely leaving their content aside.

Keywords Roman catacombs, tomb typology, ownership of tombs, funerary plots, collective tombs, *fossore*s, collective necropoleis

ANTONIO ENRICO FELLE

Paesaggi epigrafici nelle necropoli della Roma tardoantica

Alcuni casi esemplari per una 'epigrafia archeologica'

Abstract Of the inscriptions in the catacombs of Rome, a large majority still exists in its original context. This offers an exceptional opportunity to consider all characteristics of these 'written monuments' (material composition, execution techniques, writing types, textual content and the presence of images) in relation to their re-

spective contexts. The amount and quality of the inscriptions (not exclusively epitaphs: also funerary graffiti and Damasus' *elogia martyrum*) define different 'epigraphic landscapes' within the catacombs, that obviously change along their *longue durée*, from the very beginnings (in the last decades of 2nd c. AD) to the last burials (in the 5th c. AD).

The case-study considered here is the epigraphic dossier of the Domitilla catacomb, the largest funerary complex in the *suburbium* of Rome in Late Antiquity. Its quantitatively and qualitatively rich 'epigraphic landscape' could offer new insights into the history and development of the catacomb, but also help to investigate the actual management of a Christian collective and/or communitarian funerary complex in Late Antique Rome.

Keywords Late Antique Rome, Christian Catacombs, Epigraphy by Christians, Epigraphic Archaeology

FULVIA MAINARDIS

Luoghi, monumenti, epigraphic habit

Note sulle necropoli tardoantiche della parte orientale della *Venetia* et *Histria*

Abstract The paper examines the Late Antique funerary landscape and its epigraphic record in the towns of Eastern *Venetia* (*Aquileia*, *Iulia Concordia*, *Tergeste*, *Iulium Carnicum*, *Forum Iulii*). Some cases are studied to outline the materiality of the region's epigraphic culture and its relation with the topography of preexisting cemeteries. Unfortunately, for several contexts (even important ones like *Aquileia*) the reconstruction can only be fragmentary, due to the effects of spoliation and reuse that have completely uprooted the ancient contexts. Several cases of continuity with the burial grounds of the Imperial period are evident, as well as a small number of tombs that cannot immediately be attributed to the new religion, according to the taphonomic choices.

Keywords *Venetia* orientale, *Aquileia*, *Iulia Concordia*, *Tergeste*, *Iulium Carnicum*, *Forum Iulii*, epigrafia funeraria tardoantica, necropoli

ROLAND PRIEN

Shifting Burial Rites – Shifting Identities?

Late Antique Burial Practices on the Rhine Frontier

Abstract Numerous Late Antique burials are known from the urban and rural sites along the Rhine border and throughout its hinterland. The Palatinate offers an especially vast range of archaeological material. Until now, however, this extensive material has mostly been the subject of chronological studies or has, on rare occasions, been discussed with regards to the ethnic identity of those buried. The actual burial rites and grave contents, as well as further aspects of the cult of the dead, have most often not been considered. The extensive material sources certainly allow for deep insights into Late Antique burial practices in a border region of the Roman Empire, which was exposed to various cultural influences and whose emerging ‘border society’ became a model for the burial customs of the early Middle Ages. This paper gives a brief overview of selected burial grounds from towns and *villae* along the Upper and Lower Rhine. Due to the absence of structures above ground, it focuses on the grave goods and their possible functions within burial rites.

Keywords Burial Rites, Late Antiquity, *Germania*, Ethnic Identities, Christianisation

JONAS OSNABRÜGGE

Transformation und Verschwinden

Inschriften in der Funerärkultur an Oberrhein und südlichem Mittelrhein in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter

Abstract Epigraphic and funerary culture along the Upper Rhine Valley underwent many changes in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. While several hundred funerary inscriptions from the 1st to 3rd c. AD are known to us, the amount of newly erected epitaphs sank rapidly during the 4th c. AD, all but disappearing from the cities and the countryside. Even from larger cities, almost no funerary inscriptions are known, while at the same time, the area features many richly furnished burials. During this time, a large amount of inscribed funerary monuments disappeared from public view, being used to build the Late Antique city walls of numerous cities in the Rhine Valley.

