

From Necropoleis to Koimētēria: Burial Practices in Late Antique (late 3rd–7th c. AD) Sagalassos, South-West Turkey

Sam Cleymans and Peter Talloen

Abstract

This paper brings an overview of the changing traditions and beliefs towards death, interment and afterlife in late antique (late 3rd–7th c.) Sagalassos (south-west Turkey). Late Antiquity is often regarded as a transitional phase from pagan to Christian practices. To understand this gradual shift, this paper looks into several aspects of burial culture, ranging from the treatment of the body, over grave design to grave good assemblages, as evidenced by the excavated, late antique graves and skeletal assemblages from Sagalassos. As such, the continuity and change can be traced from Roman Imperial (1st–3rd c.) to Late Roman (late 3rd–5th c.) and eventually Early Byzantine (6th–7th c.) times. Altogether, the evidence from Sagalassos shows that many of the practices that are considered typically Christian, such as a modest grave design, were a continuation of pre-existing Roman Imperial or Late Roman practices of which the meaning and intention altered with the advent of Christendom. Moreover, funerary practices appear to have mirrored broader trends of urban development that are equally observed in the monumental centre of Sagalassos.

Sagalassos, City of the Living (and the Dead)

Late antique funerary culture remains an understudied phenomenon for much of Asia Minor, mostly because the quite simple graves characteristic for this period are only accidentally encountered in excavations. The limited indications at the surface, such as the lack of aboveground tomb architecture, make that Early Byzantine cemeteries are seldom identified and thus targeted in archaeological research. At Sagalassos, an ancient city in the historical region of Pisidia (south-west Asia Minor), so far 42 late antique (late 3rd–7th c.) graves, containing the skeletal remains of at least 46 individuals, have been unearthed. Here too, it took until 2011 before the first late antique burials were unearthed. In contrast, by 2011, already more than 500 Late Hellenistic and Roman Imperial (1st c. BC–3rd c.) burial containers and monumental tombs had been documented,¹ and two tombs had been excavated.²

Detailed research on the stratigraphy, material culture, chronology, and skeletal remains have allowed the reconstruction of the funerary culture at late antique Sagalassos. This paper focusses on the changing burial rites by contrasting various (bio)archaeological and historical sources to come to a better understanding of the practices, beliefs and emotions towards death, afterlife, and interment at late antique Sagalassos.

This study revolves around 6 aspects that are inherent to burial customs: 1) the treatment of the body, 2) the location and positioning of burial plots, 3) the grave design, 4) body position and orientation, 5) family or other group-related practices, and 6) the deposition of grave goods. By bringing changes observed for these aspects into synthesis, we aim to shed more light on the overall evolution of mortuary culture at Sagalassos, and how it correlated with other social phenomena within this town and its hinterland. With this case study, we hope to contribute to broader discussions on burial practices elsewhere in late antique Anatolia, and on the role of Christianity and paganism.

The city of Sagalassos, located some 100 km north of Antalya, has been excavated and studied by an international and interdisciplinary research team under the direction of KU Leuven (Belgium) for the past 30 years (Fig. 1). Sagalassos was inhabited from Late Achaemenid/Early Hellenistic times (5th–3rd c. BC) until the Middle Byzantine period (10th–13th c.). After its heyday in Roman Imperial times (1st–first half 3rd c.), the Late Roman period (second half 3rd–first half 5th c.) was marked by the absence of new monumental construction. Nevertheless, the existing infrastructure was not only preserved, but minor and major modifications took place, adjusting the existing infrastructure to the changing needs of the community, and thus maintaining the overall monumental character of the city.³ Artisanal production continued⁴ and agricultural production specialized and adapted to the changing climatic and environmental conditions.⁵ The introduction of Christianity in Pisidia constituted the start of a new phase in the evolution of religious life in the region, but it does not seem to have had any profound impact on the religious

1 Köse (2005).

2 Waelkens *et al.* (1989–1990); Waelkens *et al.* (1991).

3 Waelkens *et al.* (2006) 226–27; Poblome *et al.* (2017) 302–303.

4 Poblome and Firat (2011).

5 Kaptijn *et al.* (2013); Poblome (2015); Talloen and Poblome (2019).

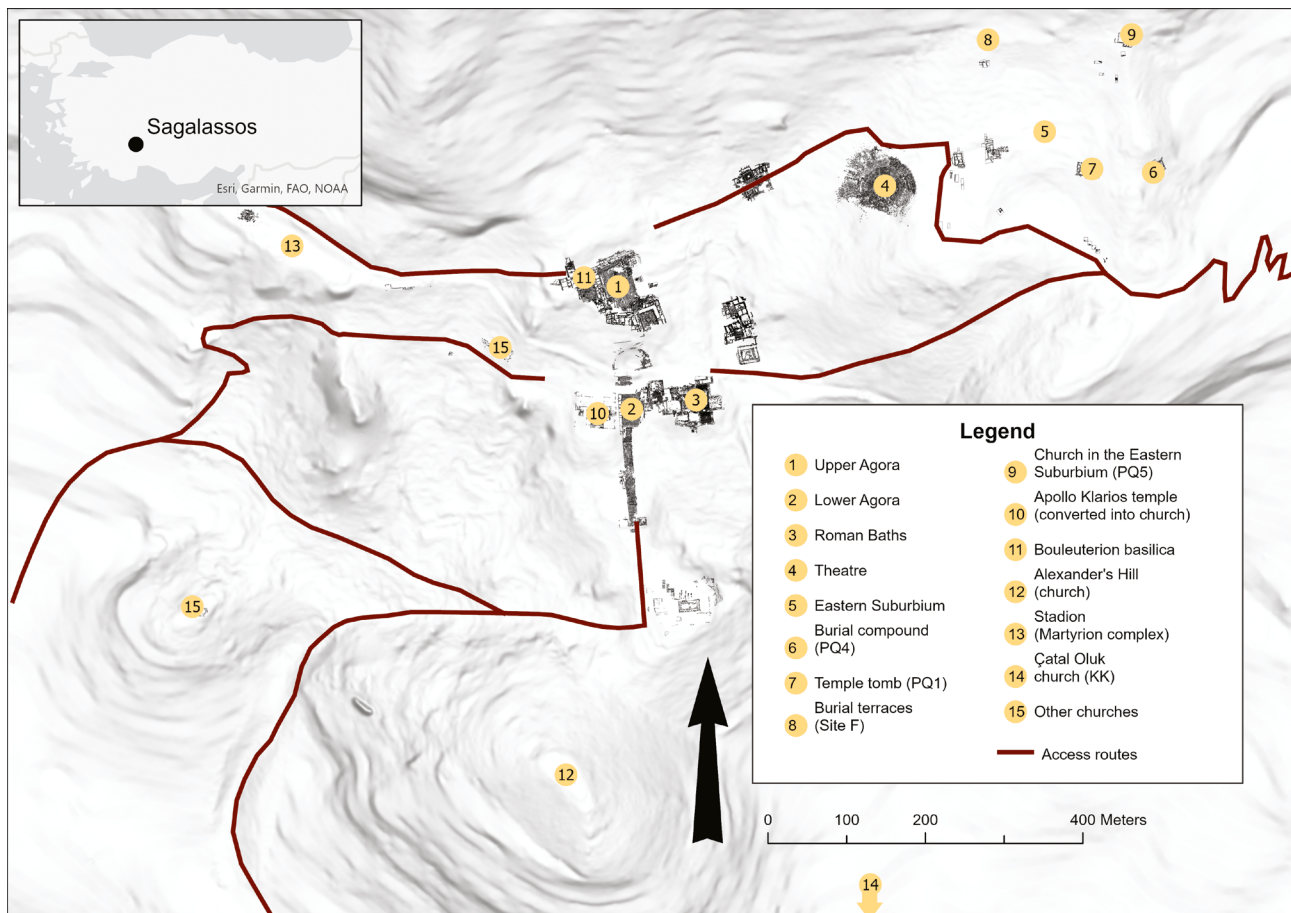


FIGURE 1 Map of Sagalassos showing the main archaeological features discussed in the paper.

practices in Sagalassos until the end of the 4th c. when all traditional sanctuaries were suddenly closed and official forms of polytheistic ritual came to an end, signalling drastic changes within a short period of time.⁶ Between the end of the 5th and the middle of the 6th c., at least 9 churches were constructed at Sagalassos, resulting in a Christianization of the cityscape.⁷ Towards the end of the 6th c., pottery production in the Eastern *Suburbium* came to a halt and was relocated.⁸ Although certain areas in the monumental centre were well-maintained or rebuilt, Sagalassos acquired a different urban character from the middle of the 6th c. onwards due to processes of encroachment and increasing neglect of several public buildings.⁹ Around the middle of the 7th c., the city was struck by an earthquake of more than 5.5 Ms, destroying many of the public buildings,¹⁰

some of which had already been put (partly) out of use.¹¹ At around the same time, Arab incursions into central Anatolia saw the repeated ransacking of the nearby provincial centre of Pisidian Antioch.¹² Sagalassos remained a Byzantine centre until the early 13th c., when it was abandoned around the time Seljuk tribes took over the region. Archaeological data for community life in this period are less abundant.¹³

The Burial Practices of the Roman Imperial Period

In order to identify changes and continuity of burial practices in Late Antiquity, we will first introduce the burial practices of the preceding Roman Imperial period (1st-first half 3rd c.) at Sagalassos. Although during the (Late) Hellenistic period only cremation appeared to have been practiced, inhumation began from the 1st c. as attested in two chamber tombs with multiple

6 Talloen (2019).

7 Waelkens *et al.* (2006); to the 8 churches *intra* and *extra muros* mentioned by Talloen (2019) also the church situated at Çatal Oluk, in the southern periphery of Sagalassos should be added since it too was part of the Southern Necropolis (Claeys and Poblome (2013)).

8 Poblome *et al.* (2017) 304.

9 Waelkens *et al.* (2006) 231–35; Poblome (2014) 630–33.

10 Sintubin *et al.* (2003) 359–74; Similox-Tohon *et al.* (2005).

11 Poblome *et al.* (2010).

12 Belke and Mersich (1990) give an overview of the sources.

13 Vionis *et al.* (2009); Vanhaverbeke *et al.* (2009); Poblome (2014); Poblome *et al.* (2017).

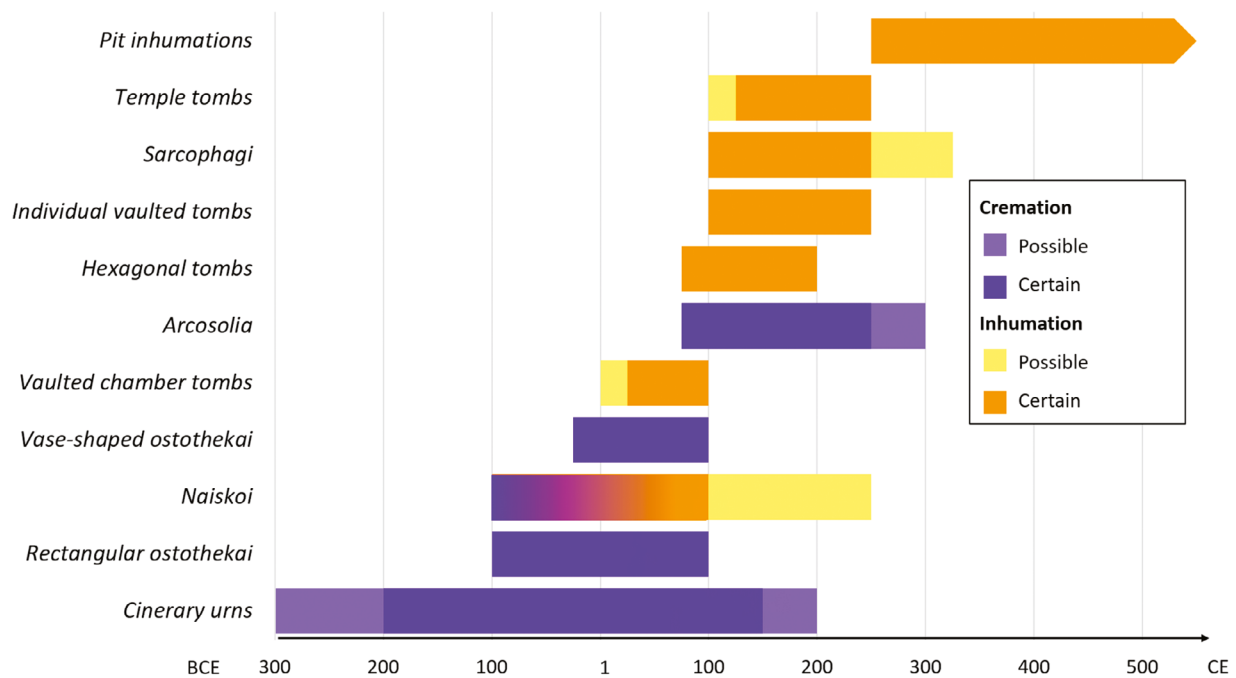


FIGURE 2 A chronological visualisation of cremation and/or inhumation per grave type at Sagalassos.

interments.¹⁴ Cremation continued until the 3rd c. as evidenced by the *arcosolia* – arched niches carved into the rock face housing cremains or cinerary urns – in the Northern Necropolis.¹⁵ The gradual replacement of cremation by inhumation is highlighted by the evolution in number and variety of grave types and burial containers, such as *sarcophagi* (Fig. 2).

As was common practice in antiquity, and even enacted into law, the dead were not allowed to be buried within the town.¹⁶ At Sagalassos too, the Roman *necropoleis* surrounded the city. Sepulchral architecture and burial containers were mostly located on vantage points and along the entranceways to town. As such, these tombs would attract the attention of passers-by and thus ensure the commemoration of the dead, a phenomenon commonly documented for Roman *necropoleis* in Asia Minor and beyond.¹⁷ This trend had already begun in the Late Hellenistic period, with the introduction of rectangular *osteotheikai*¹⁸ – stone cinerary urns – and peaked during the Roman Imperial period when elaborate structures, such as temple tombs and walled burial compounds, flanked the main roads, or were erected on slopes or hilltops (Fig. 3).¹⁹

As indicated by Fig. 2, the inhabitants of Roman Sagalassos used a broad variety of grave types. Especially in the 2nd c., the coexistence of cremation and inhumation resulted in the broadest variation. One striking aspect is that all Roman Imperial inhumation graves are arranged in stone and/or brick masonry. The burial containers (e.g., *sarcophagi*, *osteotheikai*) and most of the cremation graves (e.g., *arcosolia*) too, were carved out of stone. Plain pit burials have so far not been attested for the Roman Imperial period. The presence of nails and post-depositional movement of skeletal remains indicate that inhumations took place either in a shroud, in a wooden coffin, or – as documented for a single skeleton – on a wooden platform, depending on the burial plot they were found in. As such the choice for the one or the other may have been that of the family or group responsible for the entombment. The orientation of the graves, in turn, did not systematically adhere to any of the cardinal points. Rather it followed (or was perpendicular to) the contour lines of the natural relief or the walls of the sepulchral enclosures, or the grave's façade faced the nearest entrance road to enhance visibility.

As discussed elsewhere, the dead entombed within the same burial plot or tomb most likely belonged to the same family, based on similarities in grave good assemblages and the chronology of the construction and use of the grave.²⁰ Moreover, epigraphic evidence from *sarcophagi* indicates family relations.²¹ For the Roman

14 Cleymans and Beaujean (2020) 50–52; Cleymans and Beaujean (2022).

15 Köse (2005) 145–47.

16 Cic., *Leg.* 2.23.58.

17 For Asia Minor, see Spanu (2000) 173; elsewhere: von Hesberg (1992) 19–26.

18 Köse (2005) 76–77.

19 Cleymans *et al.* (2018); Cleymans and Beaujean (2022).

20 Cleymans and Beaujean (2020) 52–55; cf. Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 140–43.

21 Köse (2005) 105–07, 129–30 and 143–45.

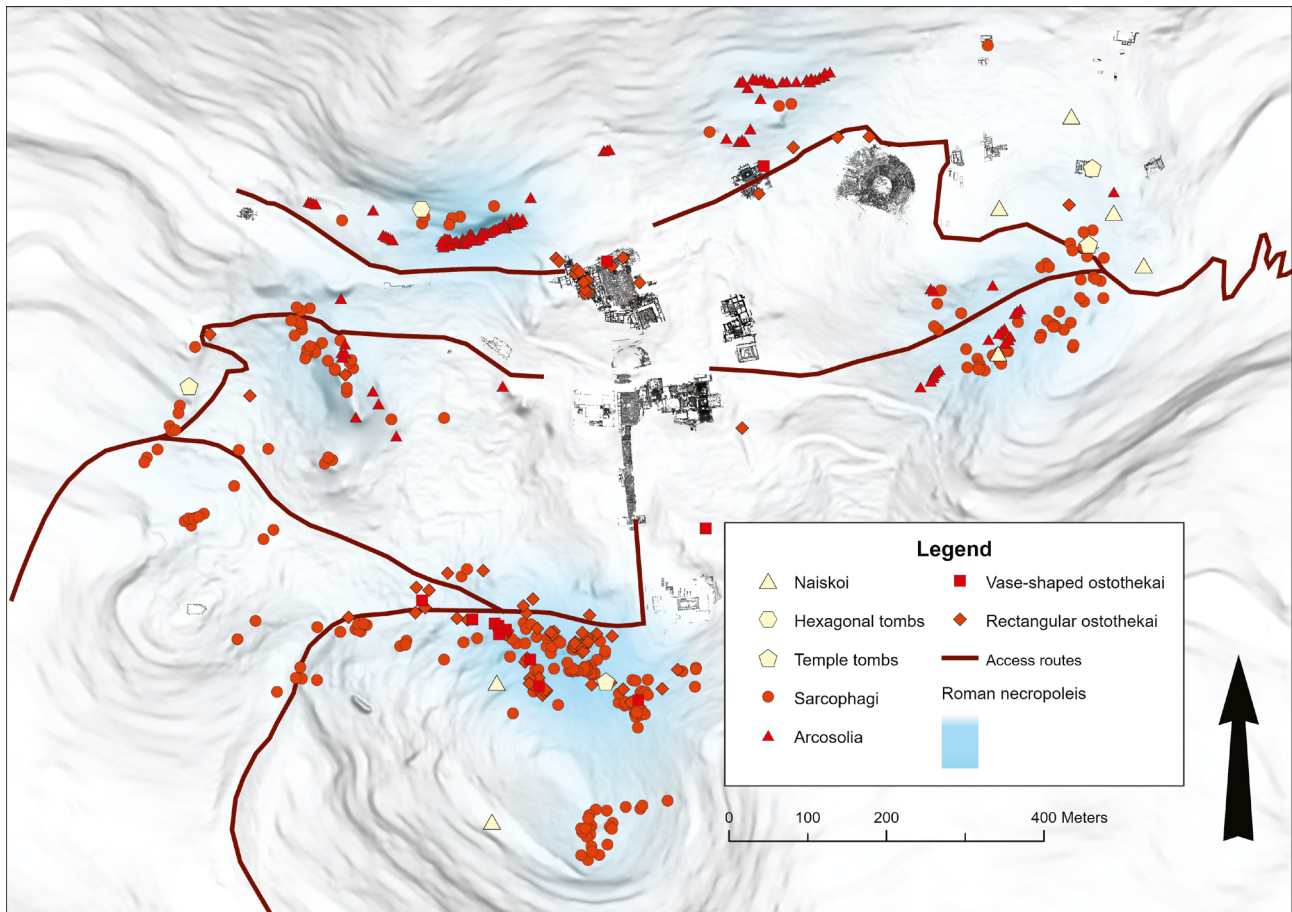


FIGURE 3 The Roman Imperial *necropoleis* of Sagalassos.

Imperial period, the only skeletal remains of non-adults originated from two 1st c. chamber tombs with multiple inhumations.²² For the 2nd c., none of the excavated graves contained non-adult skeletal remains. Given that pre-industrial societies experienced high levels of non-adult mortality (30–70% under the age of 15),²³ their absence at Sagalassos indicates that children were barred from being interred inside the normal burial plots – a common practice in the Roman Empire.²⁴

Grave good assemblages at Roman Sagalassos were generally relatively rich and varied, especially in female graves. The objects donated to the deceased were often of high-quality materials and making, as indicated by two pairs of golden earrings with pearl inlays, a gilded and silver ring, and golden *epistomia* – small sheets placed on the mouth of the departed.²⁵ Several of the grave goods even appear to be specially crafted or adjusted for funerary use, as these did not show any

traces of use-wear or were purposely broken.²⁶ Finally, the assemblages donated to men and those given with women were quite distinct. An example of such gender practices was that in Roman Imperial Sagalassos every male received a coin, placed in the mouth as fare to pay the ferrymen Charon for taking the soul of the deceased over the river Styx, whereas none of the females did.²⁷

Late Antique Burial Practices

In Late Antiquity, burials continued within the extent of the existing Roman *necropoleis* that encircled the monumental centre and residential quarters of Sagalassos (Fig. 4). For the Late Roman period (second half of the 3rd–5th c.), all 38 excavated graves are located in the Eastern Necropolis: in the *hyposoria* of a Roman Imperial period temple tomb (PQ1),²⁸ on the terraces of the steep northern slopes (Site F),²⁹ and inside a walled burial

22 Charlier (1995) 210.

23 Lewis (2007) 22.

24 Cleymans *et al.* (forthcoming). For instances elsewhere in the Roman Empire, see Scott (1999); Pearce (2001).

25 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 132–33.

26 Poblome *et al.* (2012) 8–9.

27 Stroobants *et al.* (2019) 486.

28 Claeys and Poblome (2014).

29 Cleymans *et al.* (2021) 185–88.

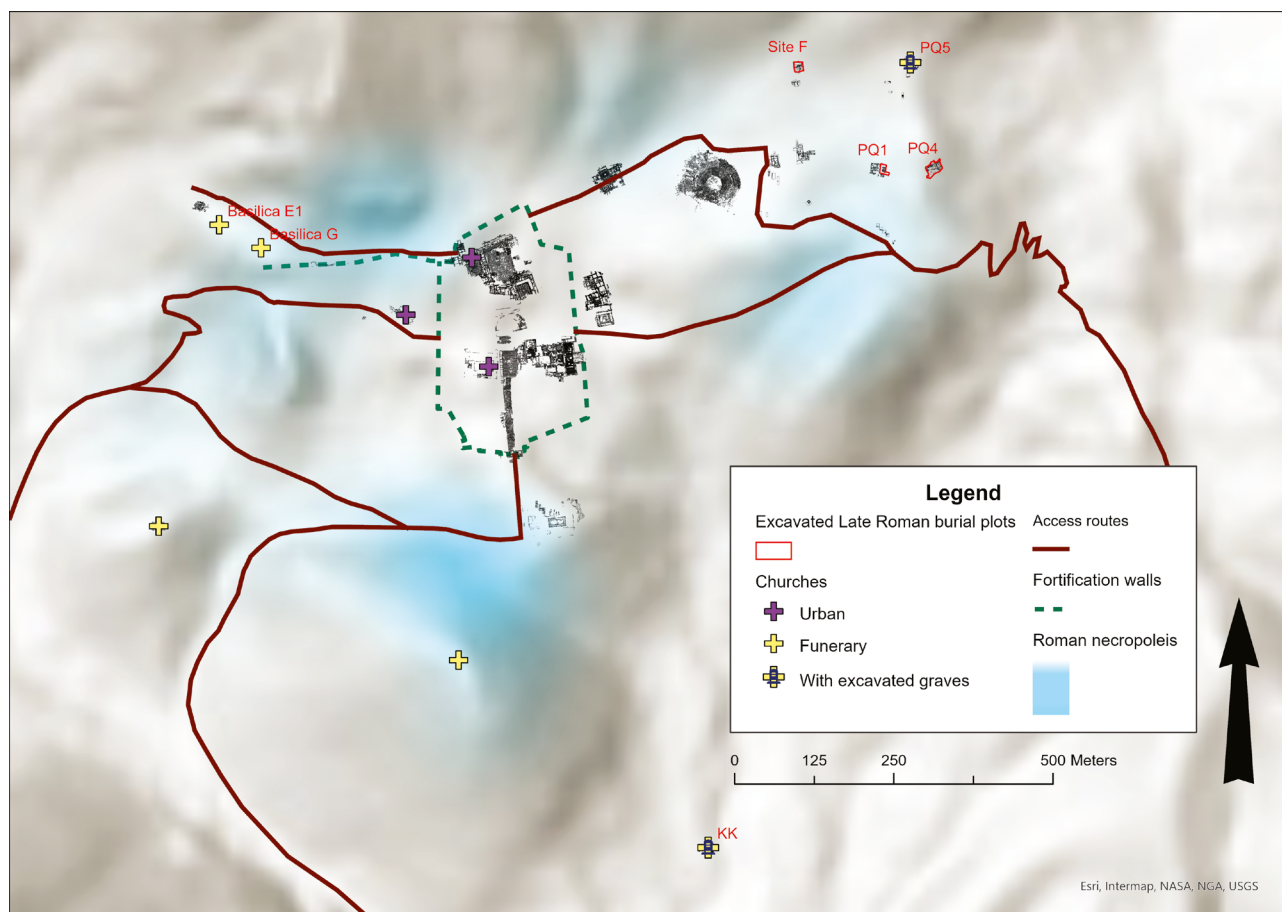


FIGURE 4 The late antique excavated and surveyed burial sites around Sagalassos. The excavated Late Roman burial plots are marked in red, and the churches with a cross.

compound originating in the 2nd c. (PQ4).³⁰ The 4 documented Early Byzantine (6th–7th c.) burials, in turn, still took place in the former Roman *necropoleis*, but were now arranged within cemeteries close to or around churches: three graves immediately south of a basilica in the Southern Necropolis in a small valley with the name Çatal Oluk (KK),³¹ and one in the foundation trench of a church built on a promontory in the north-east of the Eastern Necropolis (PQ5).³² Although the preliminary results of geophysical surveying (resistivity) mentioned the identification of at least 8 possible graves around a basilica (Basilica G) in the former Stadion,³³ GPR survey conducted in the summer of 2021 indicated that the anomalies are present at 10 m below the surface and therefore certainly cannot be burials. Therefore, we decided not to build on this evidence.

30 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 144–54.

31 Claeys and Poblome (2013).

32 Talloen and Beaujean (2015).

33 De Giorgi and Leucci (2018) 755–58.

Body Treatment

The archaeologically most visible difference in body treatment during Late Antiquity is the constant choice for inhumation, whereas in Roman Imperial times cremation continued at Sagalassos, although gradually growing less important. It thus seems that the evolution that started around the turn of the millennium had come to an end by the later 3rd c. The (re)introduction of inhumation in the Roman Empire has been explained in a number of ways. Although the role of mystery cults and of the Judaic and Christian belief systems³⁴ have been emphasized before, these hypotheses were quickly rejected as the turn to inhumation started too early and was too widespread to be merely the result of foreign cults.³⁵ More recently, Emma-Jayne Graham proposed a more convincing explanation by stressing the agency of the dead body itself.³⁶ For Roman Italy, she documented an intensification of care for the body around the same time that *libitinarii* (undertakers) started to take over burial organization in the 1st c. AD. As the preparation

34 Cumont (1949) 387–90; De Visscher (1963) 40–41.

35 Toynbee (1971) 40.

36 Graham (2015).

of the deceased was no longer the duty of the family, the relatives became distanced from the bodily aspects of death, such as the stench of the decaying corpse. To reconnect emotionally with the deceased, an increased care for the body through inhumation became preferred over the violent destruction of the body by fire.

For Sagalassos, the burial data seem to corroborate the latter hypothesis, although there is no evidence for local burial associations or professional undertakers so far.³⁷ Throughout the Roman Imperial period, a gradual intensification in shielding off the body can be observed. While Early Roman Imperial chamber tombs were designed for multiple inhumations – every new interment requiring the reopening of the grave and shoving aside (partly) decomposed human remains of previous inhumations – 2nd c. entombments primarily took place in individual vaulted tombs that provided space for a single corpse and could not be reopened. More monumental tombs, however, continued to provide space for several corpses, as indicated by the *hyposoria* underneath the excavated temple tomb (PQ1),³⁸ or by the epitaphs on *sarcophagi* mentioning that the stone casket was intended for two or three family members.³⁹ These epitaphs on *sarcophagi* further evidence for the reuse of these containers in the Middle Roman Imperial period.⁴⁰ Conversely, the Late Roman pit inhumations contained in all but one case – an adult female with neonate⁴¹ – the skeletal remains of a single individual and all consisted of coffin burials (see further). As such, the dead body was fully withdrawn from sight. Also, the Late Roman end of cremation did not result from the growing importance of Christianity. Only from the second half of the 4th c., traditional religious practices, as embodied in pagan shrines and iconography, started disappearing, while Christianity would only gradually leave its mark from the beginning of the 5th c. onwards;⁴² by that time, cremation had already ceased for almost a century.

In Byzantine Sagalassos, the rite of inhumation continued without exception. The reasons to do so, however, became more explicitly grounded in the Christian belief system. Although cremation is not formally prohibited by the Holy Script, the reasons to opt for inhumation are found in the Bible. According to Christian theology, not only the soul lives on after death, but during the Second

Coming, the body itself resurrects.⁴³ To allow this, the body should remain intact and thus inhumation became the only acceptable option.⁴⁴ Byzantine written sources inform us that with these changing beliefs, also the relation with the dead body altered. Whereas Roman families gradually became distanced from the bodily aspects of death and decay by hiding away corpses in closed containers, Christian authors called for contact and care.⁴⁵ The 3rd c. Christian treatise *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, for example, proclaimed: ‘On this account you are to approach without restraint those who rest and you shall not declare them unclean.’⁴⁶ Hereby, the Roman distancing from the deceased should not be considered as a fear for “death pollution”, as is often proclaimed.⁴⁷ A recent re-evaluation of literary sources on this phenomenon in Rome concluded that the first mentions of death pollution only appeared in Late Antiquity.⁴⁸ So far, the limited evidence from Early Byzantine Sagalassos does not permit us to make further inferences on changes in the care of the deceased body.

Location of Burial

Late Roman inhumations continued in the Roman *necropoleis* that surrounded Sagalassos. Instead of arranging new sepulchral enclosures or architectural tombs, older burial plots and tomb structures were reused. So far, 34 simple pit inhumations, cut in the underlying soil substrate and/or bedrock, have been unearthed: 29 in the PQ4-burial compound, and 5 on the burial terraces in the northern part of the Eastern Necropolis (Site F).⁴⁹ Moreover, at several places throughout the excavated grave sites, already existing mortuary architecture was usurped. For example, in the *hyposoria* underneath the 2nd c. temple tomb (PQ1) at least 6 new interments took place.⁵⁰ At the burial terraces (Site F) and the compound (PQ4)⁵¹ as well, an individual vaulted grave was opened, the previous remains shoved aside, and a new coffin burial added. As such, little changed in the positioning of the burials compared to the Roman Imperial period; the *necropoleis* continued to form transitional zones encircling Sagalassos.⁵²

37 Cleymans and Beaujean (2020) 56.

38 Claeys and Poblome (2014).

39 E.g. Köse (2005) 105–106.

40 E.g. Cleymans and Uytterhoeven (2022).

41 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 146–47.

42 Talloen (2019) 173–80.

43 John 11:25; Luke 20:34–38; 1 Corinthians 15:12–58; Revelation 20:4–5.

44 Paxton (1990) 24–25; Volp (2002) 189.

45 Paxton (1990) 25; Davies (1999) 198–99.

46 *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum* 1.376.

47 E.g., Lindsay (2000).

48 Emmerson (2020).

49 Cleymans *et al.* (2021) 185–87.

50 Claeys and Poblome (2014).

51 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 152–53; Cleymans *et al.* (2021) 187–88.

52 Cleymans and Beaujean (2022).



FIGURE 5 Aerial pictures of A) the Çatal Oluk church (κκ), and B) the basilica in the northeast of the Eastern Suburbium (PQ5). The location of excavated graves is indicated with a green arrow with the same orientation as the head of the deceased.

Somewhere around AD 500, burials at Sagalassos shifted from the *necropoleis* to church cemeteries. The oldest known inhumation in association with a church took place in the first half of the 6th c., as was attested in the foundation trench of a basilica (PQ5) in the north-east of the Eastern Suburbium.⁵³ In the southern suburb of Sagalassos too, three 7th c. graves were uncovered south of the church in the Çatal Oluk valley (κκ) (Fig. 5).⁵⁴ These Early Byzantine inhumations took place in association with extramural churches (Fig. 4), often erected within the extent of the former *necropoleis*. Although the church became the new point of attraction for mortuary practices, none of the excavations of intramural basilicas yielded evidence for graves. The ban on burials within town thus seems to have continued. Just as in Roman law, the Byzantine *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (529–534) and several subsequent legal texts prohibited burials *intra muros*.⁵⁵ Throughout the Byzantine Empire, this resulted in the construction of extramural churches around which inhumations took place.⁵⁶

A special form of extramural churches were the *martyria*, churches built over the graves of martyrs or at places they had frequented. These churches exerted a large attraction for interments, since the proximity of holy relics was sanctified and thus was considered to protect the deceased – a practice denoted as *depositio ad sanctos*.⁵⁷ The two basilicas in the Stadion of Sagalassos – a large transept basilica and a smaller tripartite basilica – have been tentatively identified as

part of such a *martyrion* complex (Fig. 6).⁵⁸ Christian martyrology informs us that *stadia* were often used for the public execution of condemned criminals, such as early Christians, who then became regarded as saints or martyrs.⁵⁹ Graves in the former Stadion of Sagalassos, therefore, cannot be fully excluded. Although the GPR did not identify any graves, the simple pit inhumations which are typical for late antique Sagalassos (see *infra*) would not show up on the GPR-signal. The wish to be buried near a church was originally not a religious obligation. The principle of being laid to rest in the proximity of a saint, and *in extensis* near church sites – or a *locus sanctus* in Latin – gave people the hope for a better chance of reaching heaven.⁶⁰ It was this principle that originally attracted families to bury their kin near churches. To meet with this wish of the urban Christian populations in the Byzantine Empire, more and more extramural churches with a clear sepulchral purpose were constructed to allow people to be buried near a *locus sanctus* and at the same time retain the ban on extramural interments.⁶¹

This trend was not uncontested in Byzantine times, especially when taking place around intramural churches or within the basilica itself. St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430), for example, wrote that it was not the location of interment, but the state of the soul that merits the dead.⁶² A law from 361, incorporated in the *Codex Theodosianus*,⁶³ in turn, forbade inhumations within church buildings, and St. Gregory the Great

53 Talloen and Beaujean (2015).

54 Claeys and Poblome (2013).

55 *Dig.* 47.12; *Cod. Theod.* 9.17.6; *Cod. Iust.* 3.44.12; *Epitome Legum* 11.39.43. See also Saradi (2006) 432–34.

56 Yasin (2005) 433; Achim (2015).

57 Ivison (1993) 26; Brandenburg (1995); Saradi (2006) 434–35.

58 Waelkens *et al.* (2006) 241; Talloen (2019) 193.

59 Thompson (2002).

60 Paxton (1990) 25–26; Effros (1997).

61 Ivison (2017) 165–66.

62 August. *De sepultura animarum* 100.1.

63 *Cod. Theod.* 9.17.6.

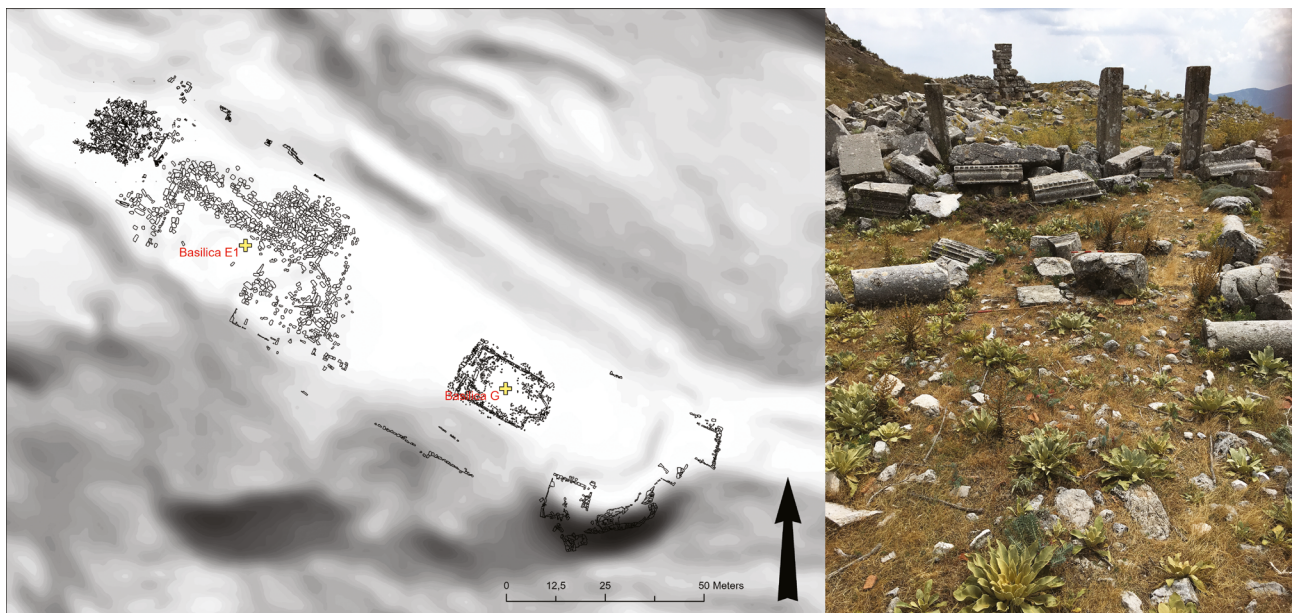


FIGURE 6 Left: Plan of the former *Stadion* with the two churches of the possible *Martyrion* complex (Basilica E1 and Basilica G). Right: A view of the narthex and main entrance of Basilica E1 in the former *Stadion*. Part of the wall of the apse is still standing in the back.

(540–604) stated that only a pure soul could reside inside a church.⁶⁴ In Byzantine Anatolia, ideas about intramural burials gradually changed between the 6th and 9th c. Leo VI (886–912) finally officialised intramural inhumation with a decree stating that interments had to happen in or near churches, regardless of whether the church itself was located *intra* or *extra muros*.⁶⁵ At Sagalassos, the first attested burials within town only appeared in the Middle Byzantine graveyard (11th–first half 13th c.), when a cemetery was arranged around a funerary chapel on the location of the converted temple for Apollo Klarios.⁶⁶ Even here, there is some doubt on whether this area still belonged to the Middle Byzantine extent of Sagalassos. In none of the excavated basilicas at Sagalassos were intra-church interments encountered.

Grave Design

Whereas the so far documented Roman tombs were all erected in stone and/or brick masonry, all late antique graves consisted of simple pit inhumations (Fig. 7). Notwithstanding this basic design – a pit cut in the underlying soil substrate and/or bedrock – some variation was present. Among the 36 excavated Late Roman plain pit inhumations, 21 were (partly) aligned with rubble stones (58%) but none were protected with a durable cover. Yet, in some cases where the pit was partly cut out of bedrock, middle-sized rubble stones – probably refuse from trenching – were part of the grave

fill. These simple pit inhumations formed the most common grave type throughout Byzantine Anatolia⁶⁷ and Early Byzantine Greece.⁶⁸ The early 6th c. grave at the church in the Eastern Necropolis (PQ5) was stone-lined too, whereas all three 7th c. inhumations in the Çatal Oluk valley (κκ), in turn, belonged to the *alla cappuccina* type (Fig. 8). Inhumations covered with such gabled roofs consisting of large tiles were quite common in late antique Anatolia, as indicated by examples from Ilıpınar near Proussa (Bithynia) and Oymağaç Höyük (Paphlagonia).⁶⁹

Simple pit graves are often interpreted as the burial rite for the urban poor.⁷⁰ At Sagalassos, however, the clear chronological distinction between Roman Imperial tombs in stone and brick masonry and late antique simple pit inhumations points to a diachronic shift in funerary rites, rather than to a distinction between social strata. This transition from stone and/or brick grave architecture to simpler, less visible burial types is not restricted to Sagalassos. Various surveys in the *necropoleis* of ancient towns documented the end of monumental tombs and stone burial containers somewhere in the 3rd c. For example, at Elaiussa Sebaste⁷¹ and Pergamon⁷² the construction of aboveground funerary architecture

64 Greg. *Dial.* 4.52.2.

65 Leo VI, *Novels* 53.

66 Cleymans and Talloen (2018).

67 Ivison (2017) 164.

68 Poulou-Papadimitriou *et al.* (2012) 379; absent at Isthmia: Rife (2012) 180.

69 Ilıpınar: Roodenberg (2009) 155; Oymağaç Höyük: Hnila (2015).

70 Toynbee (1971) 101; Hopkins (1983) 207–211.

71 Machatschek (1967) 119–20.

72 Radt (1999) 272–73.



FIGURE 7 Example of a Late Roman coffin inhumation of a probable male older than 40 at death in a simple pit cut into the underlying soil substrate and bedrock of the burial compound (PQ4).



FIGURE 8 The three excavated *tombe alla cappuccina* south of the Çatal Oluk church (κκ).

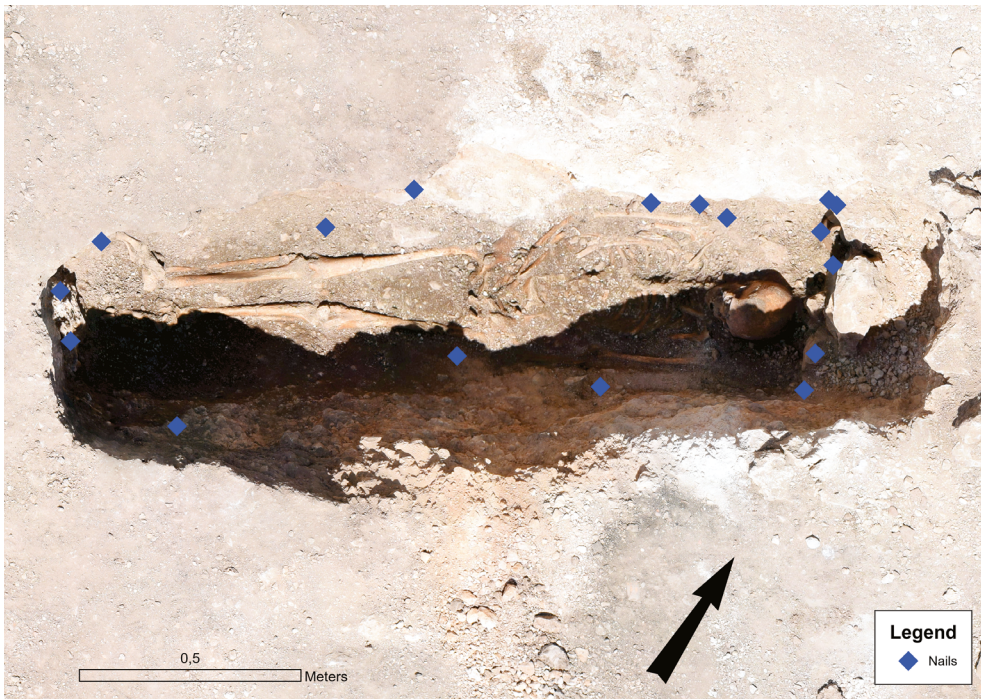


FIGURE 9 Example of a pit burial of a Late Roman probable male of 18–23 years old at death with the location of the nails being indicative for the use of a wooden coffin.

ceased shortly after the 2nd c. At Ephesos, this process was more gradual and seems to have started earlier, as already by Middle Roman Imperial times funerary monuments became less elaborate.⁷³ Just as at Sagalassos, late antique graves at Pergamon consisted mostly of pit inhumations carved into the bedrock.⁷⁴

This rather sudden shift away from conspicuous tomb design, so characteristic at Roman Imperial Sagalassos, can possibly be explained by a combination of a lack of suitable space and a transition to archaeologically less visible burial practices.⁷⁵ Indeed, the Roman Imperial *necropoleis* at Sagalassos gradually became filled up, forcing families to buy and prepare less suitable areas from the 2nd c. onwards. Especially in the Eastern Necropolis that partly overlapped with the artisanal quarter, burial plots and monumental tombs were often reused or dismantled for the construction of a pottery workshop or to be used as dump sites, and vice versa.⁷⁶ Heedful of the possibility that their investments in new funerary architecture might be trifling, efforts possibly shifted to other conspicuous practices, such as elaborate funerary processions (*pompa funebris*) or communal dinners in honour of the departed. Nevertheless, by usurping highly visible Roman structures, such as a temple tomb or walled compound, the Late Roman

inhabitants of Sagalassos recycled the aspect of visibility, still attracting attention to the burial plots.

In Early Byzantine Sagalassos, conspicuous design was guided away from the tombs themselves to the edifice they surrounded. Churches in the Early Byzantine East were often positioned along access roads, on vantage points on hills or promontories, or at the location of previous derelict sanctuaries.⁷⁷ This was also the case at Sagalassos, as shown on Fig. 4, where the churches were either located near the access roads (the possible *martyrion*), on top of hills (all but the *martyrion*), or on the location of a former sanctuary (e.g., the Apollo Klarios temple transformed into a basilica).⁷⁸ Although the cemeteries and graves were not designed to stand out in the landscape, there was a clear association with these churches that became highly apparent features in the landscape.

Deducting whether the deceased was buried in a shroud or coffin is hindered by the disappearance of the perishable materials these were made of. Nails found spread around the skeleton, both underneath and above the human remains, can generally serve as positive evidence for the use of wooden coffins (Fig. 9). This identification can be corroborated by the movement of skeletal elements in the grave: footbones that fell open or a skull that tilted backward, for example, show that during decomposition the body lay in an open space,

73 Steskal (2017) 234.

74 Radt (1999) 272–73.

75 Cleymans and Beaujean (2022).

76 Claey's (2013); Claey's and Poblome (2019).

77 Gauthier (1999); Wataghin (2003); Severin (2003).

78 Talloen and Vercauteren (2011).

such as a casket.⁷⁹ Based on this combined evidence, wooden coffins were the most common container type in Late Roman Sagalassos. For 31 of 38 (82%) Late Roman inhumations coffin-use was clearly attested. The PQ5-burial seems to have happened in a coffin too, as indicated by the 20 nails found around the skeleton, but the three *tombe alla cappuccina* from Çatal Oluk did not contain any nails. Keeping in mind that coffins could have been made with wooden pegs instead of with nails, the position of the human remains from those inhumations also did not provide a decisive answer. In any case, Byzantine iconography indicates that shrouding became standard practice in Asia Minor, probably from the 6th c. onwards.⁸⁰

As all Late Roman inhumations were subterranean, the lack of interferences or disturbances by other pit graves, despite the high burial density, indicates that some sort of grave markers must have been present. Yet, only for one Late Roman inhumation of a small child (two-three years at death) in the burial compound (PQ4), a grave marker was preserved. The small coffin in which this non-adult was buried was covered with 4 upstanding elongated stones, which supported a fragment of a vase-shaped *osteothēkē* that remained visible at the surface.⁸¹ Likely, non-durable grave markers indicated the location of the dead. Of the Early Byzantine graves, two of the *tombe alla cappuccina* were disturbed when two large storage vessels or *dolia* were dug into the ground. This suggests that soil probably covered the gabled tiles and thus the graves remained invisible at the surface, or that the preservation of these burials was deemed less important than the arrangement of the *dolia*.

Orientation and Positioning of the Body

The orientation of the grave and body is often used as an argument in the identification of (non-)Christian burials. The reasons to opt for the one or other orientation, however, are numerous.⁸² When considering the Late Roman inhumations, 31 of 38 (82%) are laid out in a more or less east – west direction with an almost equal distribution between those with the head pointing east (n = 16) and west (n = 15). That the vast majority was buried in an east – west orientation mostly resulted from the fact that the two excavated burial plots – the burial compound (PQ4) and terraces (Site F) – are arranged in this same direction. The burials thus seem to have followed the orientation of the main enclosure or retaining

walls nearby. Those buried in a north – south direction either consisted of reused Roman tomb structures which already had a north – south orientation or were child graves of which this divergent orientation permitted the smaller pit to fit in spaces too small for an east – west burial.

The Early Byzantine graves, in turn, all followed the orientation of the church they were associated with. Although these basilicas were intended to have an east – west orientation, many slightly differed due to the contour lines of the relief. The three bodies next to the Çatal Oluk basilica (κκ) were inhumed with the head at the west end of the grave. As such, these adopted the preferred Christian orientation, meant to let the deceased face east, the direction from which Christ would appear during the time of his Second Coming.⁸³ The person next to the church in the Eastern Necropolis (PQ5), in contrast, was buried with the head pointing east.

Except for one Late Roman child (3–5 years at death) that lay on its left side, all inhumations were inhumed in a supine position. Of the 29 Late Roman individuals for which the preservation of the skeleton allowed to deduct the position of the limbs, 18 (62%) had their hands folded over the abdomen, and the other 11 (38%) the arms extended lateral to the body. All 4 Early Byzantine inhumations were interred in supine position. The two skeletons with the arms preserved had their hands folded over the abdomen. This position was recorded as customary by several Byzantine authors.⁸⁴

Group-Related Practices

Whereas children seemed excluded from the Middle Roman Imperial burial plots, they reappeared in Late Antiquity. Of the 42 excavated Late Roman individuals, 9 (21%) were younger than 15 years at death. With mortality in this age class normally ranging 30–70% in pre-industrial societies (see above), this number is still too low to assume that all children have a place in the normal burial plots. A Late Roman increase of child inhumations in skeletal assemblages has been documented in Britain too but remains a point of discussion.⁸⁵

Both on the burial terraces (Site F) and in the compound (PQ4), the newly arranged Late Roman pit inhumations formed clusters or pairs. This suggests some sort of relation among the individuals interred there. While at Site F, apart from their close proximity to each other, there is no further evidence pointing to kinship or other in-group relations, mtDNA-haplotypes combined with clusters of similar grave good assemblages at the burial

79 Duda (2009); Blaizot (2014).

80 Moore (2016).

81 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 152.

82 Rahtz (1978).

83 Matthew 24:27.

84 For a list of the sources, Rife (2012) 185 n. 119.

85 Watts (1989); *pro*: Scott (1999); *contra*: Pearce (2001).



FIGURE 10 Genetic and archaeological evidence for family clusters in the eastern half of the burial compound (PQ4). Blue cluster: three individuals of haplogroup X2b and all deceased had received a ceramic object; Brown cluster: two individuals of haplogroup T1a1'3 and all received a coin and at least one glass *unguentarium*; Purple cluster: five individuals of haplogroup K1a.

compound (PQ4) strongly suggest family-related burial practices (Fig. 10).⁸⁶ West of a partition wall within this burial plot, for example, a row of 4 individuals was buried. All 4 had received two glass *unguentaria* and a coin, and two of the 4 shared the same haplotype (haplogroup T1a1'3). Similarly, of a cluster of 6 along the east wall of the compound 4 had a ceramic object deposited in their tomb, and three out of 4 successfully analysed individuals belonged to haplogroup X2b. Finally, within a third cluster of 6 graves in the south-east part of the compound, 4 individuals shared the same haplotype (haplogroup K1a). It thus seems that several families decided

to reuse this Roman Imperial burial plot to inhumate their departed relatives.

As insufficient Roman Imperial skeletal remains have been analysed for mtDNA, it remains unclear whether or not these Late Roman families were related to the Roman Imperial family that originally built, owned, and used the burial compound in the 2nd and early 3rd c. Having said that, the reuse of the burial plot by several families rather argues against real or imagined kinship relations. When considering the chronology of the compound, usurpations of Roman Imperial plots or tombs only happened at least 60 to 80 years after the last entombment by the original owners.⁸⁷ This may indicate that a burial site was only reused two to three

86 Discussed in detail in Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 154–55; Cleymans and Beaujean (2020) 55–56. The mtDNA-haplotypes were published in Ottoni *et al.* (2016).

87 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 144; Cleymans *et al.* (2021) 189.

generations later, when the family had possibly died out or had forgotten the existence of the plot. So far, no looting activities can be attributed to the Late Roman period. During the reuse of existing tombs, as identified at Site F⁸⁸ and possibly at PQ4⁸⁹ where each time a single vaulted tomb was opened for a new interment, the skull of the Roman Imperial deceased was placed on top of the new coffin, possibly as some sign of respect. It thus seems that the Roman Imperial tombs and skeletal remains were, notwithstanding the usurpations of burial plots and the reuse of existing tomb structures, maintained and treated as sepulchral spaces, not as loci for self-enrichment or looting.

For Early Byzantine Sagalassos, the very small excavated skeletal assemblage does not allow for further interpretations on family or other in-group practices. In the Byzantine Empire no segregation between adults and non-adults after death was present,⁹⁰ as was also attested at the Middle Byzantine graveyard of Sagalassos.⁹¹ Nevertheless, examples at Anemurium, Alanahan⁹² and Amorium⁹³ show that infants that probably died before being baptised, were buried around the *baptisterion*. Although separated from the rest of the community, these small children were still allowed an interment in the communal cemeteries. Unfortunately, the presence of a single non-adult in the Early Byzantine skeletal assemblage of 4 is insufficient for further evaluation. The small dataset also hampers inferences on the in-group logic of burial. In general, Christian burial grounds are considered as moving away from the Roman family logic to serve as places for the (baptized) community to be interred indiscriminately.⁹⁴

The respect paid to older graves by Late Roman families did not continue in Early Byzantine times. Almost all datable examples of grave looting, spoliation of sepulchral architecture, and dumping of stone and pottery refuse in burial plots took place between the end of the 5th and the end of the 6th c. A *sarcophagus* that once stood in a niche in the north wall of the burial compound (PQ4), for example, was moved, opened, and emptied in the 6th c.⁹⁵ Almost all ashlar stones were removed from within and in front of the same niche. Underneath the floor slabs of the niche, a small, vaulted chamber that housed a cremation urn and some ceramic grave goods, was opened and looted. Finally, at least 4 large pottery

dumps were discovered within the compound, all containing 6th c. pottery, after which the entire area was covered with refuse from stone quarrying higher up the mountain flank, sealing it off permanently.⁹⁶ At around the same time, the superstructure of the excavated temple tomb (PQ1) was dismantled, leaving only its podium in place. Later, a large pottery dump was deposited within the enclosure, covering the podium. The ceramics from the stratigraphic layers related to the dismantling and pottery refuse both dated to the 6th c.⁹⁷ Evidence for looting is present at Site F too, but its chronology is not clear.⁹⁸ Altogether, this suggests that the Early Byzantine inhabitants of Sagalassos felt insufficiently connected to their ancestors to respect their graves or reuse the burial places.

Grave Good Assemblages

In Late Roman Sagalassos, the tradition of depositing funerary gifts continued and grave goods were still quite varied. Common objects, found in 10 graves, were glass *unguentaria*, while the ceramic variant was only found in a single burial. In grave contexts, these objects are assumed to have been either containers for cosmetics or ointments which were used by the deceased during life, or were part of the funerary ritual for pouring fragrant oils or balms over the corps, after which they were placed in the grave.⁹⁹ The *unguentaria* were often deposited next to the skull. Ceramic vessels, such as jugs (n = 9), bowls (n = 2), oil lamps (n = 2), and cups (n = 2), were quite common as well, though only present in small numbers, usually one or two in a grave. Generally, these too were placed next to the head. Whether these objects served as a grave good or as container for food offerings or liquids remains unclear. This is also the case for two spherical glass vessels, each found next to the head of a deceased (Fig. 11).

Jewellery was represented by 4 copper-alloy or iron rings, 4 copper-alloy or iron bracelets, and a single golden earring.¹⁰⁰ Glass bead necklaces became more popular in this period and were given to 9 individuals. Although beads are mostly associated with adult females and children,¹⁰¹ these also ended up in two male graves. Two individuals wore an amulet around the neck, of which one was identified as a *phylakterion*, a metal sheet engraved with a spell rolled-up and put in a tube-shaped

88 Cleymans *et al.* (2021) 187.

89 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 152–53.

90 Talbot (2009) 283–85 and 306.

91 Cleymans *et al.* (forthcoming).

92 Moore (2013) 83–84.

93 Demirel (2017).

94 Yasin (2005).

95 Cleymans and Uytterhoeven (2022).

96 Cleymans *et al.* (2018) 155–58.

97 Claeys and Poblome (2014).

98 Cleymans *et al.* (2021) 190.

99 Anderson-Stojanović (1987).

100 The second earring was never found despite the grave's fill being sieved.

101 Swift (2003) 337.



FIGURE 11 The grave good assemblage of a Late Roman 3–5 year old child in the burial compound (PQ4) who received a Cu-alloy bracelet, two glass unguentaria, a ceramic cup and a necklace or bracelet (?) in glass beads.



FIGURE 12 The chalcedony cameo of Medusa from the Late Roman grave of a 10–12 year old child in the burial compound (PQ4).

amulet.¹⁰² The other example was a chalcedony cameo depicting the head of Medusa, a common apotropaic device in antiquity (Fig. 12).¹⁰³ Dress accessories became more common: 4 metal (clothing) pins, two buckles, and a crossbow fibula were unearthed. Worked bone hairpins, most of which were found underneath the skull suggesting that they were still in place, were retrieved in 4 graves. In contrast to the Roman Imperial burials where a single individual could receive up to 7 pins, only one per grave was found in Late Roman times. Another worked bone pin was interpreted as a cosmetics applicator as it was placed in a ceramic jug.

In contrast to the high-quality grave goods in Roman Imperial tombs, Late Roman burial gifts were generally of a lesser quality. Only one object was made of precious metal – the golden earring – and another of semi-precious stone – the chalcedony cameo. Most of the objects showed traces of use during life, such as the hairpins with weathered shafts. Nevertheless, some selection had clearly taken place. Several of the objects were not functional (anymore) in daily life as they showed production errors or were too worn for further use. An excellent example is an early 5th c. bowl (type 1B130) from the central *hyposorium* in the podium of the excavated temple tomb (PQ1), as shown on Fig. 13. This ceramic object showed *peri-cocturam* cracks in the base, which would

102 For a similar Early Byzantine *phylakterion* from Sagalassos, see Eich and Eich (2012).

103 Karoglou (2018) 22.



FIGURE 13 The Late Roman grave good assemblage from the central *hypogaeum* underneath the podium of the temple tomb (PQ1). The two oil lamps were used, as indicated by the fire clouding around the nozzle. Their decoration is of poor quality and the pouring hole of the one on the left was made *post-cocturam*. The bowl showed *peri-cocturam* cracks on its base, making it unsuitable for holding liquids.

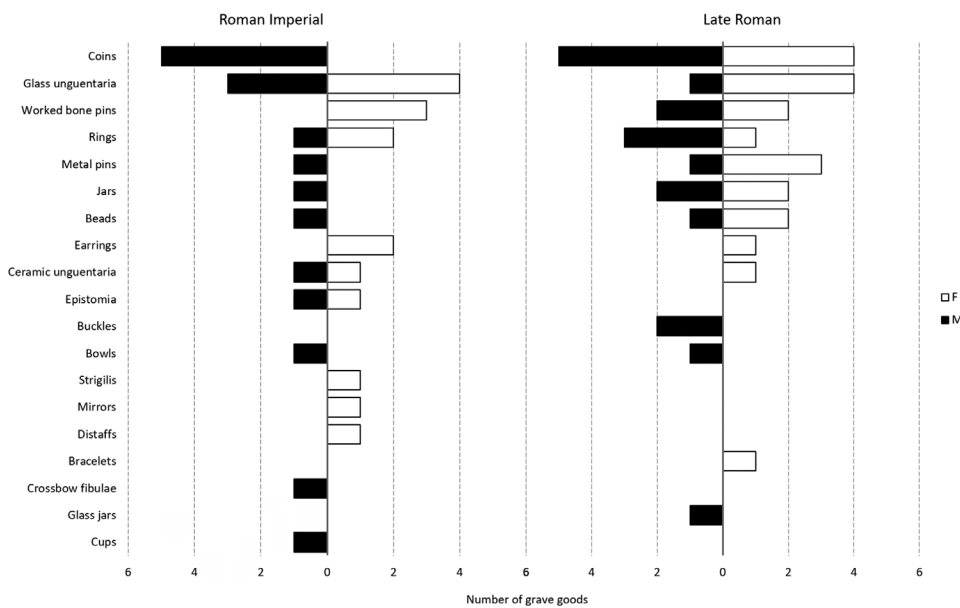


FIGURE 14 Comparison of the distribution of grave good types among males and females during the Roman Imperial and Late Roman periods (includes only those grave goods found in association with a skeleton for which the sex was attested during the physical anthropological study).

make the bowl useless for holding liquids. Two oil lamps from the same context displayed production errors too, making these unsuitable for market sale. Finally, some sort of age and gender differentiation took place, albeit to a lesser extent than in Roman Imperial Sagalassos. This is particularly true for jewellery and dress accessories. Hairpins and bracelets, for example, exclusively belonged to women, while crossbow brooches were

typical for male burials.¹⁰⁴ Non-adults under the age of 10, in turn, formed the only group that received cups. All other grave goods are more-or-less evenly distributed between men, women, and children (Fig. 14).

A category of funerary gifts not discussed so far but illustrating the same patterns as the other grave

104 Cf. Soupault (2003); Müller and Steuer (2011) 108.



FIGURE 15 The Early Byzantine belt buckle found with the inhumation south of the church in the Eastern Suburbium (PQ5).

goods, are coins.¹⁰⁵ The interpretation of coins as a fare for Charon is based on the writings of several ancient authors,¹⁰⁶ mentioning the tradition of placing an obol in the mouth of the deceased at the moment of death or during burial. In the Late Roman graves at Sagalassos, coins were the most common grave goods: 13 out of 42 individuals (31%) were given one (or two in two cases). These were evenly distributed among men ($n = 5$), women ($n = 4$), and non-adults ($n = 4$), whereas in the Roman Imperial period only men received these. Moreover, the denominations (small bronze coins and BI nummi/Antoniani), as well as the quality of the coin, were lower in Late Roman times. Based on the clustering of the graves containing a coin and the assumed kinship relations these may display, it seems that some Late Roman families clung to the tradition of paying the ferryman, while others did not. The family obviously played a central role in Late Roman funerary rituals.

Given the small sample of only 4 excavated Early Byzantine graves and the disturbance of two of these, the following observations on grave goods during the Early Byzantine period should be considered tentative. Objects were only found associated with two individuals. The adult male buried next to the church in the Eastern Necropolis (PQ5) wore a rectangular copper-alloy belt buckle with glass inlays around a Latin cross (Fig. 15).

105 Discussed in detail in Stroobants *et al.* (2019).

106 Ar., *Ran.* 140–141; Lucian, *Charon* 11; Lucian, *Luct.* 10; Prop. 4.11.7–8; Juv. 3.265–268; Apul., *Met.* 6.18.4–5. For a complete overview of all literary references, see Thüry (2016) *Table 7* and *Table 9*.

This badge of religious identity, together with the find location beside the church, clearly indicates that this person was Christian. Similar belt buckles with glass inlays have been encountered throughout the Byzantine Empire and mainly dated to the second half of the 5th and 6th c.¹⁰⁷ A glass *unguentarium* and 9 glass beads were found in the only undisturbed non-adult inhumation of 7th c. Çatal Oluk. These beads were either blue or green in colour, and 4 were tubular in shape while the other 5 were globular. As indicated by examples from Early Byzantine Northern Greece and Late Roman Europe,¹⁰⁸ both the colour combination and alternating tubular and globular shapes were quite common. Based on this very limited excavated evidence, it remains difficult to say whether only non-adults received grave goods, a common practice in the Byzantine Empire also attested at Middle Byzantine Sagalassos.¹⁰⁹

From *Necropoleis* to *Koimētēria*

So far, the discussion on late antique burial practices – different from the preceding Roman Imperial period and the subsequent post-earthquake Byzantine period at Sagalassos – treated the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods separately, as two distinct temporal blocks. This division corresponds with the general descriptions on how burial practices developed in the Roman East from the *necropoleis* to *koimētēria*. Indeed, from the 3rd c. onwards, the word *koimētērion* appears in Christian contexts in the Roman East and gradually replaced the concept of “necropolis”.¹¹⁰ The latter literally means “city of the dead” and was the most frequently used term in Roman Imperial times to designate burial grounds.¹¹¹ This reference to a city evokes images of liveliness and a range of activities taking place. The well-documented Eastern Necropolis of Sagalassos was such a place where funerary practices partly overlapped with artisanal activities. As aboveground tombs were often placed next to the main access roads of the city, there was constant passage through these burial grounds. In Byzantine times, the terminology shifted to *koimētērion*, literally ‘sleeping place’. Although the word was already used in the 4th c. BC,¹¹² it did not appear in Roman ‘pagan’ contexts. In the Roman Empire, *koimētērion* made its

107 For various parallels, see Schulze-Dörlamm (2002).

108 Northern Greece: Antonaras (2003) 331; Europe: Swift (2003) 337.

109 Pitarakis (2009) 153; Talbot (2009) 300–301; On Sagalassos: Cleymans and Talloen (2018) 292–93.

110 Brandenburg (1994); Rebillard (1993).

111 Hope (2009) 155.

112 Diosadas, *apud Ath.*, *Deipnosophistes* IV.143c.

advent at the end of the 2nd c., already in a Christian text.¹¹³ In contrast to the lively *necropoleis*, this new term hints at a more peaceful resting place, referring to the Christian belief that death is not the end, but that body and soul will resurrect.¹¹⁴ At Sagalassos, burials indeed moved away from the busy *necropoleis* towards cemeteries surrounding churches. These churches, although still within the extent of the former *necropoleis*, were often farther removed from the entranceways or busy suburban activities. The basilica in the Eastern Necropolis, for example, is located on a more remote promontory in the north-east and build around the time artisanal production was moving away from the nearby Eastern *Suburbium*. Similarly, the church at Çatal Oluk is situated in a quiet valley shielded from busy city-life.

At Sagalassos too, such (relatively sudden) demarcations in funerary culture have been observed, the first situated around the middle of the 3rd c. when the construction of monumental tomb architecture halted and was replaced by coffin inhumations in simple pits and the second with the onset of Christian graves near churches from around AD 500 onwards. These shifts stand out because of their distinctive character, but in fact entail only a small aspect of the overall mortuary culture. Most of the Late Roman practices were a continuation of already existing Roman Imperial customs, such as the deposition of coins, body orientation following the direction of contour lines and nearby walls, the family being responsible for organizing several aspects of burial, and a continued use of the *necropoleis*. Similarly, Late Roman grave goods often consisted of recycled objects, personal ornaments, or dress accessories from daily life that ended up in the grave. Conversely, the documented practices from the Early Byzantine period conform largely with Christian funerary culture and corresponding beliefs on the afterlife, resulting in change in terms of grave orientation, exclusively inhumation rites, deposition near churches, limited number of grave goods (as far as can be reconstructed from the limited skeletal assemblage), and modest grave design.

Yet, some elements indicate that this transition was not as abrupt as it would seem at first, but comprised some slower, more gradual processes as well. First, the oldest known Christian interment at Sagalassos, being the early 6th c. burial next to the basilica in the Eastern Necropolis, faced west – instead of the expected eastward-facing position – and was inhumed in a coffin and not shrouded. Whereas certain aspects of the burial point to Christian practices (the belt-buckle with cross, the location next to a church), some older

traditions appear to have continued as well. Or perhaps not all Christian customs may have been introduced yet. Moreover, although the Early Byzantines clearly distanced themselves from the older, ‘pagan’ burial plots and architecture by regarding these as sites for spoliation, dumping, and looting, the general area of the *necropoleis* remained in use for funerary practices, albeit now only in close proximity to the newly erected extra-urban churches.

The differences with the previous periods mirror broader social phenomena taking place at late antique Sagalassos. In the Late Roman *necropoleis*, for example, no new tomb structures were built, and the overall quality of the grave goods decreased. Yet, at the same time the existing graves and burial plots were treated with respect, reused, and well-maintained. This correlates with the Late Roman way the inhabitants of Sagalassos treated public architecture in town: no new large-scale building projects were launched before the middle of the 5th c., but continued use and maintenance of the existing infrastructure, combined with minor and major modifications speak to the vitality of the community. The disappearance of monumental tomb architecture was earlier in this paper explained as a combination of competition for space and a shift in investments from grave design to communal practices. On a higher level, this new way of dealing with death and interment, revolving around reuse and maintenance, cannot be unlinked from the Late Roman way of life. The specialization and diversification patterns documented for the artisanal and agricultural production at Late Roman Sagalassos have elsewhere been associated with rural population growth as well as the partial decrease in economic connectivity and exchange throughout the Roman Empire following from the crisis of the 3rd c.¹¹⁵ By opting for new and more sustainable production strategies, the inhabitants of Sagalassos intended to find an equilibrium to sustain its population. The move away from public and private building projects and focus on more sustainable processes of reuse, upkeep, and the preservation of Roman funerary customs, can thus be regarded in the same vein. By keeping and recycling already existing burial plots, grave architecture, and objects to be used as grave goods, the funerary practices at Sagalassos mirrored the developments within the urban centre.¹¹⁶

The rise of Christianity during the Early Byzantine period affected many aspects of life at Sagalassos, including death. Yet as pointed out above, several elements of continuity could be ascertained in funerary practices of

113 Tert., *De anim.* 51.7.

114 Rebillard (1993) 976.

115 Poblome (2015).

116 Cleymans and Beaujean (2022).

this period, albeit now with a Christian touch. The aforementioned sustainability of Late Antiquity, reflected by modest grave design and few grave goods, became combined with the Early Christian ideals of modesty and poverty.¹¹⁷ As a result, funerary gifts and personal possessions, including markers of religious beliefs, disappeared almost completely. Having said that, there was not yet a standard Christian funerary liturgy at this time and the family generally remained the principal player in funerals.¹¹⁸ While monumental grave architecture may have become something of the past, major investments were now made in the form of several (at least 6) funerary churches surrounding Sagalassos. These provided new topographical foci within the traditional burial grounds of the city and introduced monumental sacred architecture in the extra-urban area on an unprecedented scale. The beliefs of the Christians that the end of the world was near and that the righteous dead would be raised, made the cemeteries foci of worship.¹¹⁹ These focal points were monumentalised through the construction of opulent basilicas which became the visual markers of the transformation of the *necropoleis* into *koimētēria*. Social status would from now on be expressed by prominent burial locales in close proximity to the sanctuary.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by the Research Fund of KU Leuven and the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). We would like to thank the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, its General Directorate of Culture and Museums (Kültür Varlıkları ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü), and its annual representatives for permission to excavate, for support, and much-appreciated help during the fieldwork campaigns. A word of gratitude is devoted to Prof. Jeroen Poblome (KU Leuven), for reading and commenting upon an earlier draft and supporting this research. Furthermore, we would wish to thank all archaeologists, workmen, and team members who made this research possible. Copyrights of all illustrations belong to the Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project.

117 Rhee (2017).

118 Rebillard (2009) 139.

119 See Yasin (2009).

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Apul. *Met.* = J. Arthur Hanson ed. and transl., *Apuleius. Metamorphoses (The Golden Ass)*, 2 volumes (Loeb Classical Library 44) (Cambridge Mass. 1996).
- Ar. *Ran.* = J. Henderson ed. and transl. *Aristophanes, Frogs, Assemblywomen and Wealth* (Loeb Classical Library 180) (Cambridge Mass. 2002).
- August. *De sepultura animarum* = Augustine of Hippo, *De sepultura animarum*
- Cic. *Leg.* = C. W. Keyes transl. *Cicero, On the Republic, On the Laws* (Loeb Classical Library 213) (Cambridge Mass. 1928).
- Cod. Iust.* = P. Krüger ed. *Corpus Iuris Civilis 2: Codex Iustinianus* (Berlin 1906).
- Cod. Theod.* = C. Pharr ed. and transl., *The Theodosian code and novels, and the Sirmondian constitutions* (New York 1952–1969; rev. 2001).
- Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum* = J. Davies transl. *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, J. Davies, *Death, Burial, and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity* (London 1999).
- Dig.* = J. E. Spruit, R. Feenstra, and F. Wubbe ed. and transl., *Corpus iuris civilis: tekst en vertaling*, 6 volumes (Zutphen 1994–2001).
- Diosadas, *apud Ath.*, *Deipnosophistes* = C. B. Gulick ed. and transl. *Athenaeus, Deipnosophistae*, 7 volumes (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge Mass. 1927–1941).
- Epitome Legum* = C. E. Z. von Lingenthal ed. *Liber juridicus alphabeticus sive synopsis minor et Ecloga Legum in epitome expositarum* (Lipsiae 1856).
- Greg. *Dial.* = Greg. *Dial.* = PL 77. 149–430.
- Juv. = S. Morton Braund ed. and transl. *Juvenal and Persius* (Loeb Classical Library 91) (Cambridge Mass. 2004)
- Leo VI, *Novels* = P. Noailles and A. Dain transl. *Les nouvelles de Léon VI le sage* (Paris 1944).
- Lucian, *Charon* = A. H. Harmon transl. *Lucian Volume 11, The Downward Journey or The Tyrant. Zeus Catechized. Zeus Rants. The Dream or The Cock. Prometheus. Icaromenippus or The Sky-man. Timon or The Misanthrope. Charon or The Inspectors. Philosophies for Sale* (Loeb Classical Library 54) (Cambridge Mass. 1915).
- Lucian, *Luct.* = A.H. Harmon transl. *Lucian Volume 1v, Anacharsis or Athletics. Menippus or The Descent into Hades. On Funerals. A Professor of Public Speaking. Alexander the False Prophet. Essays in Portraiture. Essays in Portraiture Defended. The Goddess of Surrye* (Loeb Classical Library 162) (Cambridge Mass. 1925).
- Prop. = G. P. Goold ed. and transl. *Propertius, Elegies* (Loeb Classical Library 18) (Cambridge Mass. 1990).
- Tert. *De anim.* = E. A. Quain transl. *Tertullian, On the Soul*, *Fathers of the Church* 10 (1950) 179–309.

Secondary Sources

- Achim I. A. (2015) "Churches and graves of the early Byzantine period in Scythia Minor and Moesia Secunda. The development of a Christian topography at the periphery of the Roman Empire", in *Death and Changing Rituals: Function and Meaning in Ancient Funerary Practices*, edd. R. Brandt, M. Prusac, and H. Roland (Oxford 2015) 287–342.
- Anderson-Stojanović V. R. (1987) "The chronology and function of ceramic unguentaria", *AJA* 91 (1987) 105–122.
- Antonaras A. (2003) "The use of glass in Byzantine jewellery – the evidence from Northern Greece (fourth–sixteenth centuries)", *Annales du 16e Congrès AIHV* (2003) 331–35.
- Belke K. and Mersich N. (1990) *Phrygien und Pisidien* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 7) (Vienna 1990).
- Blaizot F. (2014) "From the skeleton to the funerary architecture: a logic of the plausible", *Anthropologie* 52.3 (2014) 263–84.
- Brandenburg H. (1994) "Coemeterium. Der Wandel des Bestattungswesens als Zeichen des Kulturumbruchs der Spätantike", *Laverna* 5 (1994) 206–233.
- Brandenburg H. (1995) "Altar und Grab. Zu einem Problem des Märtyrerkultes im 4. und 5. Jh.", in *Martyrium in multidisciplinary perspective: Memorial Louis Reekmans*, edd. M. Lamberigts, L. Reekmans, and P. Van Deun (Leuven 1995) 71–98.
- Charlier C. (1995) "Les crânes d'époque romaine de Sagalassos. Épaisseur des parois", in *Sagalassos III. Report on the Fourth Excavation Campaign of 1993*, edd. M. Waelkens and J. Poblome (Leuven 1995) 357–66.
- Claeys J. (2013) "Marginale archeologie? De Oostelijke Voorstad van Sagalassos (Zuidwest-Turkije)", *TMA* 50 (2013) 23–29.
- Claeys J. and Poblome J. (2013) "Sagalassos' un Güneyi: Çatal Oluk 2 Bizans Kilise Alanının Kazı Çalışmaları", in *Sagalassos 2011 kazı ve restorasyon sezonu* (KST 34.3), edd. M. Waelkens et al. (2013) 146.
- Claeys J. and Poblome J. (2014) "Alan PQ1: Naiskos Mezarı", in *Sagalassos'ta 2012 yılı kazı ve restorasyon çalışmaları* (KST 35.2), edd. M. Waelkens, R. Rens, J. Richard et al. (2014) 249.
- Claeys J. and Poblome J. (2019) "Meanwhile in suburbia", in *Sagalassos. Meanwhile in the Mountains*, edd. J. Poblome, E. Torun, P. Talloen, and M. Waelkens (Istanbul 2019) 135–47.
- Cleymans S. and Talloen P. (2018) "Protection in life and death: pendant crosses from the cemetery of Apollo Klarios at Sagalassos, Turkey", *EJA* 21.2 (2018) 280–98.
- Cleymans S., Talloen P., Beaujean B., Van de Vijver K., and Poblome J. (2018) "From burial plot to dump site: the history of the PQ4 compound at Sagalassos (southwest Anatolia)", *Anatolica* 44 (2018) 123–63.
- Cleymans S. and Beaujean B. (2020) "Het bloed spreekt. Familiebegravingen in Romeïns (eerste tot vijfde eeuw na Christus) Sagalassos, Zuidwest-Turkije", *TMA* 62 (2020) 50–58.
- Cleymans S. and Uytterhoeven I. (2022) "From cradle to casket: the biography of a sarcophagus at Sagalassos, SW Anatolia", *IstMitt* 71 (2022) 89–120.
- Cleymans S. and Beaujean B. (2022) "Where to put them? Burial location in Middle Hellenistic to Late Roman (second century BC–fifth century AD) Sagalassos, southwest Anatolia", *AnatSt* 72 (2022) 167–94.
- Cleymans S., Van de Vijver K. and Matsuo H. (forthcoming) "Who did the Moriai favour most? Life expectancy at Roman and Middle Byzantine Sagalassos".
- Cleymans S., Claeys J., Van de Vijver K. and Poblome J. (2021) "Burial Terraces in the Eastern Necropolis. The excavations of Site F at Sagalassos (SW Anatolia)", *Anatolica* 47 (2021) 147–98.
- Cumont F. V. M. (1949) *Lux Perpetua* (Paris 1949).
- Davies J. (1999) *Death, Burial, and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity* (London 1999).
- De Giorgi L. and Leucci G. (2018) "The archaeological site of Sagalassos (Turkey): exploring the mysteries of the invisible layers using geophysical methods", *Exploration Geophysics* 49.5 (2018) 751–61.
- de Visscher F. (1963) *Le droit des tombeaux romains* (Milan 1963).
- Demirel F. A. (2017) "Infant and child skeletons from the Lower City Church at Byzantine Amorium", in *Life & Death in Asia Minor in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine times: Studies in Archaeology and Bioarchaeology*, edd. J. R. Brandt, E. Hagelberg, G. Bjørnstad, and S. Ahrens (Oxford 2017) 306–317.
- Duday H. (2009) *The Archaeology of the Dead: Lectures in Archaeoethnology* (Oxford 2009).
- Effros B. (1997) "Beyond cemetery walls: early medieval funerary topography and Christian salvation", *Early Medieval Europe* 6.1 (1997) 1–23.
- Eich A. and Eich P. (2012) "Ein neues Silberamulett aus Sagalassos", *Rivista di filologia e di istruzione classica* 140.1 (2012) 5–19.
- Emmerson A. L. (2020) "Re-examining Roman death pollution", *JRS* 110 (2020) 5–27.
- Gauthier N. (1999) "La topographie chrétienne entre idéologie et pragmatisme", in *The Idea and Ideal of the Town between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, edd. G. P. Brogiolo and B. Ward Perkins (Leiden 1999) 195–209.
- Graham E.-J. (2015) "Corporeal concerns: the role of the body in the transformation of Roman mortuary practices", in *Death Embodied: Archaeological approaches to the treatment of the corpse*, edd. Z. Devlin and E.-J. Graham (Oxford 2015) 41–62.
- Hnila P. (2015) "Rural necropoleis and settlement dynamics. Thoughts on Roman and Byzantine graves at Oymaağaç Höyük, Samsun province", in *Landscape dynamics and settlement patterns in Northern Anatolia during the Roman*

- and *Byzantine Period*, edd. K. Winther-Jacobsen and L. Summerer (Stuttgart 2015) 147–64.
- Hope V. M. (2009) *Roman Death: The Dying and the Dead in Ancient Rome* (London 2009).
- Hopkins K. (1983) *Death and Renewal: Volume 2: Sociological Studies in Roman History* (Cambridge 1983).
- Iverson E. A. (1993) *Mortuary Practices in Byzantium: An Archaeological Contribution (c. 950–1453)* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Birmingham 1993).
- Iverson E. A. (2017) “Funerary archaeology”, in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks*, ed. Ph. Niewohner (Oxford 2017) 160–75.
- Karoglou K. (2018) *Dangerous Beauty: Medusa in Classical Art (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 75.3)* (New York 2018).
- Köse V. (2005) *Nekropolen und Grabdenkmäler von Sagalassos in Pisidien in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit* (Turnhout 2005).
- