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Animals in funeral practices in Belgic Gaul between the end of the 1st century BC and the beginning of the 5th century AD: From gallic practices to Gallo-Roman practices.

Sébastien Lepetz

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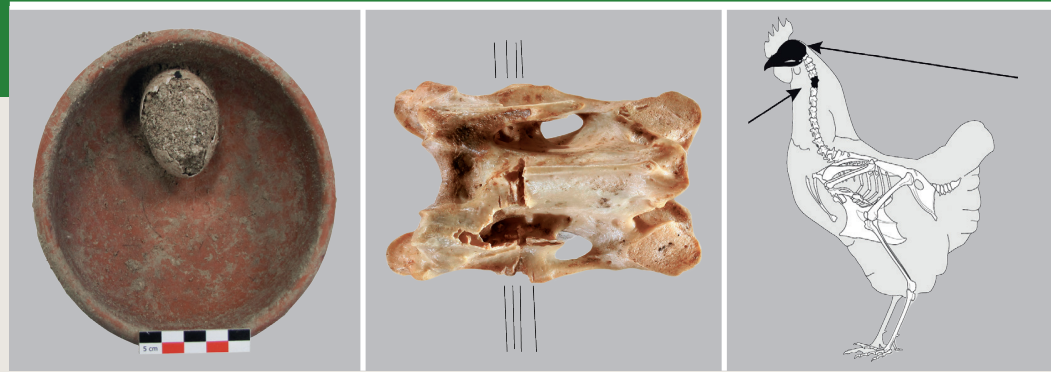
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KOLLOQUIEN ZUR VOR- UND FRÜHGESCHICHTE 26



Sabine Deschler-Erb | Umberto Albarella
Silvia Valenzuela Lamas | Gabriele Rasbach

ROMAN ANIMALS IN RITUAL AND FUNERARY CONTEXTS

Proceedings of the 2nd Meeting of the
Zooarchaeology of the Roman Period Working
Group, Basel, 1st–4th February 2018

Sabine Deschler-Erb, Umberto
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DEUTSCHES ARCHÄOLOGISCHES INSTITUT
Römisch-Germanische Kommission, Frankfurt a. M.

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Vorwort zur Reihe „Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte“

In Händen halten Sie, liebe Leserin und lieber Leser, den 26. Band der „Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte“, der Ihnen neu und doch vertraut vorkommen mag. Denn diese Reihe, die von der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission (RGK) und der Eurasien-Abteilung des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (DAI) gemeinsam herausgegeben wird, existiert seit 23 Jahren, seit im Jahr 1997 die Akten des Internationalen Perlensymposiums in Mannheim als Band 1 publiziert wurden. Neu ist aber, dass die RGK erstmals die Herausgabe eines Bandes im neuen Reihenformat des DAI betreut hat. Die Aufmachung der „Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte“ (KVF) entspricht nun der Aufmachung zahlreicher weiterer Publikationsreihen des DAI. Das neue Layout ist moderner, attraktiver und nutzerfreundlicher. Es ist nun für viele DAI-Publikationsreihen nutzbar und hat einerseits einen hohen Wiedererkennungswert, erlaubt andererseits individuelle Anpassungen und Nutzungen.

Auch der vorliegende Band ist, wie es seit ihren Anfängen prägend für die KVF ist, ein Beispiel international ausgerichteter, Forschungstraditionen und -regionen übergreifender Wissenschaft. Inhaltlich schließt dieser 26. Band an eine ganze Reihe von KVF-Sammelbänden mit interdisziplinärer bzw. fachübergreifender Ausrichtung an. Mit KVF 26 stehen diesmal interdisziplinäre Untersuchungen zu Mensch-Tier-Beziehungen in den verschiedenen regionalkulturellen Kontexten des Römischen Reiches im Mittelpunkt und insbesondere die Rolle von Tieren in Zusammenhang mit Bestattungen und anderen Ritualen.

Knochengewebe vermag sehr gut, viele verschiedene Spuren menschlichen Handelns zu konservieren, und diese Spuren können wir als Zeugnisse dieser Handlungen, aber auch der dahinterstehenden Überlegungen, Absichten und Traditionen verstehen. So erlauben Tierknochen, aber auch andere Überreste wie Eierschalen, die Verknüpfung zoologischer Methoden und Fragen mit jenen einer sozial- und kulturhistorisch orientierten Archäologie. Tierreste sind also in jedem Sinne *archäologische* Funde, die nicht nur zu Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsfragen Auskunft geben können, auch nicht allein zu sozialhierarchisch begründeten Unterschieden bei Bestattungsbeigaben, sondern auch zu *per se* kulturhistorischen Fragen wie eben jenen nach kulturell, religiös

bzw. weltanschaulich bestimmten Praktiken, nach Differenzen in ihrer Ausübung, nach ihren regional spezifischen Bedeutungen und nach ihren Veränderungen.

Damit liegt ein informativer und instruktiver 26. Band der KVF vor mit neuen Ansätzen, neuen Fragen und neuen Einsichten in einem neuen gestalterischen Gewand. Die Aufnahme der Reihe KVF in die einheitliche Publikationsgestaltung des DAI ermöglicht auch, diesen und weitere KVF-Bände in Zukunft in der *iDAI.world* – der digitalen Welt des DAI – unter *iDAI.publications/books* online zugänglich zu machen und zum Abruf im Open Access bereitzustellen. Zwar dient auch den interdisziplinär arbeitenden Altertumswissenschaften das gedruckt erscheinende Werk nach wie vor als Hauptmedium fachwissenschaftlichen Austauschs, doch stehen uns durch die digitale Vernetzung unterschiedlicher Daten- und Publikationsformate mittlerweile zahlreiche weitere Möglichkeiten der Veröffentlichung wissenschaftlicher Inhalte zur Verfügung. Das neue Publikationsformat ermöglicht die zukunftsweisende Verknüpfung von Print und digitalen Dokumentations- und Publikationsressourcen, z. B. durch das zeitgleiche Bereitstellen digitaler Supplemente.

Das Erscheinen von 26 Bänden in kurzen Abständen zeigt, dass die vor über 20 Jahren konzipierte Reihe erfolgreich war und ist, innovativ bleibt und in eine lebendige Zukunft blickt. Auch künftig werden Eurasien-Abteilung und RGK die Reihe „Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte“ im neuen Gewand und – wo sinnvoll und notwendig – als hybride Verknüpfung analoger und digitaler Wissensvermittlung fortführen. Und wie bisher werden wir in die KVF Beiträge von Tagungen und Symposien aufnehmen, an deren Vorbereitung und Durchführung wir personell bzw. organisatorisch beteiligt waren.

Zuletzt noch ein Dank an alle an der vorliegenden Publikation Beteiligten. Für die Möglichkeit im neuen Reihenformat des DAI publizieren zu können, danken wir ganz herzlichen den Kolleginnen und Kollegen der Redaktion der Zentrale. Die Bildbearbeitung der Beiträge lag in den Händen von Oliver Wagner. Johannes Gier war für das Lektorat der Beiträge verantwortlich. Lizzie Wright redigierte die englischen Texte, Hans-Ulrich Voß betreute die Drucklegung des Buches. Ihnen wie den Herausgeber*innen des Bandes danken wir sehr für die hervorragende Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Publikation.

Frankfurt am Main, den 12.11.2020

Eszter Bánffy
Erste Direktorin

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Alexander Gramsch
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Preface to the series “Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte”

In your hands, dear reader, you hold the 26th volume of the series “Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte”: It might seem to you different, but still familiar, because this series, concomitantly published by the Romano-Germanic Commission (RGK) and the Eurasia Department of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), has been in existence for 23 years. The first volume, published in 1997, consisted of the proceedings of the “Internationales Perlensymposium” held in Mannheim. What is new is that the RGK has published a volume in the new DAI series format for the first time. The layout of “Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte” (KVF) now matches the layout of numerous other DAI publication series. This modern layout is more attractive and more user-friendly; the new format is mirrored across many DAI publication series. Not only does it have a distinctive design; it also enables individual adaptations and uses.

The present volume, as is characteristic of the KVF series from its beginnings, is an example of internationally oriented scholarship spanning diverse research traditions and research fields. In terms of content, this 26th volume continues a long tradition of conference proceedings with an interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary orientation published within KVF. The focus of KVF 26 is on interdisciplinary studies of human-animal relationships in different regional-cultural contexts of the Roman Empire. In this, particular emphasis lies on the role of animals in burial and other ritual contexts.

Bone tissue excellently preserves many different traces of human actions. These traces can be interpreted as the evidence of these actions as well as of the underlying reflections, intentions, and traditions. Animal bones as well as other remains such as eggshells therefore make it possible to link zoological methods and issues with those related to socially and cultural-historically oriented archaeology. Animal remains are thus *archaeological* finds in every sense: They provide information not only about diet and economy, or about differences in grave goods based on social hierarchy. They touch on key cultural issues such as culturally, religiously or ideologically determined practices. Moreover, zooarchaeological analyses allow us to detect differences in these practices, to identify regionally specific meanings and the changes therein.

Thus, an informative and instructive 26th volume of the KVF series is available in a new design, including new approaches, new research questions, and new insights. In the future, through the incorporation of the KVF series into the common DAI publication design this and further volumes can be published online: on the *iDAI.world* platform – the digital world of the DAI – under *iDAI.publications/books* and in Open Access. Printed publications admittedly still serve as a main medium for subject-specific exchanges for interdisciplinary archaeological studies. The new publication format allows digital networking of various data and publication formats providing us with numerous additional possibilities for the publication of scientific content and enabling the future-oriented linking of print and digital documentation and publication resources, for example through the simultaneous provision of digital supplements.

The publication of 26 KVF volumes at short intervals shows that this series conceived over 20 years ago has been successful, remains innovative, and looks ahead to a lively future. From now on the Eurasia Department and the Romano-Germanic Commission will continue the series “Kolloquien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte” in the new design and, where this seems reasonable and vital, in the form of a hybrid connection of analogue and digital knowledge. As in the past, in the KVF series we will continue incorporating proceedings of meetings and symposia in the preparation of which we are involved personally or organisationally.

Lastly we want to express our gratitude to all who participated in producing the present publication. We thank our colleagues from the editorial office at the Head Office of the German Archaeological Institute for the opportunity to publish in the new DAI series format. The digital imaging of the contributions was carried out by Oliver Wagner. Johannes Gier was responsible for the copyediting of the contributions. Lizzie Wright edited the English texts. Hans-Ulrich Voß was in charge of the editorial process. We are very grateful to all these people and to the editors of the volume for the outstanding preparation and realisation of this publication.

Translated by Karoline Mazurié de Keroualin.

Frankfurt am Main, 12 November 2020

Eszter Bánffy
Director

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Head of the editorial office

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(Logo: Stefanie Deschler)

Preface

by Sabine Deschler-Erb / Umberto Albarella / Silvia Valenzuela Lamas / Gabriele Rasbach

This volume includes contributions that were originally presented at the conference *Roman Animals in Ritual and Funerary Contexts*, which was held in Basel 1st–4th February 2018 and organised by Sabine Deschler-Erb. The conference represented the second meeting of the International Council for Archaeozoology (ICAZ) Working Group on the *Zooarchaeology of the Roman Period*.

ICAZ Working Groups are largely informal and independent collectives of researchers engaged with a theme of common interest. Their association with ICAZ allows them to connect to a larger international community and benefit from a number of shared facilities, such as the ICAZ web page <<https://www.alexandriaarchive.org/icaz/index>> (last access: 20.10.20)> and Newsletter <<http://alexandriaarchive.org/icaz/publications-newsletter>> (last access: 20.10.20)>. They also enjoy the opportunity to share the ICAZ ethos of collaboration, mutual aid, and international solidarity.

The *Zooarchaeology of the Roman Period* ICAZ Working Group was originally proposed by Silvia Valenzuela Lamas and Umberto Albarella and approved by the ICAZ International Committee in 2014. The aspiration to create such a group emerged from the awareness that the Roman World was intensively connected. Nevertheless, much research on the use of animals in Roman or Romanised areas has been carried out at a localised level, often oblivious of parallel studies undertaken in other regions of Roman influence. It was clear that many of the investigated research themes – such as the use of animals in religious contexts, livestock trade, and husbandry improvements, to mention just a few – would benefit from greater integration and enhanced international synergies. This applied to the methodological approach, as well as the actual evidence from different areas of the Empire. With this objective in mind, the first meeting was organised in Sheffield (UK) 20th–22nd November 2014 by the two Working Group promoters and focused on *Husbandry in the Western Roman Empire: a zooarchaeological perspective*. The core objective of the meeting was to bring together researchers operating in different areas of the former Roman World and contiguous regions, which was successfully achieved. Some of the contributions to that conference were published in a monographic issue of the *European*

Journal of Archaeology (Volume 20, Special Issue 3, August 2017).

The focus on the western Empire that characterised the first meeting led to the need to open up geographically for the second meeting and focus on a thematic investigation which would be of fully international relevance. Sabine Deschler-Erb proposed to organise the second meeting in Basel (Switzerland) and this, at the very core of Europe, proved to be a very successful location. She suggested a number of possible topics to the informal membership of the group and the theme of ‘ritual’ was chosen. This was another fruitful move as there was hardly any shortage of material to present, and the conference provided a whirlwind of case studies across different areas, whose connections and shared questions could clearly be identified. The objective of the second meeting to move beyond the focus on the Western Empire was fully achieved. The list of papers included in this volume clearly shows the great geographic range on display, with different contributions presenting research based in the south, north, east, and west of the Roman area. The modern countries featured in the book include Austria, Belgium, Britain, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.

The Basel conference and its proceedings should provide an ideal springboard for further success and interconnection of researchers investigating the use of animals in Roman times.

Last but not least, we would like to express our great gratitude to all of the institutions and people who made the Basel conference and these proceedings possible. We thank the University of Basel, especially the Integrative Prehistory and Archaeological Science, for hosting the conference, as well as for technical and administrative support; the Swiss National Foundation, the Provincial Roman Archaeology Working group of Switzerland, and the Vindonissa chair of the University of Basel for their financial support; the Römerstadt Augusta Raurica, the Kantonsarchäologie Aargau, and the Römerlager Vindonissa for their warm welcome and generous catering; the organisation team, Monika Mráz, David Roth, and Viviane Kolter-Furrer, whose help was essential before, during, and after the conference; all student volunteers, Florian Bachmann, Debora Brunner, Marina Casaulta,

Laura Caspers, Sarah Lo Russo, Hildegard Müller, and Benjamin Sichert, who worked with great commitment; and the Romano-Germanic Commission, Frankfurt, who accepted these proceedings for their series. We thank Hans-Ulrich Voß and Johannes Gier, who carried out an excellent editing job.

The next conference will take place in Dublin (Ireland) on 11th–13th March 2021 and will be organised by Fabienne Pigière on the topic of *Animals in Roman economy*. It will certainly provide new opportunities for cross-fertilisation, collaboration, and exchange of ideas.



Animals in funeral practices in Belgic Gaul between the end of the 1st century BC and the beginning of the 5th century AD: From gallic practices to Gallo-Roman practices.

by *Sébastien Lepetz*

Keywords

Sacrifice, Rite, Burial, Offering, Zooarchaeology, Antiquity

Schlüsselwörter

Opfer, Ritual, Begräbnis, Opferung, Archäozoologie, Antike

Mots-clès

Sacrifice, ritual, funéraires, immolation, archéozoologie, antiquité

Introduction

For many years now, excavations in what is today the north of France have uncovered numerous cemeteries dating from the end of the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD. Their excavation has allowed archaeologists to compile a remarkable body of finds that allows us to describe a part of the activities conducted at the time of the funeral. Some tombs are very rich and have yielded significant quantities of ceramics and diverse other objects, which could then be studied, and which have revealed the complexity of the deposits. These sites were all excavated within the past years and subjected to methods of excavation that, compared with those used on earlier excavations, increased the amount of information that was recorded. We are able to understand the sequence and the logic of the deposits, the modes of cremation and of collecting the human remains on the pyre, the aspects relating to the presence of flexible containers made of perishable materials (bags, baskets), the presence of shelves in the grave, and other facilities that are present.

These excavations have resulted in analyses that allow us to better understand the funerary rites themselves, their diversity in Belgic Gaul, and their specifics per province in comparison with Roman customs. Certain cemeteries have yielded burials covering multiple centuries, providing precious indications of the evolution of funerary practices in the region. Among these ritual practices are those involving animals.