On the other hand, apart from this abrupt end of the epitaphic habit, some areas show signs of continuity, especially when taking the area along the Middle Rhine into consideration. This continuity went along with a transformation of the epitaphs’ external and internal form. The content of the inscriptions and the letter forms changed, and so did the monuments, along with the way they were positioned. A closer inspection of the so far largely neglected lateral sides of the epitaphs offers new information about their positioning, possibly in so far unknown

burial buildings, as well as on the re-use of earlier funerary monuments. Some decorative aspects of the later epitaphs might even consciously emulate earlier forms from the same places.

The aim of this paper is to trace the local developments of the epitaphic culture during Late Antiquity, contrasting the relatively inscription-rich area to the north with the almost empty south. A possible explanation for the scarce evidence in the south, other than a general decline of epigraphic culture, might be found in a low activity of Christian communities and the nearly total absence of burial in collectively used funerary buildings, which offered an attractive context for epigraphic communication in other areas.

Keywords Epitaphic Culture, Late Antiquity, Funerary Inscriptions, *Germania*, Upper Rhine Valley

HILTRUD MERTEN

Christliche Bestattungskultur in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter am Beispiel von St. Maximin in Trier

Abstract Early Christian grave inscriptions are among the most important sources which provide us with an insight into life and death in Late Antique Trier. The number of inscriptions is high, consisting of about 1 300 individual items. In comparison: more than 42 000 Christian inscriptions of the Late Antique period are known from Rome, about 4 000 from Carthage. The numerical proportions show the importance of the Christian community at Trier. These epigraphic sources offer a reliable basis for an investigation into the social structure of the Christian community and church organisation, as well as into the development of church and society after the collapse of the Roman Empire.

Christian funerary culture can be illustrated impressively by the example of a 4th c. AD cemetery basilica discovered on the site of the later abbey of St Maximin. Size and equipment of the building suggest that the Christian community was protected by the imperial court residing in Trier. Nearly 1 000 sarcophagi, the high-quality of the inscriptions and the fact that the dead were dressed in precious robes indicate that the persons buried were members of the upper social classes.

Members of the high society were predominantly buried near the graves of saints. These tombs, enjoying the powerful protection of bishops venerated as saints, can be found on both the northern (St Maximin/St Paulin) and the southern cemetery (St Matthias).

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the holy tombs continued to retain their attraction. The example of St Maximin shows that burials in the funeral hall continued to be of the same social class. Funeral rites, however, changed, as noble and wealthy Franconian families provided their dead with precious jewellery instead

of sumptuous clothing. Concerning Christian funerary culture, the transition from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages did not result in a rupture but proceeded gradually.

Keywords Early Christian epitaphs, cemetery basilica, Late Antique textiles, inhumation *ad sanctos*, change of burial practices.

MORGANE UBERTI

Les épitaphes en leur *milieu*

Remarques à partir du matériel épigraphique de l'Aquitaine tardo-antique et alto-médiévale

Abstract Based on the study of some Late Antique and Early Medieval epitaphs from Southwestern Gaul, the article asks the following question: How did inscriptions shape funerary spaces and how did they work/act within these spaces, if we consider them as spaces of social practices? In other words, what do they 'offer' (if we consider the concept of 'affordance')? It is therefore no longer appropriate to determine the epigraphic gesture, neither appreciate its communicative value, but to analyze dynamics driven by epitaphs in the experience and the making of place, in this case the necropolis, insofar it physically inhabits it. In which way do epitaphs affect their surrounding space, what does this space, because it is visited, affect it in terms of uses and meanings? How are the relationships set up between the epitaph and its environment and all that composes it (other tombs, visitors, landscape) over time? In this respect, archaeological approach is an adequate mode of investigation since it allows looking back at the evolution of space and its component over time.

After a short presentation of epigraphic habits in the Late Antique provinces of *Aquitania* and *Novempopulania* in order to fit epitaphs into their local writing context, the paper focusses on spatial dynamics at work in the funerary space as a landscape and a place of experience, drawing on few cases study from *Aquitania*. If the whole fails to capture the portrait of *one* specific funerary epigraphic habit in *Aquitania*, it raises the question of processes both visual and kinetics in changing the perception of a funerary space to a written place, and so the role played by inscriptions in the making of 'placeness'. Thus, funerary inscriptions from Southwestern Gaul are an opportunity to explore a way of approaching the epigraphic material in its *milieu*, that is, an ecology of inscriptions.

Keywords Late Antique epigraphy, South Western Gaul, necropoleis, visuality, motions, placeness, burial practices