Within this corpus of sites, 20 cemeteries (in 17 different municipalities) have yielded 464 burials with remains of animals. The vast majority of the data from these burials are unpublished, as are the other archaeological data from these sites.

There is not enough space in this paper to describe the sites themselves in detail, even though each necropolis, each tomb even, merits such a description, in the sense that each deposit is unique and presents unique characteristics, having its own history and bearing witness to unique actions – loaded with social, symbolic, or

ritual meaning – conducted by a family. It is clear that the place of the animals within these events can only be entirely understood if their remains are incorporated into a global approach that integrates the totality of the archaeological objects, artefacts, and descriptions. A complete analysis of the tombs should therefore be conducted.

But while we await the detailed publication of these sites, it is nevertheless possible to reveal certain general aspects of practices conducted in the northern part of Gaul. Several analytical or synthesising studies are already available for the region under discussion here and for the adjacent regions¹. They evaluate certain characteristics of the faunal deposits and certain aspects of the evolution of these deposits. They also touch on the significance of the gestures observed in relation to the corpse – sacrifices, offerings, shared meals – underlining the ever-present difficulty of recognising the way in which the animals are implicated in the different phases of the funeral (whether entire animals or animals cut in pieces, and whether cooked, eaten, or exposed).

I propose to complete our picture of the practices carried out around the tomb by relying on this large body of evidence. The objective is to contribute to a better understanding of the specifics of provincial practices and to better define their evolution under the Roman Empire in the northern part of Gaul. The crux of this approach is our capacity to link our archaeological information to practices in pre-Roman Gaul, in Roman Italy, and in the Roman provinces to local habits that may be particular to certain cities, and to habits that are particular to individual families.

With this in mind, I will first outline Gallic practices (this description will be short, because these practices have been described in detail elsewhere). Then I will also outline some elements of the Roman context as it is known from texts and from the *Porta Nocera* necropolis at Pompeii. Then I will describe and analyse the practices at the end of the 1st century BC and the first two centuries AD, on the one hand, and the practices of Late Antiquity, on the other.

Practices in independent northern Gaul

Zooarchaeological studies conducted on Gallic funerary sites have resulted in deep knowledge about practices in the Late Iron Age². In the 5th and 4th centuries BC, the species concerned are essentially pig (*Sus domesticus*), cow (*Bos taurus*), and caprines (sheep, *Ovis aries*, and goat, *Capra hircus*). A change is seen from the 2nd century BC onwards, when pig becomes dominant and dog (*Canis familiaris*) and chicken (*Gallus domesticus*) appear. These deposits were either made on the pyre or beside the burnt remains of the deceased human, within the tomb. In the majority of cases, the pieces concern burnt parts of animals (including the head, shoulders, thighs, and ribs). But studies have shown that other categories of remains are also present, including defleshed

bones of equids, whose meaning is not always easy to determine. Méniel has also revealed the existence of a special layout of anatomical parts³. Pieces of meat reconstitute animals that appear complete but that are not. Anatomical parts are missing, but their absence is hidden by the ceramic deposits. It's about giving the impression that the pig carcasses are more complete than they really are or that there is a greater abundance of victuals than there really is. One of the peculiarities of the tombs of the final part of the La Tène period is a significant and visible presence of deposits of meat, and not just in the high-ranking tombs. This seems to be a cultural trait, which is interesting to compare and contrast with Roman traditions in the funerary domain.

1 MÉNIEL 1995; MÉNIEL 2002; MÉNIEL 2008a; Méniel 2008b; METZLER-ZENS et al. 1999; LEPETZ 1996; LEPETZ 2017; LEPETZ/ VAN ANDRINGA 2004.

2 See for example METZLER-ZENS 1999; MÉNIEL 2002; MÉNIEL 2008a; MÉNIEL 2008b.

3 MÉNIEL 2002; MÉNIEL 2008a; MÉNIEL 2008b.

Practices in Italy

For the Roman world, the different temporal stages of the funeral, to the extent that we can understand these based on tombs and texts, proceed in a sequence that is generally known. The funeral itself takes place near the tomb. In terms of rite, the choice of inhumation or cremation is not of great importance in Rome⁴: sometimes inhumation is dominant, sometimes cremation, and sometimes both forms of burial are practiced simultaneously. Inhumation is more frequently practiced from the 5th to 1st centuries BC, after which the dominant mode is once again cremation. During the 2nd century AD, things change again, and inhumation once more becomes dominant. This change also occurs in the eastern provinces, more or less at the same time. These changes were not the result of any particular belief, but, rather, of fashions, customs, and habits, and the Latin authors do not write about these changes⁵. The rites performed around inhumation are, in their structure, identical to those performed around cremation.

This clarification is important, because it means that we do not necessarily need to look for changes in how animals are involved whenever we see a change in how the human remains are treated. And, if we see changes in how animals are treated, these do not necessarily need to be explained by religious considerations.

The different stages of the funeral are as follows, each accompanied by its own gestures: in the case of cremation, the living place the corpse on a human-made pyre, they burn it, they collect the bones, they place them in a container, and they bury them. Then they close the tomb and, over a period of days, weeks, or months, take moments to commemorate the deceased.

Animals can play a role at different points in time during the funeral. Once the corpse of the deceased has been placed on the pyre, the living place various offerings, such as personal objects, perfume, and flowers. Cicero lists the sacrifice of a female pig, for the goddess Ceres, as the first rite⁶. The living place the remains of the sacrifice on the pyre. The family then shares a meal around the pyre. Scheid presumes that the animal is thus shared among Ceres, the deceased, and the family⁷.

This sacrifice-banquet is part of a series of rites through which the tomb is legitimised, and through this meal, the community of the living says farewell to its deceased.

Funerary rituals are rites of passage *par excellence*, because they are used to confer on the deceased a new status and new properties⁸. They have as objective to permit the person to depart the world of the living and gradually enter that of the dead, to assure the best journey possible to the hereafter, and to install the deceased in their new status: the status of a dead person. After the extinction of the pyre, the bones are collected and deposited in a tomb. This is the start of a period of nine days that ends in a sacrifice. During this sacrifice, which is celebrated near the tomb, the living definitively distanced themselves from the dead person. In effect, they offer a sacrifice to the Manes, the collective divinity of the deceased ancestors, of which the deceased is now a part. The relatives of the deceased also make a sacrifice to the gods Penates or Lares (who are the household gods), and they also consume a sacrificial banquet to which the family – all except for the deceased – and the neighbours are invited⁹.

This habit of eating a communal meal was sufficiently common that permanent structures, *triclinia*, were constructed specifically for this purpose close to the tombs. Examples are known from the necropolis of Pompeii (*fig. 1*).

For inhumations, it is likely that the gestures were not much different and that they also involved the sacrifice of a female pig to Ceres. For inhumations, however, one wonders how the banquet was ‘shared’ with the deceased. J. Scheid envisages that the inhumation represented a more sober funerary rite than a cremation and that, for example, the sacrifice of a pig was replaced with the imbibing of drink and the deposition of fruit¹⁰.

Subsequently, at intervals determined by the religious calendar, during the *parentalia*, for example, the family made sacrifices to the Manes and Penates of the deceased, and in these cases, the living also shared a meal.

This information acquaints us with the succession of gestures, including those involving animals (during sacrifices or during meals), and with their meaning. It is clear that the presence of remains of animals is not necessarily the result of a sacrifice. They may relate to the family meal. It is also clear that the food is not intended to feed the deceased¹¹, but is instead related to defining the tomb and to the need to indicate the separation from

4 SCHEID 1998; SCHEID 2008.

5 SCHEID 1998.

6 CICERO, *On the Laws*, 2, 22.

7 SCHEID 2005; SCHEID 2008.

8 VAN GENNEP 1981.

9 SCHEID 2008.

10 SCHEID 2008.

11 LEPETZ / VAN ANDRINGA 2004.



1 Porta Nocera Necropolis, Pompeii. *Triclinium* next to the tomb in enclosure 7ES (Photo: S. Lepetz).

the world of the living. The texts thus provide information on the meaning of the gestures, which is something that archaeology is not able to do. Our archaeological data contribute to the description of gestures, but they tell us nothing about their meaning. At the same time, we are aware that the information provided by the texts is not particularly detailed, because they are private gestures, which, among the Romans, are not celebrated by a priest but by the father or son of the family. The gestures to be performed are thus left to individuals to carry out, who, depending on the family, the context, and the region, may differ in how they carry them out. This also explains why the rites are not described in detail: first, from the point of view of the religious and political authorities, they did not need to be, and second, they had to take multiple forms.

It is then interesting to compare and contrast the information from the texts with that obtained through archaeology in order to measure the variety and to analyse elements that either support or contradict the general framework or, indeed, to obtain more detail about certain aspects of practices and rites. This is possible with the excavations carried out in Pompeii.

The excavations undertaken at Pompeii from 2003 to 2007 concerned several funerary enclosures in a funerary quarter of the necropolis of *Porta Nocera*, located by the south-east exit of the town¹². The excavations allowed for the study of 58 tombs dating from the last quarter of the 1st century BC to the third quarter of the 1st century AD. Among these were five primary tombs with individual single inhumations, one secondary double tomb with cremations, and one secondary triple tomb with cremations. The remainder are individual cremation tombs, bringing the total number of individuals studied to 64. In general, the tombs were not very

rich in material remains. Apart from the funerary urns, no deposits of ceramics were present in the tombs. Only glass balsamaria relating to libations were well represented. Numerous faunal remains were found mixed with burnt human bone, coins, fragments of worked bone, and botanical remains. Some are from the stage of cremation of the corpse, having been part of pieces of meat placed on the pyre. We have collected them from urns; from the remnants of pyres deposited around the urn in the pits; from the levels of the pyres themselves (some of them were excavated); from pits in which had been placed the remains from the cleaning of the cremation areas; and from the circulation levels (since these layers have accumulated remains resulting from successive re-excavation and reorganisation of the tombs).

Two thirds of the tombs (or 36) yielded burnt animal bone. The taxa represented in these cremated remains are pig, sheep, goat, chicken, and fish.

The remains of other taxa, namely, horse/donkey (*Equus* sp.) and dog, were found as well, burnt and sometimes mixed with the human bone. But analysis tends to indicate that these items do not relate to funerary rites.

With respect to pig, although pieces of meat were placed on certain pyres, this practice was far from universal, as only 30% of the tombs yielded pig. In the majority of cases, these are single skeletal elements relating to small pieces of meat, perhaps culinary preparations. The 93 burnt bones and teeth derive from all parts of the animal (head, limbs, distal limb), and no selection is evident. Caprines are also present in the tombs, but in lower frequencies, with a combined total of just 26 burnt bones, deriving from six tombs.

Chicken (105 items) was also found in both the tombs and the cremation areas. Remains of chicken were placed on at least eleven pyres. At most only about a dozen different skeletal elements are represented, which seems insufficient to envisage the presence of whole birds.

Fish are represented by 82 bones. The list of taxa is relatively diverse and does not seem to indicate any clear selection, in that it concerns taxa that would be habitually encountered along the coasts of the region. These fish may have been consumed fresh or may have been transformed into brine or sauce, and because of this it is difficult to know in what form they were deposited on the pyre. It is even possible to envision, given the small size of the fish bones, that some of these skeletal elements may have come from the stomach of the deceased and been burnt at the same time as the corpse (even if there's no evidence of digestion on the bones).

Study of the faunal assemblages from the tombs has revealed that they are quite different from each other.

12 VAN ANDRINGA et al. 2013; LEPETZ 2017.

Some tombs are rich in pig, others in fowl, and yet others in fish. And yet others have no faunal remains at all. The image emerging from the analysis of the animal remains from *Porta Nocera* and of their link with the funerary rituals is that of a sort of freedom, reflected in the relative diversity of the gestures.

The other category of faunal remains at *Porta Nocera* are the approximately 2000 non-burnt bones that were found dispersed at ground level, as part of secondary deposits within the tomb fill, on the walkways, or on the road network. The degradation of the bone surfaces and the anatomical distribution reveal that these items have been subject to attack by atmospheric agents, to trampling, and to detritivores. The non-burnt bones have all the characteristics of food remains, with 60 % pig versus

30 % caprines. Chicken bones are rare. The fragmentation and butchering marks indicate that a large proportion of these bones could be food waste. The material that is present on the circulation levels (fragments of fine ceramics, lamps, balsamaria) seems to be evidence of gestures performed in the enclosure, and the admixture of bones could be part of this evidence, as traces of a meal taken around the pyre or around the tombs.

The animals are involved in funerary gestures relating to the placing of the pyre, and they were part of banquets. But they did not form part of the deposits (in the form of unburnt pieces of meat) at the moment when the remains of the deceased were placed into the ground. This is a notable difference with the practices in northern Gaul.

Gallo-Roman practices in northern Gaul: Between traditions and new customs

Rescue archaeology conducted in northern France over the past two decades, as well as excavations carried out somewhat longer ago, have brought to light many cemeteries, of which the animal bones have been studied. The total of 20 sites, 14 of which are unpublished and six of which are published, contained 464 tombs with animal remains. These date from the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD and come from the *civitates* of the *Atrebates*, the *Nervii*, the *Morini*, the *Ambiani*, the *Veliocasses*, the *Viromandui*, and the *Parisii* (fig. 2; tab. 1).

Among these excavations, those conducted prior to the digging of the Seine–Nord Europe Canal and the creation of the “Actiparc” at Saint-Laurent-Blangy have yielded remarkable assemblages and have been the subject of particular attention. For the most part, the excavations have been conducted with great precision, and the quantity of information that they have yielded is very significant.

For the High Empire (referring to the reign of Augustus/Claudius through to Trajanus), we can use Marquion (Site 1 and Sector 22–23) to anchor our reflection, because the tombs, which are rich, have been dated relatively precisely, and because they extend over multiple phases. For the period of the Low Empire, the site of Louvres can perform the same function, because it has yielded many tombs in which the animal remains are well preserved. We can clarify certain phenomena with the help of other examples and thus add several other sites to the synthetic overview.

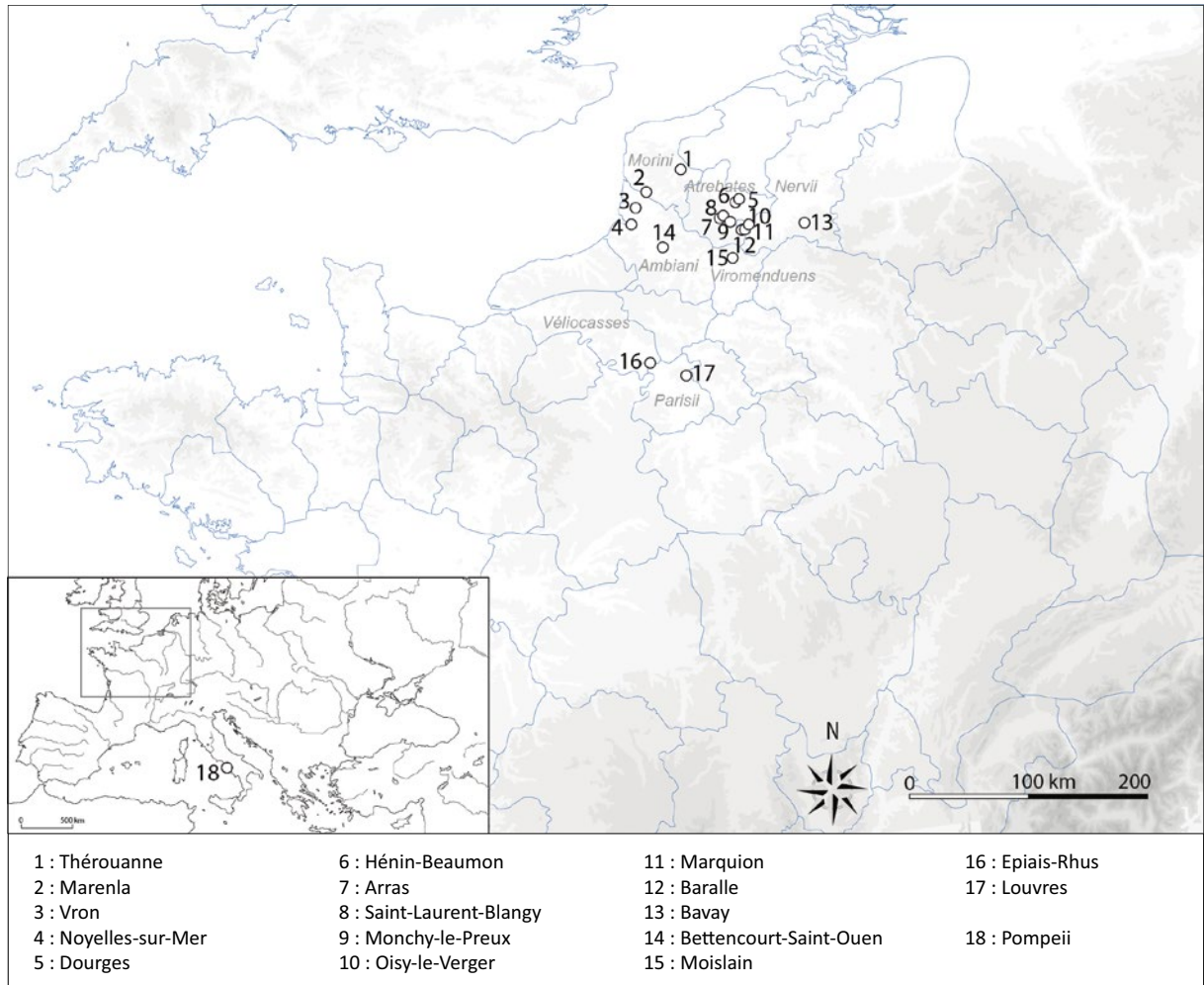
It must be noted that the link between unburnt remains and burnt remains cannot be fully made, because it was not feasible to systematically study the assemblages of burnt bones and to separate out the animal bones from all the sites. The circumstances of the excavation, analysis, and storage, as well as time restrictions relating to analysis, do not always favour a complete analysis.

The end of the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD

At Marquion Site 1 (fig. 3), 49 of the tombs yielded remains of animals. Of these, 37 contained unburnt animal bones; 22 contained burnt animal bones, found in funerary urns or among the human remains; and ten contained both burnt and unburnt animal bones. The gesture of depositing an animal on the pyre or in the tomb was thus not systematic. Some yielded several hundred animal bones, while others contained fewer than a dozen.

The non-burnt remains are mainly of pig, followed by domestic cockerel and, in much lower proportions, sheep, cow, dog, goose (*Anser anser*), hare (*Lepus europaeus*), equids, and fish.

Pig is present as cut pieces of meat. Ten tombs yielded one or two halves of crania cut longitudinally



2 Location of the sites discussed in the text.

(i. e. midline, on the sagittal plane). These halved crania were deposited with the cut side down, to ensure that the piece of meat was still recognisable as a head.

Deposits involving the hindlimbs are quite common (eight tombs, for a total of ten hams). The butchering produced a portion that goes from the hip bone to the foot. In four cases, the feet were separated from the leg. Forelimbs are less common. No complete examples have been found, and only three tombs yielded pieces of the forelimb. In contrast, the forefeet are well represented. Skeletal elements from the neck (cervical vertebrae), upper back (thoracic vertebrae), and lower back (lumbar vertebrae) are relatively plentiful and were often found in anatomical articulation. They result from the cutting up of the carcass. Some tombs also contain the tail, and some contain the ribs, often as more or less complete series. Other contemporary sites present a similar picture, with little variation in the kinds of meat portions present. There do not appear to have been any rules about which half of the body was to be used: for both the

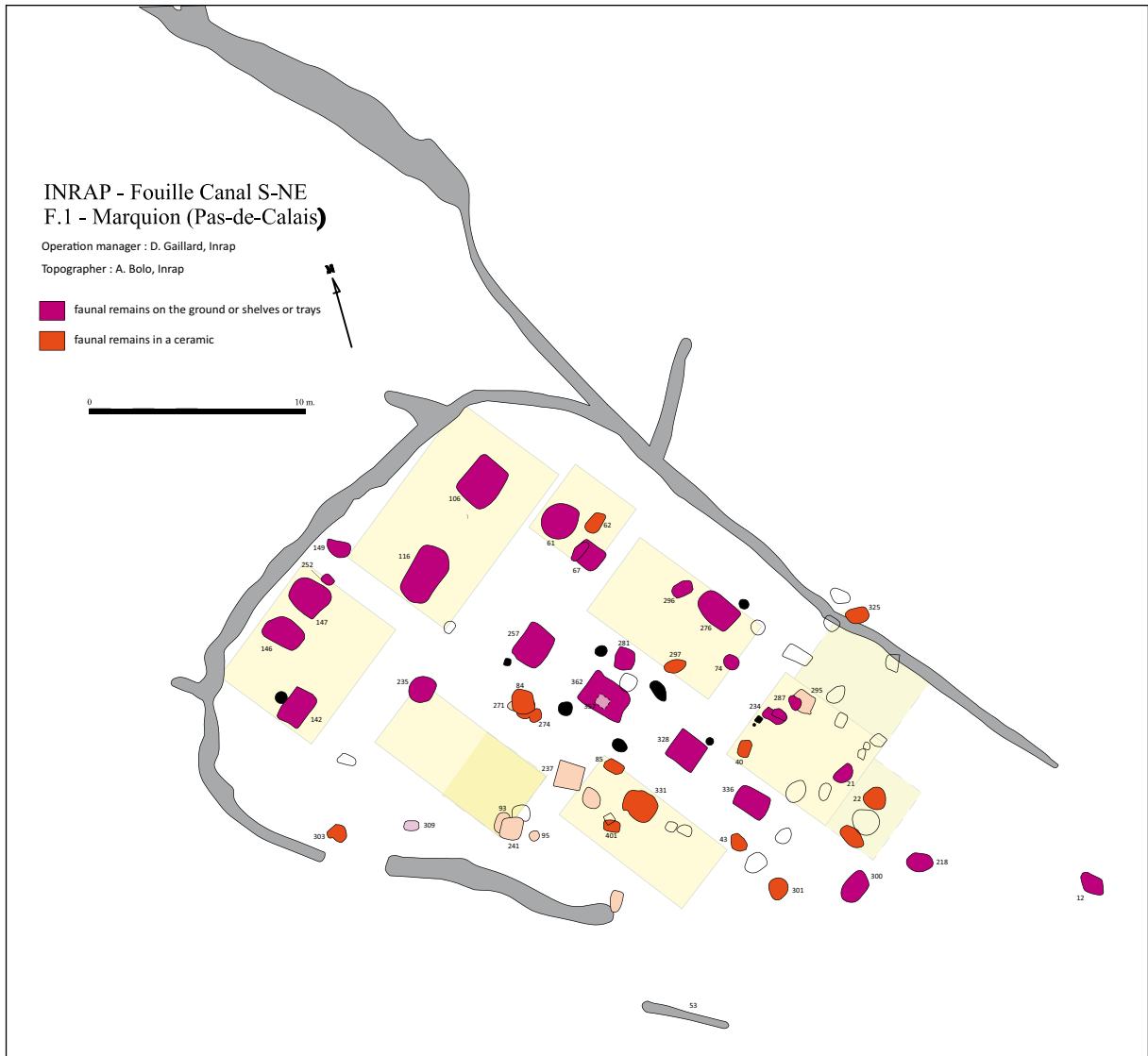
halved heads and the limbs, there are an equal number of rights and lefts (*fig. 4*).

Both male and female pigs are present (*fig. 5*). At Marquion, males are more numerous, but in the combined sample, the sex ratio (11 males vs. 8 females) does not show any preference and appears to indicate that the animal's sex was not an important criterion.

The presence of the halved crania allows us to analyse dental eruption and wear in order to estimate biological age. The pigs are mostly under 1.5 years old (*fig. 6*), and this age at death is similar to that observed on settlements in the region, although it is slightly younger in the tombs. In addition to adult, sub-adult, and juvenile pigs – represented by parts of the torso, the limbs, and the feet, as well as halved crania – the site also yielded very young piglets. These were deposited intact and not butchered. At Marquion, in three out of the five tombs with piglets, piglets were deposited in pairs. In some of these piglets, the dp4 has barely erupted; in others, it has erupted but is not yet in wear. These individuals were thus at most a few weeks old.

Site	Civitas	Sector	Excavator	Cremation graves (n)	Inhumation graves (n)	Graves with animal remains (n)	Period	References for site	References for faunal analysis
1	Thérouanne Morini	Les Oblets et Le Caveau	C. Barbet (Inrap), F. Thuillier (Inrap)	20	7	7	2 nd -3 rd century AD	BARBÉ et al. 1996; THUILLIER 1996; THUILLIER 1997	LEPETZ unpublished data
2	Marenla Nervii/Morini	Le But de Marles	D. Piton		26	12	4 th century AD	PITON et al. 2006	LEPETZ / PITON et al. 2006
3	Vron Ambiani		C. Sellier	presence		1 (cremation) + 34 (inhumation)	end 4 th -beginning 5 th century AD	SEILLIER 1978	MÉNIEL 1995
4	Noyelles-sur-Mer Ambiani		D. Piton		31	7	4 th century AD	PITON et al. 1978	PITON et al. 1979
5	Dourges Atrebatas		P. Demolon (Service archéologique de Douai)	presence		7 (cremation) +33 (inhumation)	4 th century AD	MÉNIEL 1995	MÉNIEL 1995
6	Hénin Beaumont Atrebatas	ZAC du Bord des eaux	J.-F. Geoffroy (Afan)	10	19	5 (cremation) + 6 (inhumation)	1 st & 4 th centuries AD	GEOFFROY 1997; GEOFFROY 1998	LEPETZ, unpublished data
	Hénin Beaumont Atrebatas	RD40	R. Clotuche (Inrap)	10		2	1 st century AD (AD 30-40 for faunal remains)	CLOTUCHE / MILLERAT 2004	LEPETZ, unpublished data
7	Nemetacum Arras	Conseil Général Rue de la Paix	A. Jacques & D. Gaillard (Service archéologique d'Arras)			4	4 th century AD	JACQUES / GAILLARD 2006	LEPETZ, unpublished data
8	Saint-Laur-Biangy Atrebatas	Actiparc	A. Jacques & G. Prilaux (Service archéologique d'Arras and Inrap)	51		14 (cremation) + 4 (inhumation)	Roman period	JACQUES / PRILAUX 2003	LEPETZ, unpublished data
9	Monchy-le-Preux Atrebatas	La Chapelle de Feuchy	A. Jacquet & P. Rossignol (Service archéologique d'Arras)	presence		5	2 nd century AD	JACQUES / ROSSIGNOL 2001	LEPETZ, unpublished data
10	Oisy-le-Verger Atrebatas/Nervii	Fouille 13	T. Marcy (Inrap)	17		7	La Tène D-Clau-dian period	MARCY 2011	LEPETZ, unpublished data
11	Marquion Atrebatas/Nervii	Site 1	Denis Gaillard (Inrap)	152	3	52	end of La Tène-3 rd century AD	GAILLARD 2017	LEPETZ, unpublished data
	Marquion Atrebatas/Nervii	Zone 22-23	C. Barbet (Inrap)	7		5 (cremation) + 6 (inhumation)	last third of 1 st century AD and first decades of 2 nd century AD	BARBET 2017	JOUANIN / LEPETZ, unpublished data
12	Baraille Atrebatas/Nervii		C. Hosdez & A. Jacques (Service archéologique d'Arras and Inrap)	100		23	end 1 st -beginning 2nd century AD	HOSDEZ / JACQUES 1989	MÉNIEL 1989
13	Bavay Nervii	Fache des prés Aulnoys	F. Loridant (Service archéologique départemental du Nord)	169		66	1 st -3 rd century AD	LORIDANT / DERU 2009	FOREST 2009
14	Bettencourt Saint Ouen Ambiani		P. Lemaire (Inrap)	8		7	High Empire	LEMAIRE 2000	LEPETZ, unpublished data
15	Moislain Viromandui	Fouille 15 Au petit chemin de Nurlu	S. Sarrazin (Inrap)	14		9	High Empire	SARRAZIN 2011	LEPETZ, unpublished data
	Moislain Viromandui	Fouille 27 Au petit chemin de Nurlu	J. Lamant (Inrap)	16		8	first half of 1 st century AD	LAMANT 2014	LEPETZ, unpublished data
16	Epiais-Rhus Veliocasses		J.-M. Lardy			37	Late Empire	LARDY 1983	MÉNIEL 1995
17	Louvres Parisii	ZAC du Parc	A.-S. Vigot (Éveha)		250	103	3 rd -4 th or 5 th century AD	VIGOT et al. 2014	LEPETZ, unpublished data

Tab. 1 Sites discussed in the text. The numbers match those on the map.



3 Marquion Site 1. Site plan. (CAD: A. Bolo, D. Gaillard, Inrap).

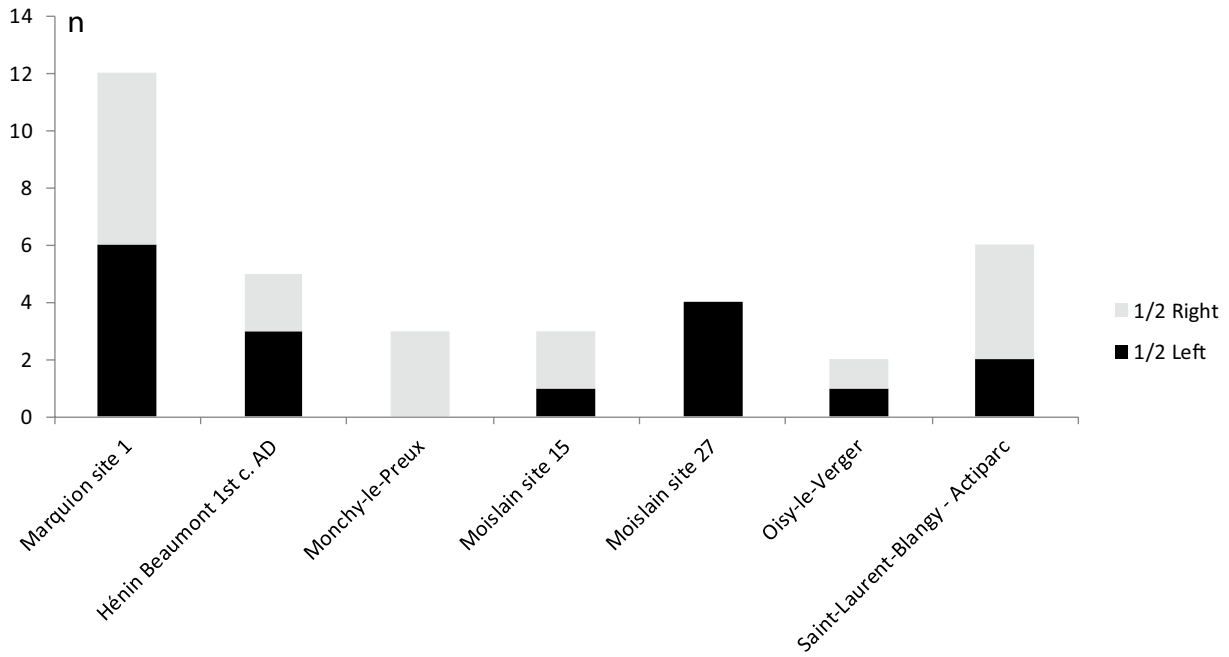
In the case of chicken, the preservation conditions were not always favourable to precise observations, but it seems that most of the time the birds were deposited whole in the tomb. There was no sex selection (both hens and cockerels are present) nor age selection (both juveniles and adults are present). The anatomical distribution is normal except for the head, which could have been removed during food preparation.

Caprines are rarer than pig. At Marquion, eleven tombs yielded remains of caprines. Their proportion matches that of chicken, but there are differences in representation among the time periods. At Baralle, they are present in just three of the 24 tombs, whereas pig is present in 19. Limb bones predominate. At Marquion, no caprine crania, vertebrae, or feet were deposited in the tombs. Moislain yielded multiple ribs, Baralle yielded a series of four lumbar vertebrae, and Thérrouane yielded

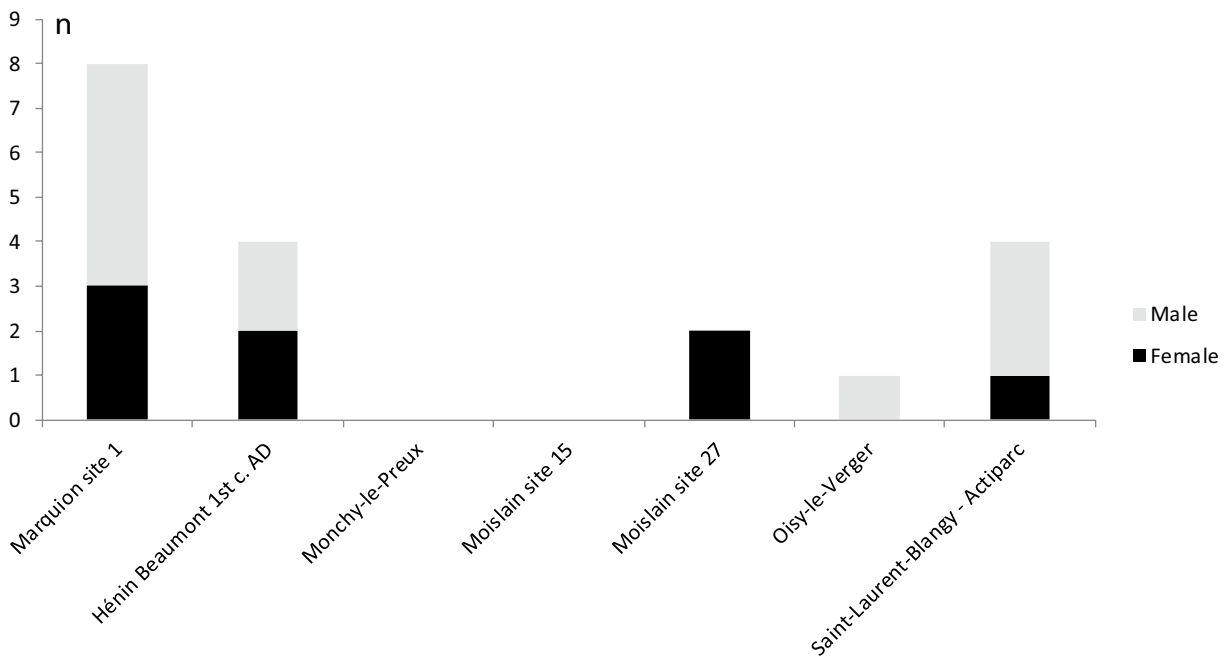
one vertebra, but these skeletal elements are in the minority. The other difference with pig is the presence of forelimbs, and not just hindlimbs. For the most part, these are of young animals. ST147 at Marquion contained one right and one left forelimb of a lamb. At Baralle, the legs of lamb are from juveniles.

Remains of cattle were identified from three sites. At Moislain Site 15, a piece of meat from the top of the thigh was represented archaeologically by a fragment of the innominate and the sacrum. At Marquion, the remains indicate larger pieces of meat: one tomb yielded a series of five ribs (the flank), and another tomb (*fig. 12*) contained a series of four complete right ribs. At Baralle, cattle is also represented by series of ribs, in three tombs, and by a butchered heel of an adult individual.

Goose is only present at Marquion. Goose occurs at Site 1, in the tombs from the end of the 1st century BC, as



4 Body half distribution of the halved pig's crania by site.

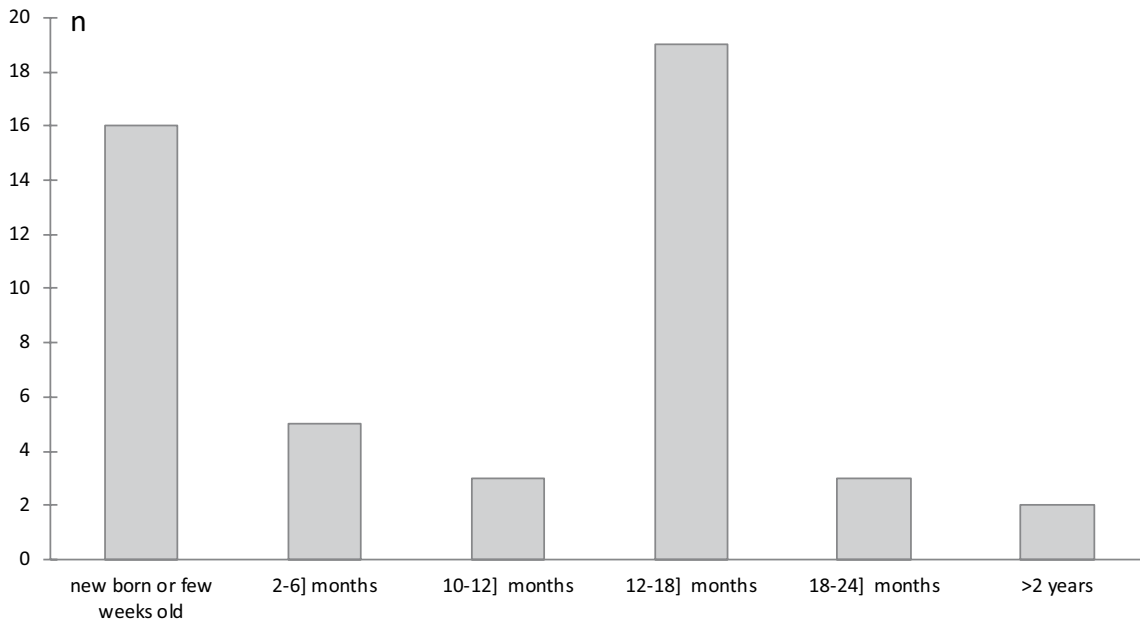


5 Sex distribution of the halved pig's crania by site.

pieces of meat: thighs or various parts. Goose also occurs somewhat later, in tombs of Sector 22–23 (end of 1st century–beginning of 2nd century AD), as complete or almost complete animals. Here, burnt goose bones were also often found mixed with burnt human bones.

Dog is rare. Only one cervical vertebra and one tibia at Marquion Site 1 may represent food remains. Horse (*Equus caballus*) is present in just two tombs, at Mar-

quion. A tibia may represent a piece of meat, but a right metacarpal III and a vestigial metacarpal placed on a piece of ceramic (fig. 7) do not. The other skeletal elements that should have been present if this had been an entire foot (that is the carpals and the phalanges) are absent. A knife cut on the diaphysis indicates human action, but not of disarticulation. We therefore have to conclude that certain portions of the carcass have a



6 Age distribution of the pigs, combined sample from sites dating from the end of the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD.

non-dietary significance. We will see another example of this further down, among the defleshed assemblages.

Remains of wild mammals are never frequent in the tombs. When they are present, probably relating to prepared food, they show up as smaller pieces. At Marquion Site 1, one ceramic vessel yielded 42 bones of what was likely a single individual of young hare, deriving mostly from the anterior part of the body (cranium, ribs, forelimbs, lumbar vertebrae). Tomb 428 at Marquion Sector 22–23 yielded a thigh of a hare.

Fish, crustaceans, and shells are also rare in the tombs. One item of pike (*Esox lucius*) at Marquion and one of chub mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*) at Moislain indicate that deposits of fish were sometimes placed in tombs dating to the beginning of the 1st century AD. The presence of chub mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*), which frequents the Mediterranean and the Atlantic coast of southern Europe, is evidence of items acquired by means of trade with areas farther south. These are several vertebra of a large individual, probably originally part of a piece of salted fish. The situation for shellfish is less clear. The oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) and abalone (*Haliotis tuberculata*) found at Théroouanne and the shells (not identified) from tomb 429 at Marquion Sector 22–23 may be imported foods in their own right, but they may also be imported containers for other products or items used in the preparation of medicines. The same holds for the cuttlefish (*Sepia cf. officinalis*) cuttlebone (which was burnt) found at the same site. This was probably an in-

redient for a preparation for eye infections, as were other products and utensils found there¹³.

The faunal remains found among the groupings of burnt human bones tell us about another stage of the funeral ceremonies: the deposition of pieces of meat on the pyre. The tombs from Phase I at Marquion have not yet been studied. Some of the pyres from Phases II and III yielded isolated remains of pig, indicating the practice of placing pork on the pyre. The frequent remains of domestic chicken indicate that chicken was preferred to pork for this phase of the ceremony. This is especially evident for the phase corresponding to the middle of the 1st century to the middle of the 2nd century AD, where almost half of these assemblages of bone contain the burnt remains of chicken, whereas only about 10% contain those of pig (fig. 8). This predominance of chicken over pig is seen at the site of Bavay¹⁴, where, of the 68 cremations yielding burnt faunal remains, pig is present in just four cremations, cow in six, and bird in 28. It is probable, although not proven, that these animals were deposited intact. We can see that the different species were not used indiscriminately, but that their presence had different meanings at different times in the funeral proceedings.

At Marquion, we can see changes in the taxonomic composition. Certain taxa are mostly present during the early phases of the site. Thus dog, hare, goose, cattle, and fish show up mostly from the end of the 1st century BC to the very start of the 1st century AD. In the phases that

13 BARBET 2017.

14 FOREST 2009.



7 Marquion Site 1, tomb ST 287. A horse metacarpal (D) is clearly visible on top of the ceramics. (Photo: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap).

follow, there seems to be a simplification, with essentially only three taxa present: pig, chicken, and caprines. At the same time, we see a reduction in the number of pieces of meat in the tombs. Until the middle of the 1st century AD, the number of pieces ranges between six and twelve. After that, it drops to just two, indicating that offers in the tombs become rarer starting in the middle of the 1st century AD.

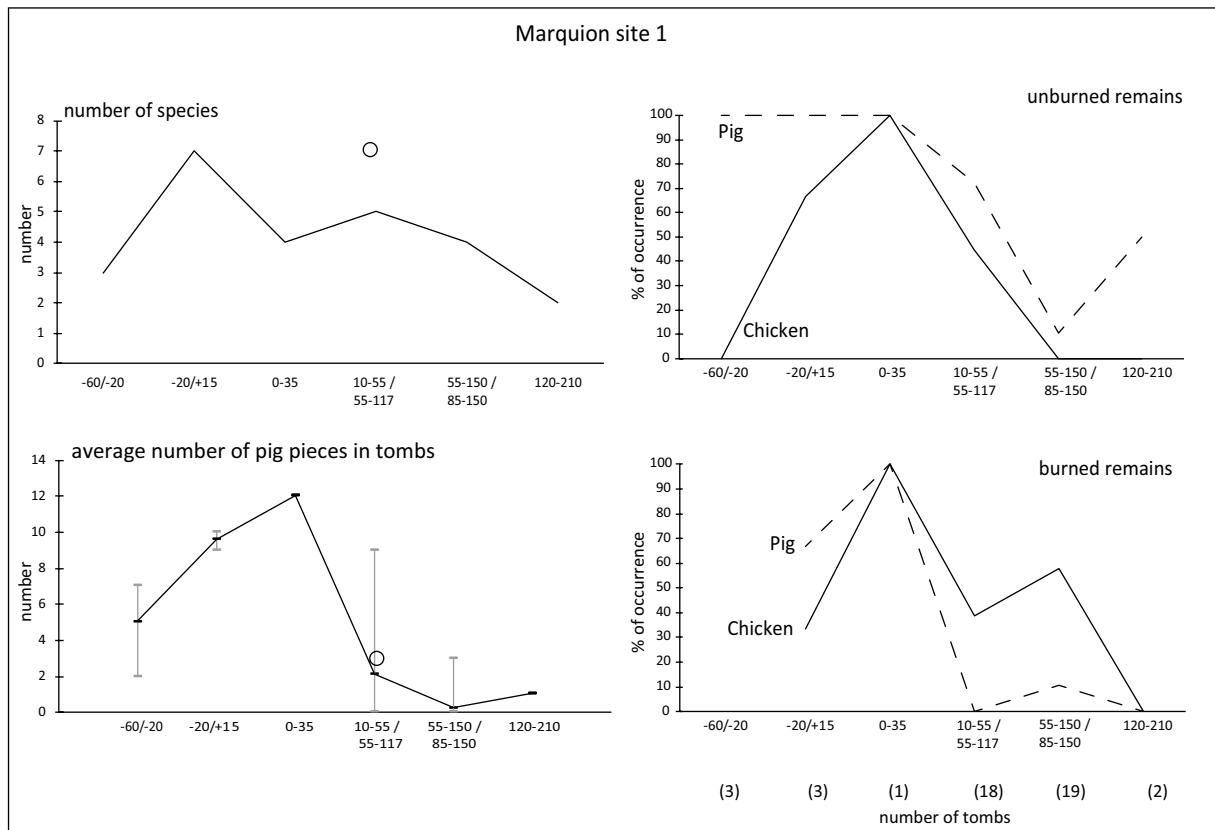
With a few minor variations, this trend is seen in all of the sites under study here (*fig. 9*). A comparison of the unburnt deposits for the combined sample of all the tombs in the regions shows that all of the domestic mammals are present in the 1st century AD, accompanied, for this period, by chicken, goose, and hare, but that their proportions are very variable. Their percentage in tombs yielding faunal remains ranges from 50 to 90 % for pig, to around 50 % for chicken, to 10 to 15 % for caprines and cow, to at most 5 % for each of the other taxa.

By the middle of the 2nd century AD, five species are no longer found in the tombs: cattle, dog, horse, goose, and hare. A few isolated examples are found in Late Antiquity. The percentage frequency of caprines gradually decreases, but they don't disappear. Pig and chicken also become less frequent, but while pig continues to de-

crease, chicken starts to increase again starting at the end of the 2nd century AD, becoming largely predominant. We thus see three developments: first, we see a reduction in the number of offerings during the 1st century AD and the beginning of the 2nd century; second, we see an abrupt change in taxonomic representation, with the disappearance of the lesser taxa around AD 150; third, at this same time, we see a major preference for chicken, at the expense of pig, which now becomes a more minor taxon. Below I describe these changes in detail for the Late Empire and show that they are accompanied by changes in the pig deposits.

The staging of certain anatomical elements, their placement in containers made of perishable materials, and their placement on elevated shelving, as is sometimes observable in certain tombs, reveals the complexity of the funerary practices. Variation over time in the customs and in the taxa used marks changes related to modifications of local customs or family traditions.

At Marquion Site 1, the way in which the animal deposits are placed changes over time. At the end of the terminal La Tène, the offers are placed in the bottom of the pit in 50 % of cases. They are found placed close to the ceramics or may have been deposited in a container that has since disappeared (*fig. 10*).



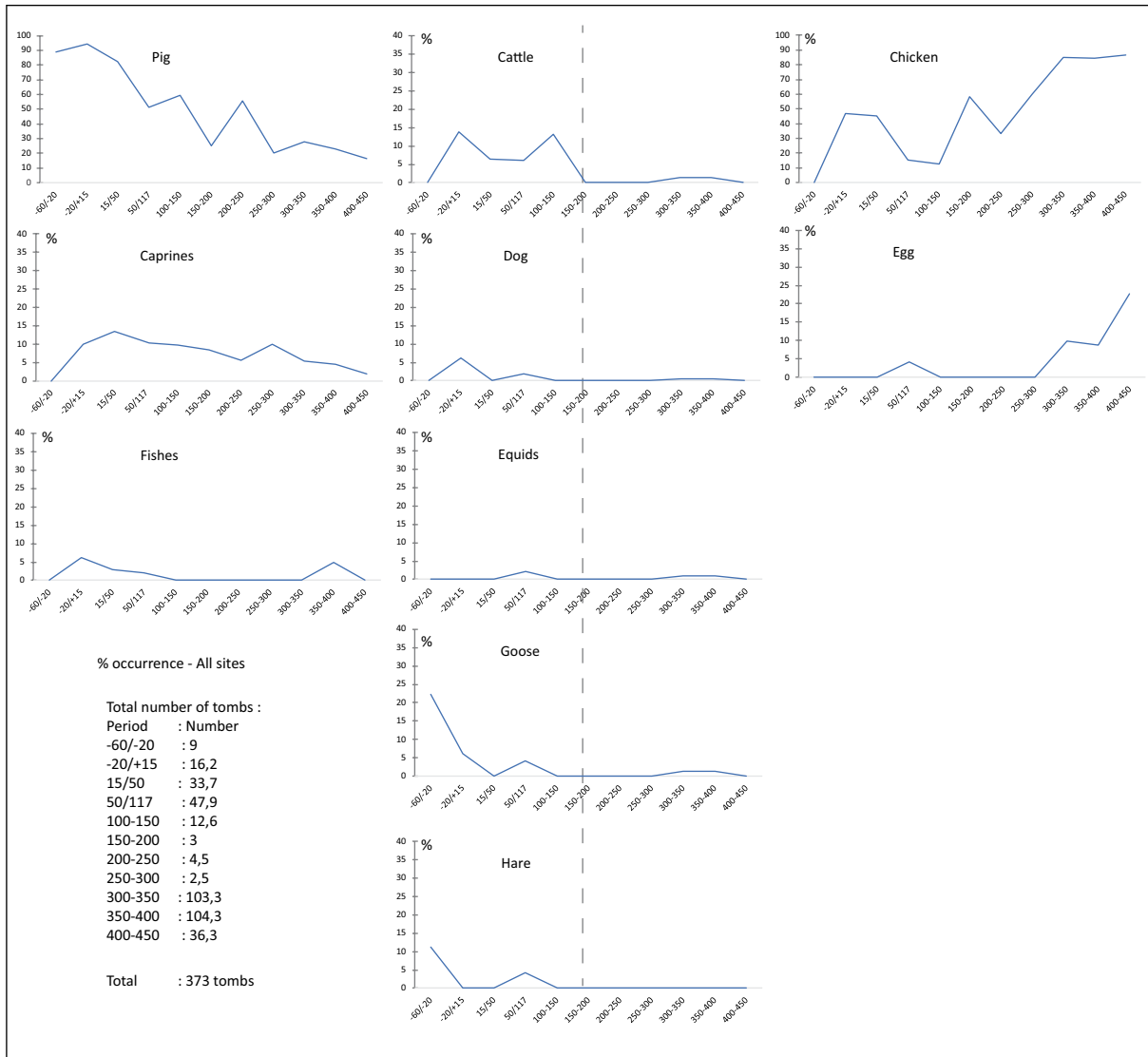
8 Marquion Site 1. Chronological distribution of number of taxa, average number of pig remains, %-frequency of unburnt pig and chicken, and %-frequency of burnt pig and chicken. The open circle marks the remains from Sector 22–23 (in years BC [indicated by minus sign] or AD).

The second category comprises animal offerings placed on a shelf or a platter (figs 11 and 12). At the beginning of the 1st century AD, offerings become more numerous and are placed in the tombs in a different arrangement. Thus, tomb 362 yielded animal offerings placed in horizontal position above three items of pottery (fig. 12). These items, which were all the same height and placed at regular intervals, appear to have supported a plank. Tomb 328 contained, in the middle and against its west wall, remains of animals that were bordered on the east and west by funerary urns. The presence of nails and woodworking staples nearby also suggests use of a plank. Tomb 257 also has indications for the use of a rectangular plank. The presence of six woodworking staples and of ironwork and an iron rod found around and under the bones seems to support this hypothesis. These items had been placed in the north corner of the tomb. In the case of tomb 142 (fig. 11), the placement of the offering, resting on ceramics in the north corner and along one side of the tomb, suggests the use of a shelf.

Just before the end of the 1st century AD, in some tombs we begin to see food offerings being placed in the tomb on a plate or platter, and the percentages of tombs with deposits placed directly on the ground and with deposits placed in containers become approximately equal. Deposits in containers first make an appearance in the reign of Claudius, and they continue until the start of the 2nd century AD (fig. 13).

Work undertaken on the Lamadelaine necropolis has extensively described the way pieces of meat were staged in the terminal La Tène¹⁵. These deposits are characterised by the presence of disarticulated and reassembled pieces. The sites presented here show similarities. The deposits at the end of the 1st century BC consist of halved pig's crania associated with cervical vertebra and series of ribs (fig. 14). The head has been split longitudinally, the neck has been severed, and the ribs are not articulated with the thoracic vertebrae (which are missing). These are therefore pieces of meat that were taken from a carcass, cut up, and subsequently reassembled. The deposit gives the impression of an animal that is

15 METZLER-ZENS et al. 1999.



9 Chronological distribution of %-frequency of taxa, combined sample (373 tombs). The data (number of tombs and %) are weighted according to the chronological division.

more complete than it actually is. This type of deposit continues fairly late at Marquion, until the Claudian period. Other anatomical elements were subjected to similar treatment. In tomb 26 at Moislains, dating to the Augustan period (*fig. 15*), a forelimb of a pig appears to be in anatomical position and in articulation, but analysis of the bones revealed the presence of cut marks, indicating that the bones were disarticulated before being deposited in the tomb. Tomb 106 revealed a similar scenario involving the bones of the hindlimb (*fig. 16*). Often, the natural anatomical position of the bones is not respected during this reassembling. In the case of tomb 106, the orientation of the tibia was reversed

during the reassembly, resulting in the distal end of the tibia almost touching the distal end of the femur. It seems that the objective was to place the bones in the outline of a triangle. This type of gesture has also been documented at Lamadelaine and at numerous other contemporary sites, including Moislains (for the Augustan period)¹⁶. From the end of the first third of the 1st century AD, this custom seems to disappear.

Traces on the bones, notably on the scapula of a pig in tomb 26 at Moislains and on the humerus and scapula of a pig, presented on a plate, in tomb 1066 at Oisy-le-Verger, raise the question of whether or not any flesh remained on the bones. In both cases, it is thought that

16 METZLER-ZENS et al. 1999.



10 Marquion Site 1, tomb ST 116. Pieces of meat (L) were placed in a rectangular container made from perishable material (the image has been manipulated, so the animal bones are more clearly visible). (Photo: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap. CAD: S. Lepetz).



11 Marquion Site 1, tomb ST 142. Chunks of meat (1, 2, 3) were placed on a plank (a shelf?) above the ceramics. (Photo: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap. CAD: S. Lepetz).



12 Marquion Site 1, tomb ST 362. Chunks of meat were placed on a plank (a shelf?) above the ceramics. (Photo: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap. CAD: S. Lepetz).



13 Marquion Site 1, tomb ST 331. Right half of a cranium (G) and elements from the shoulder and ribs (E) of a pig were placed in a plate. (Photo: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap).

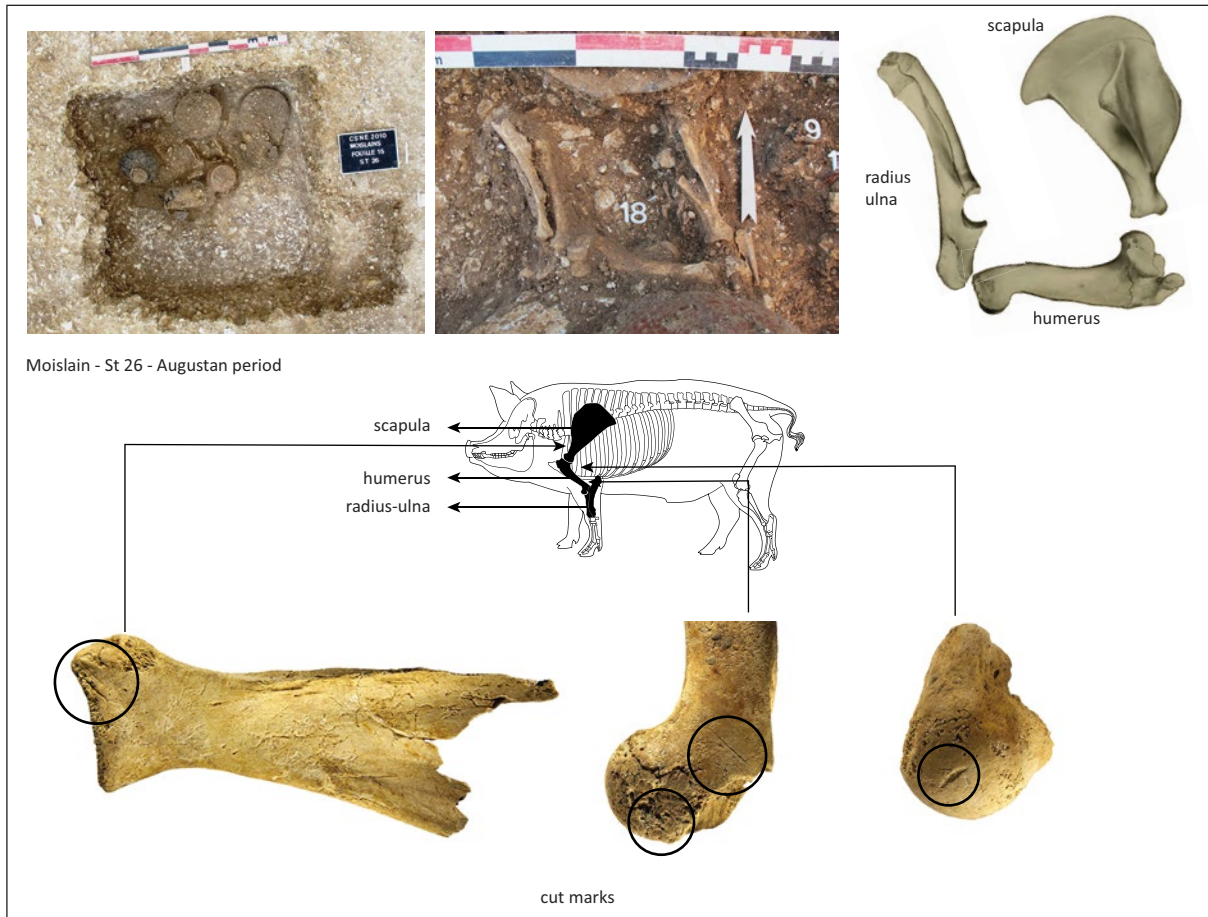


Saint-Laurent Blangy - Actiparc ST E557 - 0/+50 AD



Marquion - site 1 - ST 276 - Claudian period

14 Marquion Site 1, tombs 331 and 276, and Saint-Laurent-Blangy Actiparc, tomb ST E557. Examples of skeletal elements in articulation within tombs, consisting of body parts (halved cranium, neck, vertebrae) previously butchered and then reassembled in anatomical position in the tomb. (Photo: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap. CAD: S. Lepetz).



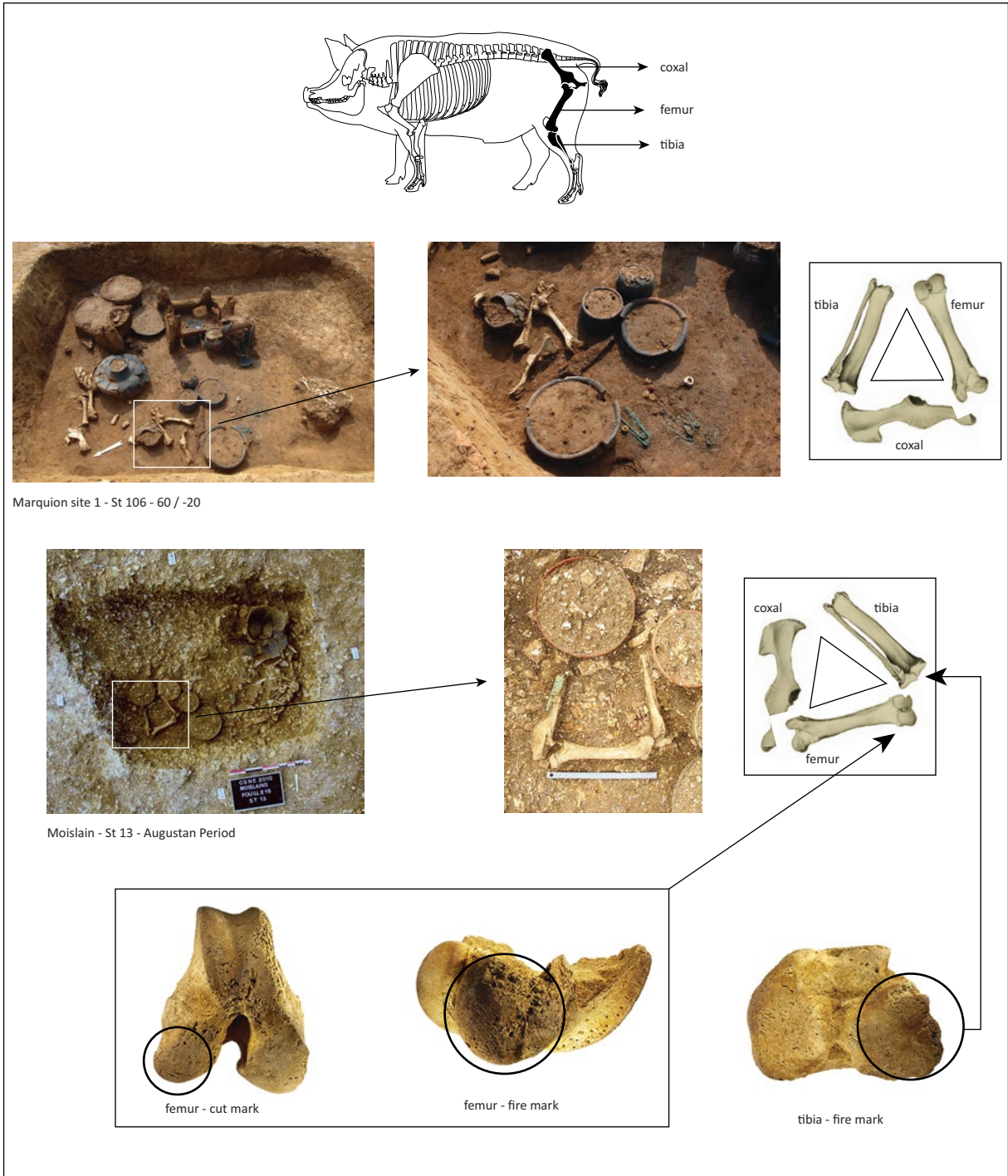
15 Moislain, Fouille 15, tomb ST 26. Elements of pig forelimb, butchered and then reassembled in anatomical sequence in the tomb. The disarticulation cut marks are clearly visible. (Photos: J. Lynch, Inrap. CAD: S. Lepetz).

the flesh had been removed and that only the (defleshed) bones were deposited in the tomb. This question has also been posed for certain series of vertebrae, including the lumbar vertebrae in tomb ST 26 at Moislains (*fig. 17*) and elsewhere (including at Baralle¹⁷), where the bones are cut on either side of the vertebral body. Finally, certain pieces of evidence indicate that the pieces of meat were cooked. For example, in tomb 13 at Moislains, the bones from the thigh of a pig show cut marks indicating that it was cut into smaller pieces, but also burn marks from being in contact with an open flame, indicating cooking (*fig. 16*). In tomb 61 at Marquion, traces of burning on the canine of a young sow of 18 months indicate that the fire reached the head, either during singeing of the hide after slaughter or during roasting of the piece of meat.

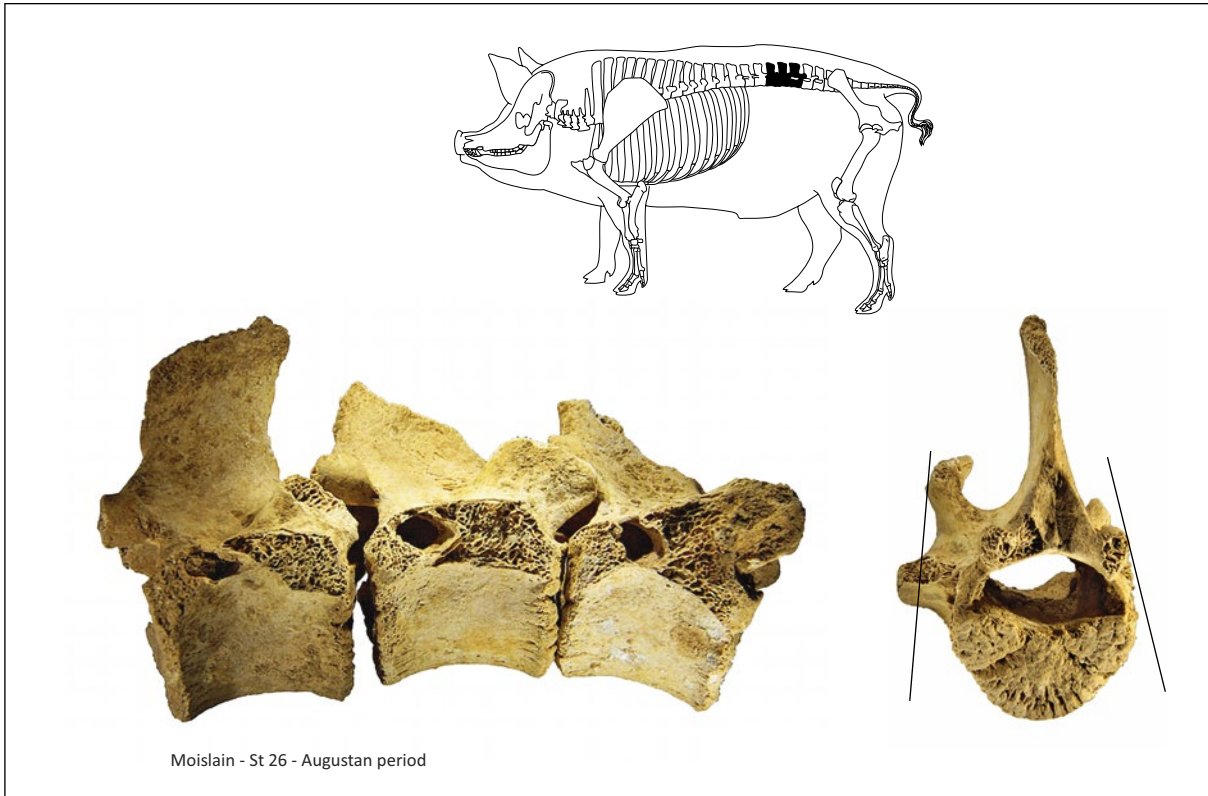
Practices from the 3rd century AD

The Louvres site is an archetype of sites of the Lower Empire in terms of animal deposits, and it presents a wealth of information for this period. The necropolis yielded 255 tombs dating to Late Antiquity, primarily individual inhumations in which the deceased, generally clothed or enveloped in a shroud, was placed in a perishable container, which was then covered with a lid, which was nailed shut (*fig. 18*). About a hundred of the tombs yielded faunal deposits, always associated with serving pieces made from ceramic or glass. The meat was placed either next to the dishes or, in some cases, on top of the dishes, suggesting a staging by means of non-permanent supports.

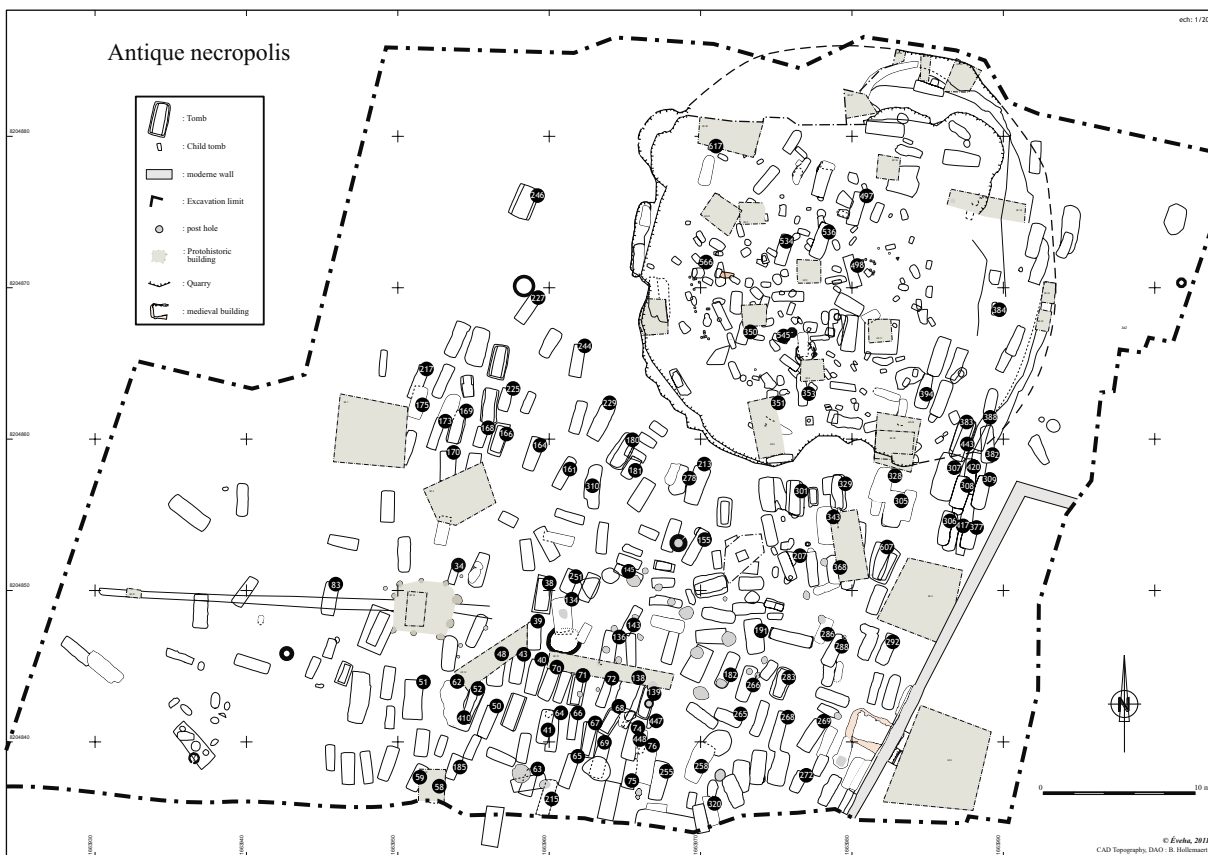
17 MÉNIEL 1989.



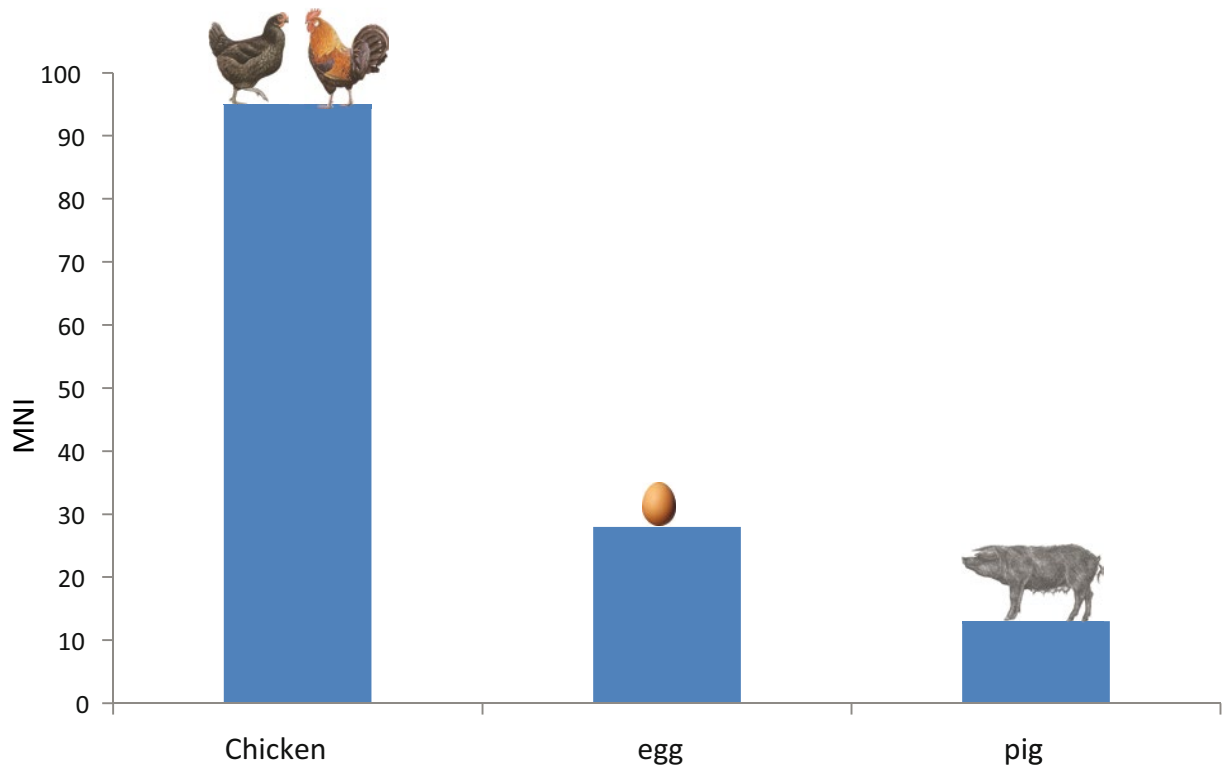
16 Marquion Site 1, tomb ST 106, and Moislains, tomb ST 13. Elements of pig hind limb, butchered and then reassembled in anatomical sequence and placed in the shape of a triangle in the tomb. Traces of cooking are visible on the ends of those from Moislains providing confirmation that the disarticulation happened after cooking. (Photo Marquion: N. Vandamme, H. Trawka, D. Gaillard, Inrap. Photo Moislain: C. Durin, Inrap. CAD: S. Lepetz).



17 Moislain, tomb ST 26. An anatomical series of butchered lumbar vertebrae of pig.



18 Louvres. Location of the structures that yielded primary deposits of faunal remains. (CAD topography, DAO: B. Hollemaert, Éveha).



19 Louvres. Distribution (minimum number of individuals) of male and female chicken bones, chicken eggs, and pig, combined sample.

Animal remains in the tombs

A total of 103 tombs yielded at least one animal deposit – 28 of which yielded two, two of which yielded three, and one of which yielded four. In the majority of cases, these deposits were found in just one or two locations in the tomb. In most cases, they were placed by the head of the deceased or near the upper part of the body (at shoulder level). In three cases, they were placed at the level of the hips or the thorax. In 24 cases, these remains were found at the level of the feet or the lower body. In one structure, bones were found at both the feet and the head.

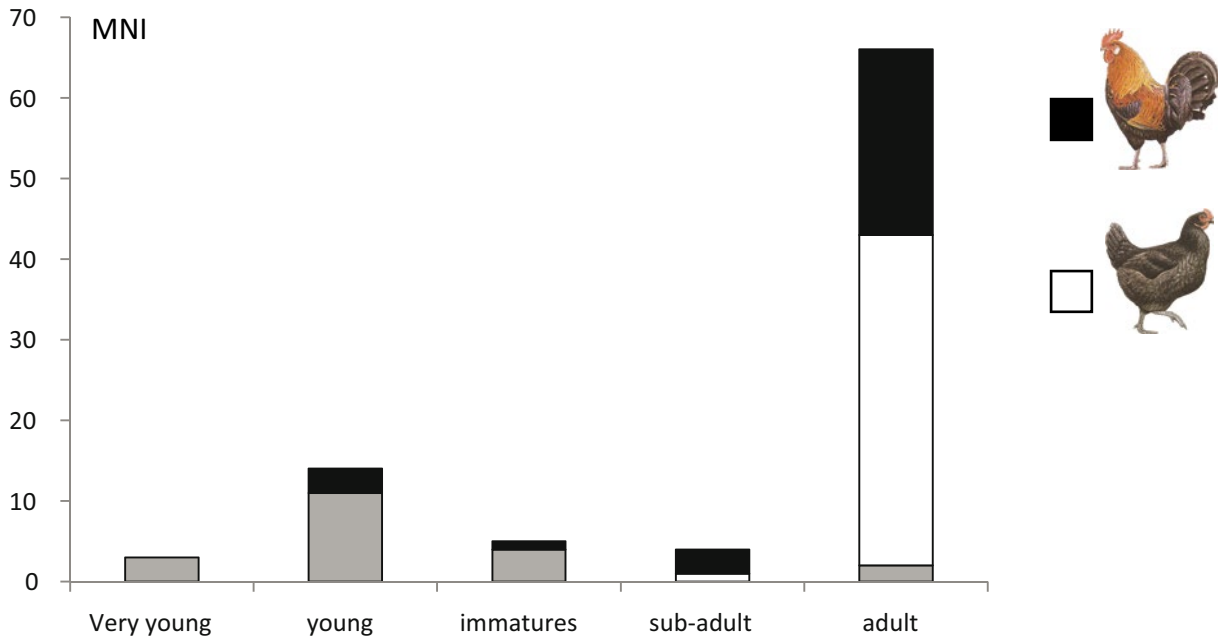
The best represented taxon is undoubtedly chicken, totalling 99 individuals excluding the 28 cases of eggshell. Chicken remains far outnumber pig, with just 13 specimens (*fig. 19*). Dog, sheep, goat, and goose are certainly present nearby, in the ditches surrounding the tombs (i. e. in structures that are not tombs), but never directly associated with the human cadavers.

The chicken are not all the same age (*fig. 20*). Most (66 individuals) are adult, nine are subadult or immature, 14 are juvenile, and three are very young chicks. It

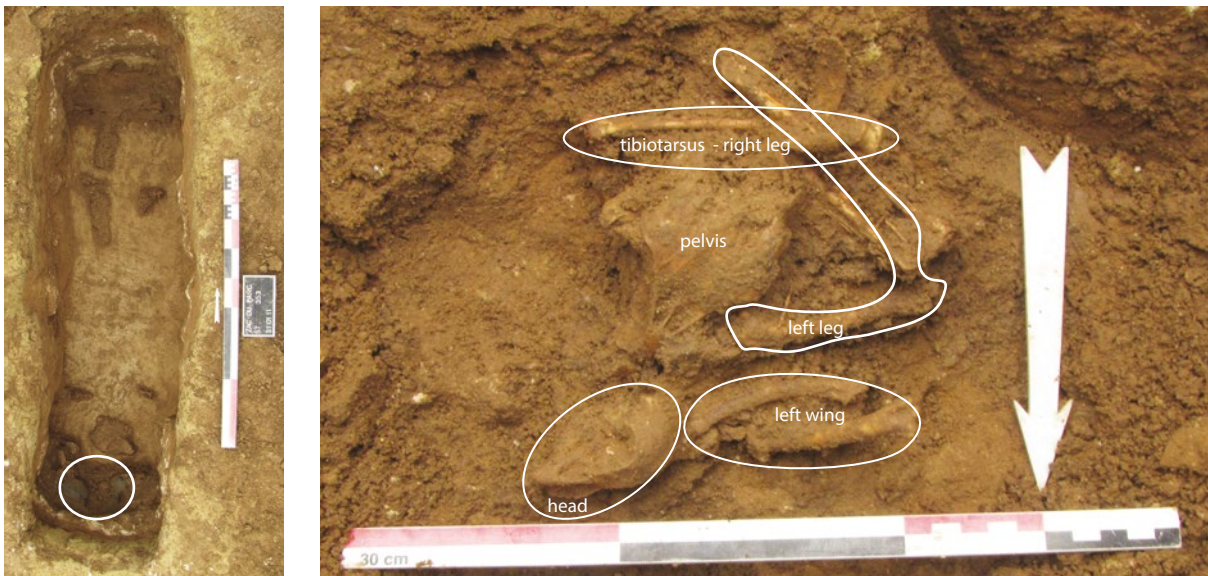
is impossible to determine the sex of young birds based on their bones. However, for subadults and adults, the presence of spurs on the tarsometatarsus and the dimensions of this and other bones allow us to distinguish males from females¹⁸. More females than males were identified (42 female vs. 30 male individuals). We can envisage that males were more numerous among the younger birds, following the logic that males would have been killed young in order to consume their meat, whereas females would have been kept beyond that age, for egg production. If we entertain the hypothesis that all the juvenile chicken found were males, the ratio balances out (42 female vs. 48 male individuals). It is thus possible that there was no sex selection, even though the image provided by the adults shows a preference for females.

One of the consequences of the delicacy of the excavations in certain deposits is that it is possible, in eleven cases, to describe the way in which the birds were positioned (*fig. 21*), which then allows us to spot cases that do not follow the general rule. Five birds were placed on their stomach, three on their back, one on the left side, and two on the right side.

¹⁸ For the osteometric sources used see LEPETZ 1996; CLAVEL 1997.



20 Louvres. Distribution (minimum number of individuals) of male and female chicken remains by age, combined sample.

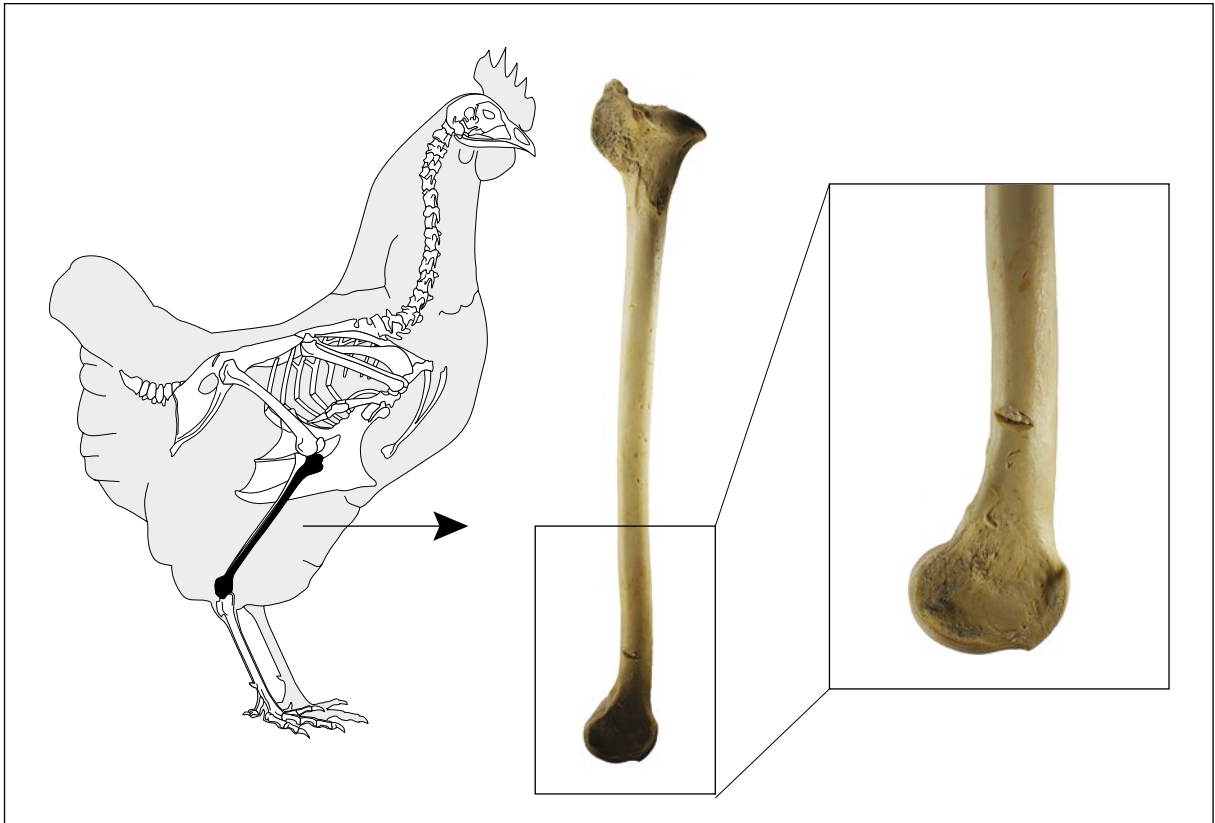


21 Louvres, tomb ST 353. Adult chicken deposited on its stomach, in anatomical sequence. A large portion of the neck is missing, and there is a cut mark on the cranium. (Photo: A.-S. Vigot, Éveha).

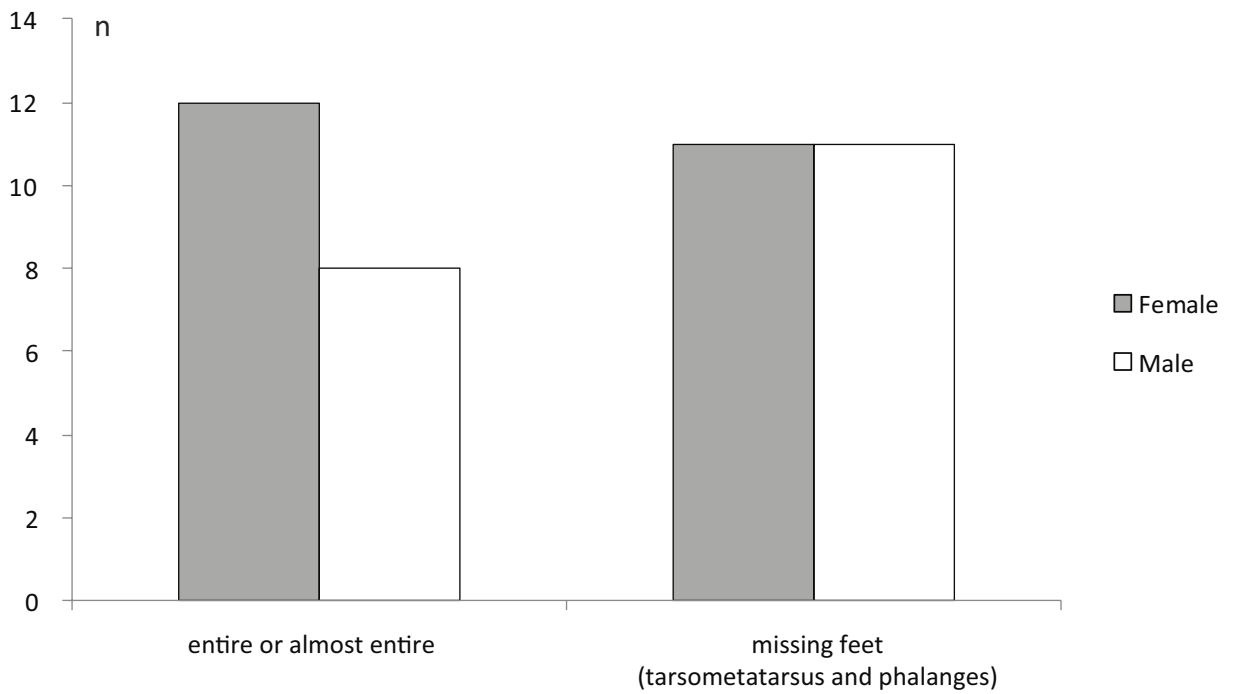
The first impression of the excavation and the site photos is that the birds were placed in the tombs intact, but in reality this was not the case. Missing anatomical parts, cut marks, and deliberate fracturing reveal that the individuals underwent some kind of preparation ahead of time (figs 22 and 23).

The hand-collection methods have undoubtedly prevented the recovery of certain bones of certain individuals. About one quarter of the assemblage (25 individuals) is considered incomplete. In certain cases, this

raises the question whether this absence is significant. For example, structure 66 contained nothing but two chicken bones and structure 40 nothing but two chicken humeri. In other cases, a much more frequent occurrence, physiochemical agents in the soil have caused some or most of the skeletal elements to disappear, resulting in assemblages with gaps whose origin is difficult to establish. On the other hand, six individuals are fully complete. It is hypothesised that a further 18 must have been deposited intact, considering that only a few



22 Louvres, tomb ST 63. Cut mark on a chicken distal tibiotarsus. The feet have been removed.



23 Louvres. Sex distribution (minimum number of individuals) of birds by presence/absence of feet.



24 Louvres, tomb ST 81. Deposit of a piglet cut into pieces. The positioning of the pieces of meat does not match that in an intact individual. (Photo: A.-S. Vigot, Éveha).

bones are missing, resulting in minor gaps. Following this hypothesis, 24 chicken were deposited intact. In addition to these complete animals, there are 24 others that are intact except for the tarsometatarsus and the foot and wing digits. Of these, 17 show cut marks or fractures at the distal end of the tibiotarsus, indicating that a knife was passed through the articulation with the ankle for the removal of the feet. A further four individuals, in addition to having their feet (tarsometatarsi and foot digits) removed, also had their head and neck butchered (two males and two females), and a further eight were intact except for the head (i. e. they still had their feet). In the case of these latter eight, it is possible that only the head was removed during preparation.

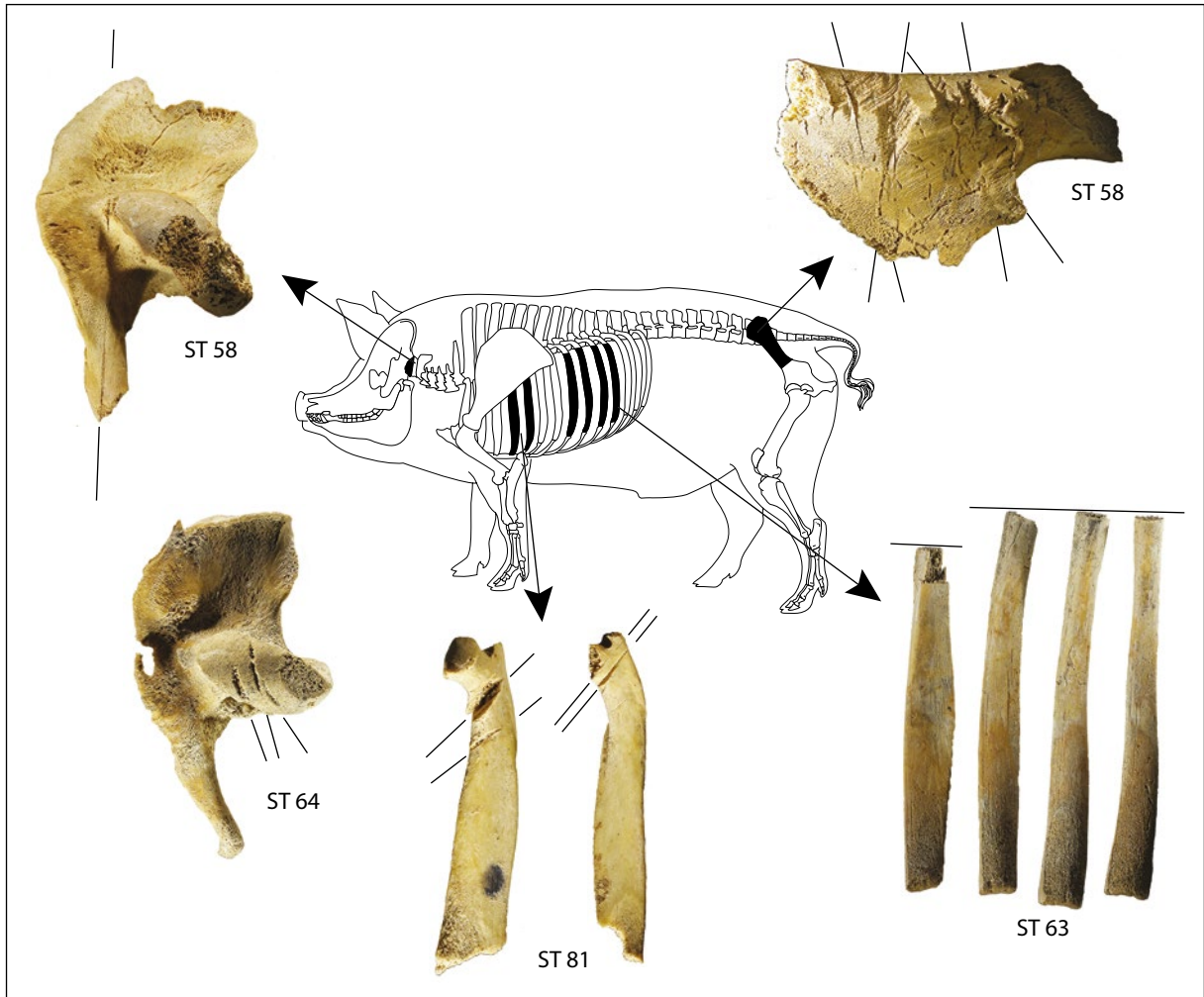
In addition to (almost) complete chickens, subdivided carcasses were also uncovered. In the case of chicken, just one had been subdivided. One hen (structure 182) shows cut marks on the distal ends of the tibiotarsi, indicating that the feet were detached from the rest of the carcass. But the feet are also present in the deposit.

A different scenario pertained to the piglets in 13 other structures. In some cases, the animal was complete or almost complete, and in those cases the missing bones were probably originally present but were missed as a result of excavation and recovery techniques. In other cases, the animal is incomplete. In St 134, for example, the head and the mandibles are present, as are the vertebral column and the ribs. The shoulder of the right forelimb (that is the scapula and the humerus) and parts of both hindlimbs are present. The feet are represented by fragments of the metapodia. The left femur and the right

tarsals are missing, as are all of the unfused epiphyses, which is probably the result of problems with recovery. It is difficult to estimate which of the long bones, if any, were missed during excavation, but it seems certain that only part of the animal was deposited. It is noteworthy that no cut marks were observed. The deposit in St 83 is unusual in that it consists solely of the right front trotter; the other parts of the body are not present.

The cutting up into pieces is also attested to by the positioning of the bones and the presence of cut marks. The positioning of the pieces (see, for example, the situation in St 81, *fig. 24*) indicates that there was not necessarily a wish to reassemble the animal by placing the different anatomical parts in their correct position. It is clear that subsequent slumping of the matrix surrounding the meat hampers interpretation, but it is nevertheless possible to see that we are dealing here with the placement of pieces of meat, unlike was the case for the complete piglet in the tombs. Cut marks are comparatively frequent on the occipital condyles, indicating the severing of the head (three cases), as are marks on the ribs (two tombs) and vertebrae (one tomb), indicating the severing of series of ribs from the vertebrae (*fig. 25*). The piglet from St 454 exhibits numerous marks, including those resulting from the splitting of the head into two parts.

In general, only a single offering was placed in each tomb, but some tombs have yielded multiple animals deposited simultaneously. In all other aspects, these multiple deposits resemble the single deposits, in that neither the species, nor the parts deposited, nor the treatment of



25 Louvres, tombs 58, 63, 64, and 81. Anatomical position and location of cut marks on piglet bones.

the carcass differed (*fig. 26*). Four of the tombs yielded multiple chicken and six yielded a combination of chicken and pig. It is noteworthy that, while isolated chicken are common, all of the piglets were associated with either a bird or an egg.

The tombs yielded 28 eggs, from a number of different structures, either in ceramic vessels (*fig. 27*) or loose. In some cases, the state of preservation of the egg only allowed the collection of small, isolated fragments of eggshell. In other cases, the eggs could be lifted in one piece or excavated *in situ*, and this revealed that they were whole, not broken. It is of course impossible to know whether all the eggs were whole, but it seems likely. The thickness of the eggshell falls within the reference range established for modern chicken eggshells by Keepax and Jonuks *et al.*¹⁹. We also hoped to find out

whether there was a link between the presence of these eggs and the sex of the deposited birds. It is noteworthy that in two cases, the eggs were not associated with any other animal and that in two other cases, the egg accompanied the remains of a piglet. In 12 cases, the egg was associated with a cockerel, and in nine cases it was associated with a hen. Therefore, no preferential association is apparent. For two birds, the sex could not be determined, because they were juveniles.

Cut marks observed on the bones relate to preparation of the animal. The purpose of the deposits therefore was to present prepared dishes at the bottom of the tomb. But it is difficult to establish whether these pieces of meat were cooked. In cases where bones were found in anatomical articulation with all or most skeletal elements present, it seems plausible to suggest that these

¹⁹ KEEPAX 1981; JONUKS *et al.* 2018.



26 Louvres, tomb ST 398. Combined deposit of a cockerell and a piglet, in pieces. (Photo: A.-S. Vigot, Éveha).

animals were raw, just killed. Conversely, the isolated elements may have come from prepared foods and thus may have been cooked.

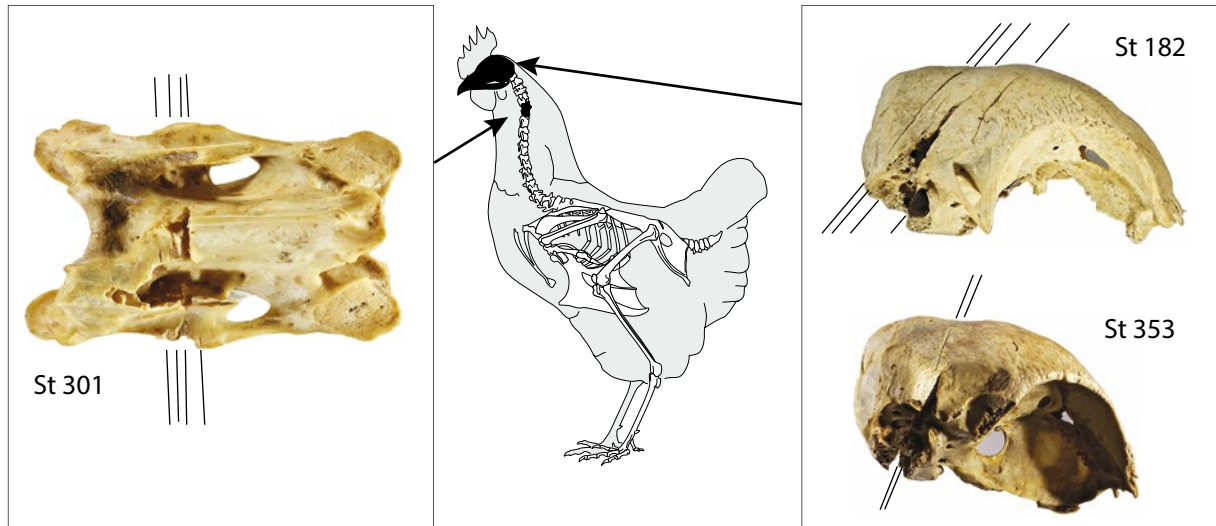
We know that the funerary rituals included sacrifices, and we are inclined to think that the chicken found beside the deceased were the victims of sacrificial practices. This thinking is reinforced by the fact that some of these birds (fig. 28) showed cut marks on the neck or head that cannot be explained as food preparation, since all the skeletal elements are present and in articulation. For one hen, it is easy to spot the perpendicular cleaver marks to the cervical vertebra, indicating a gesture corresponding to the slashing of the animal's throat. These are thus slaughtering marks. But this still leaves multiple possibilities for how the birds got there. The chicken could have been transported to the tomb already dead, and they may even have been killed separate from any sacrificial context (purchased at the butcher's?). Or the chicken could have been killed with the express aim of placing them in the tomb, but as an item of food, without the element of sacrifice. Or they could have been the *victimae* of activities related to the interment of the deceased human. What does seem clear is that in some cases these actions were followed by the removal of the feet, which was apparently necessary for the *mise en scène* of the deposits at the bottom of the tomb.

The birds from Louvres match the archetypical funeral assemblages of Late Antiquity. The deposits from this period primarily consist of chicken, followed by very young piglets and chicken eggs, the last of which are taking on a growing importance at this time. We see this same type of deposit at Epiais-Rhius and at Dourges, where pig is also mostly present as animals that would



27 Louvres, tomb ST 213. Remains of an intact egg. (Photo: A.-S. Vigot, Éveha).

still have been lactating, and in the Low Empire levels at Hénin-Beaumont, Marquion, Arras, and Saint-Laurent-Blangy "Actiparc". Most of the time, the birds were deposited intact or with the feet removed, whereas the piglets were often deposited in pieces. The change that began in the middle of the 2nd century AD leads to an overwhelming omnipresence of chicken by the 4th century (fig. 9), although the other species, such as caprines and goose, do not disappear completely. The list of deposited species is rounded out at Marquion (4th century AD) by a goose and at Dourges by three geese and a rock



28 Louvres, tomb ST 301 (left). Knife cut mark on the palmar face of a cervical vertebra of a large chicken. The presence of the vertebrae and head in articulation reveals that the cutmark relates to the sacrifice of the animal. Louvres, tombs ST 182 and ST 353 (right). Knife cut marks on the heads of chickens. The number of cuts per cranium is surprising. It may relate to decapitation, but the fact that this part was not removed favours the hypothesis that these marks relate, instead, to the killing of the animal.

dove (*Columba livia*). It is not necessary to seek any particular significance in these isolated cases; rather, we should view them as the expression of a degree of freedom afforded to the family. Similarly, another local custom is depositing fish and molluscs in ceramics. This mainly concerns the cemeteries of the 4th and 5th centuries of the coastal strip. At Marenla, one burial yielded the remains of a flounder (*Platichthys flesus*) and another yielded a tin dish containing shells of common cockle (*Cardium edule*). At Noyelles-sur-Mer, the fish identified from five graves is also flounder.

The animals outside the tombs

One of the particularities of the site of Louvres is that the necropolis delivers animal deposits from outside the tombs, specifically of dog and caprines. There are two types of dog burial. The first type of dog deposit is the complete skeleton of a dog in structure 384 (fig. 29). Here we are confronted with gestures that have been recognised elsewhere – see, for example, in Tunisia, the necropolis of Puppūt²⁰, and in France, the necropolis des Dunes, in Poitiers²¹; the site at 78 avenue Jean Jaurès in Nîmes; the site of La Butte, in Lyon²²; or the site of La villa de la Gare at Quiou, on the Côte d’Armor,

Brittany²³ – but never reviewed in depth²⁴. Often, as at Louvres, Poitiers, and Lyon (tomb 5 in the quartier Saint Pierre²⁵), a ceramic is placed beside the animal, often between its legs. These burials reflect a desire to provide the companion of the deceased and the deceased’s family with a dignified burial – an act that is intended to be far removed from the act of getting rid of the animal in a common charnel-pit, or in a ditch at the edge of a road or field. It is also known that this use may in some cases have extended to the point of placing the animal inside a sarcophagus especially made for it. For Late Antiquity, a case is known from Turkey involving the sarcophagus of the dog Stephanos of Termessos (Lycia), on which is written a text that leaves no doubt: “I am the dog Stephanos, Rodopé erected for me this tomb”²⁶. Another example is envisaged by Eveillard²⁷, this time for Roman *Armorica*, at Plouarzel in Finistère (France). At Louvres, there was no sarcophagus, but the analysis of bone movement and anatomical connections suggests that decomposition took place in an unrestricted space, suggesting the existence of a wooden chest or wooden roofing at the top of the pit.

The second type of deposit involving dogs is the one that raises the most questions, because this form is not known from the existing archaeological literature. Structures 566 and 617 each contained a ceramic vessel containing the complete skeleton of a new-born puppy (fig. 30). It is really interesting to note that structure 566

20 LEPETZ 2008.

21 VIGOT et al. 2008.

22 BLAIZOT 2009, 86.

23 Unpublished.

24 See LEPETZ 1993; BLAIZOT 2009.

25 CHASTEL et al. 1995.

26 Antalya Museum, Inv.-No. 016.

27 EVEILLARD 2012.



29 Louvres, tomb of a dog. (Photo: A.-S. Vigot, Éveha).

is in the immediate vicinity of a tomb containing a very young infant (just several months old) and that structure 617 is close to three tombs of new-borns.

The association of tombs of dogs with tombs of infants has sometimes been envisaged²⁸, but the examples presented thus far are tenuous because the topographic proximity alone is insufficient to prove a link. At Louvres, the situation is somewhat different. The fact that at this site there are two similar but independent deposits and that the puppies had been placed in ceramic vessels shows the purposeful, meticulous nature of the gesture. The young age of the puppies argues against the idea that a family would have felt a strong bond with these animals, yet their interment was carefully performed. But it is hard to imagine that the topographic relationship was without meaning. The link with the new-born graves seems obvious, even though we have trouble establishing the reason for it. Rather than a religious gesture, we might think of this as a wish on the part of the family (the parents?) to pay homage to the young deceased.

For caprines, the area between the tombs revealed four pits each containing a single sheep, one pit containing a goat, and one pit containing a pig. The caprines were all juveniles, and the pig was less than a year old. Radiocarbon dating places the pig in the medieval period. This is probably an animal that died of natural causes and was buried by its owner, in the Middle Ages. The relative chronology indicates that the sheep and goats date to Antiquity.

The issue of animals deposited as part of commemoration or separation rituals was addressed during the excavation of a ram discovered at a mausoleum dating to Antiquity at Vâton, in the Calvados, France²⁹. The deposit of this sheep occurred between 50 and 250 years after the tomb had been closed off. This time gap means that it is not possible to establish whether there was a link between these two gestures, of burying a dead person and burying a dead animal. At Louvres, a similar situation presents itself: it is difficult to know whether the sheep and goat mentioned above were sacrificed as

28 BLAIZOT 2009, 87.

29 HINCKER et al. 2012.



30 Louvres, tomb ST 565. Very young puppy that had been placed in a ceramic vessel (left), curled up in anatomical position (shown schematically right). (Photo: A.-S. Vigot, Éveha. CAD: S. Lepetz).

part of a ceremony or, instead, died naturally. Given that these deposits are situated in the same area as the human tombs, one might think that the persons tasked with burying these animals must have known about the funerary nature of the site. The young age of the caprines argues for them having died of natural causes. However, we have to remember that the animals buried around the tombs in Antiquity are all sheep or goat – species that are rarely part of the tomb burials themselves – and that no pigs or chicken have been found in these pits. We therefore have a negative *a priori* for linking the deposits in the pits to those in the tombs, because the pit deposits are unusual and do not appear to correspond to the funerary habits involving those species.

Structure 448 is different, though. At the bottom of the ditch was a skeletally complete adult goose, placed

on its back, wings spread, covered by a young sheep of about 1 or 1.5 years old placed on its right side. At least three eggs (undoubtedly more) had been placed in a straight line on the right wing of the bird. This deposit has no equivalent elsewhere, and it remains difficult to interpret. One could envisage an offering made to the deceased or to the deceased's Manes as part of rites of commemoration, even though, in general, commemorative practices favour libations. One could also think of gestures of divination or necromancy, as has already been proposed for the ram at Vâton, even though there are no formal indications for this. Nevertheless, if we consider this association to be religious instead of fortuitous, we should then reconsider the other isolated deposits of sheep and goats, and allow for the possibility that these, too, formed part of practices related to human deaths.

Conclusion

At the end of this paper, it is necessary to re-emphasise the two main limitations of the approach. Only parts of the archaeozoological data could be presented, and the deposits could not be described in detail, and thus the descriptions above can only partially express the richness, complexity, and variety of the tombs. Further, our image of the practices is also only partial. For a complete image, it would be necessary to describe and analyse all the constituent elements of the tombs, the form of the structures and their arrangement in the *necropoleis*, the anthropological data, the ceramics, the other objects, and all the characteristics of the sites. The task of full publication has yet to be undertaken. But despite these reservations, several elements are apparent, and these allow us to better understand the place of animals in the funeral practices of the inhabitants of Belgic Gaul.

- The data collected from our sites concerning the La Tène practices of the last decades of the 1st century BC show a certain homogeneity in the deposits and gestures, which probably indicates a homogeneity in beliefs.
- The deposition of halved heads of pigs, staged together with separated necks and ribs, is observed on many sites of this period and has been described from Luxemburg to northern France.
- The gesture of disarticulating the limb bones and reconstituting them as a triangle in the tombs seems widespread throughout this region, as does interring

sections of vertebrae or other anatomical parts that are partly defleshed.

- On the other hand, we can see that these schemas extend beyond the chronology of the Gallic period, since we find them in the 1st century AD as well, in some cases into the reign of Claudius. It is unclear whether people's thinking persisted, but certainly the associated customs were retained.
- The custom of arranging large quantities of cut-up meat, mainly pork, in the tombs, is also a feature common to these Gallic and Gallo-Roman societies, undoubtedly underlining the important role that meat products would have played in these cultures. In contrast, the differences with Roman Italy are significant because such non-burnt and (nearly) complete skeletons are not found in graves of Pompeii.
- There is no significant break between the Gallic and the Roman periods. Rather, we observe a shift through to the middle of the 2nd century AD that, little by little, reduces the prominence of these pieces of meat in the tombs. Pork and chicken are decreasing in frequency, somewhat as if there was a tendency to greater (relative) frugality. There are not only fewer pieces, but also fewer species, with the virtual disappearance from the 150s AD onward of cow and dog, some pieces of which had still been associated directly or indirectly with funeral deposits up until that time. Pork and mutton continue to decrease in importance. There is a change in the middle of the 2nd century;

from this date, we see a continuous increase in chicken, in the form of cockerels and eggs, which culminates in the 4th century with a form of quasi-exclusivity of this species. Pig is still present in low proportions, but in another form, namely, as cut-up, very young piglets, rather than the reconstituted, halved pigs of earlier times. The form of these deposits has fundamentally changed. The vision that the family has for the grave-side portion of the burial ceremony has also changed: after the omnipresence and abundance of meat in the 1st century, in the 4th century we generally see only a chicken and an egg in the pit. The form of the homage rendered by the living to the deceased changes and becomes simpler.

To this general guide, which is necessarily simplified, we must add those elements that emphasise everything that we are not yet able to comprehend. Do the defleshed

bones in the tombs constitute remains of meals taken by the living? Are the complete animals that are occasionally found around the graves (sheep, geese) signs of commemoration of the funeral, or do they correspond to other types of beliefs? How should we interpret the deposits of new-born puppies next to graves of small children? Finally, we have to ask ourselves about the origins of the growing prominence of chicken in the religious context of a Roman Empire that, at the end of the 4th century, had officially become Christian. Work on sacrifices and food offerings in Merovingian Gaul has revealed the survival of dietary practices around the tomb beyond the 5th century (including the deposition of prepared meals)³⁰. These customs were tolerated, even accepted, without reluctance by the religious authorities because they harked back to tradition and operated in the private sphere. Here too, there was no rupture, but, rather, a gradual change in customs.

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Abstract

Excavations over the past 10 years in what is today the north of France have uncovered numerous cemeteries dating from the end of the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD, allowing archaeologists to compile a remarkable body of finds that permits us to describe a part of the activities conducted at the time of the funeral. A corpus of 20 cemeteries with a combined total of 464 tombs with animal remains is available. Data from these cem-

eteries make it possible to better understand the place of animals in funeral rituals, and they allow us to observe changes that took place over the course of the terminal La Tène and the Roman period in the positioning of animal remains in tombs and in the presence of animal species and anatomical parts. They also allow us to compare practices in northern France with contemporaneous practices in Italy.

Zusammenfassung

Tiere in Bestattungspraktiken in Gallia Belgica zwischen dem Ende des 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. und dem Beginn des 5. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.: Von gallischen zu gallo-römischen Praktiken

Ausgrabungen der letzten zehn Jahre im heutigen Nordfrankreich haben zahlreiche Nekropolen vom Ende des 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. bis zum 5. Jahrhundert n. Chr. freigelegt, die es ermöglichen, einige der während des Begräbnisses ausgeführten Aktivitäten zu beschreiben. Ein insgesamt 464 Gräber mit Tierresten von 20 Nekropolen beinhaltendes Corpus ist verfügbar. Die Daten aus diesen Nekropolen ermöglichen ein besseres Verständ-

nis der Stellung der Tiere bei Begräbnisritualen und der Veränderungen, die zwischen der späten La Tène Zeit und der römischen Periode hinsichtlich der Arten und anatomischen Teile sowie der Anordnung der Überreste in den Gräbern stattfanden. Sie ermöglichen es uns auch, die Praktiken in Nordfrankreich mit den zeitgenössischen Praktiken in Italien zu vergleichen.

Résumé

Les animaux dans les pratiques funéraires au Gallia Belgica entre la fin du 1^{er} siècle avant J.-C. et le début du 5^e siècle après J.-C. : Des pratiques gauloises aux pratiques gallo-romaines

Les fouilles menées au cours des dix dernières années dans ce qui est aujourd'hui le nord de la France ont mis au jour de nombreuses nécropoles datant de la fin du 1^{er} siècle avant J.-C. au 5^e siècle après J.-C., permettant de décrire une partie des activités menées au moment des funérailles. Un corpus de 20 nécropoles avec un total de 464 tombes livrant des restes d'animaux est disponible. Les données de ces nécropoles permettent de mieux

comprendre la place des animaux dans les rituels funéraires et les changements intervenus entre La Tène finale et la période romaine concernant les espèces et les parties anatomiques impliquées et la disposition des vestiges dans les tombes. Ils nous permettent aussi de comparer les pratiques du nord de la France avec les pratiques contemporaines d'Italie.

This volume includes a number of papers that were originally presented at the conference *Roman Animals in Ritual and Funerary Contexts*, which was held in Basel (Switzerland) from 1st–4th February 2018. The conference represented the second meeting of the International Council for Archaeozoology (ICAZ) Working Group on the *Zooarchaeology of the Roman Period*.

The articles present ritually deposited animal remains across a wide geographical range and incorporate both archaeological and zoological findings. The integration of these two strands of evidence is also one of the central concerns of the ICAZ Working Group, as in the past they have often been dealt with separately. However, it is precisely this interdisciplinary cooperation that opens up new perspectives on ritual practices in a wide variety of contexts. In this volume we see the enhancement of our understanding of ritual treatment of animals in central sanctuaries, in rural areas, at natural sites, and as part of building construction processes.

The case studies presented in this volume demonstrate how animal remains such as bones and eggshells provide information beyond diet, economy, and differences in social hierarchy. Their interdisciplinary investigation additionally enables insights into practices governed by cultural, religious, and ideological conditions.

The aim of the Zooarchaeology of the Roman Period Working Group (<https://alexandriaarchive.org/icaaz/workroman>) is to represent a network of exchange and collaboration across borders and to enable the understanding of the interconnections between the research questions associated with animal remains from this important historical period.

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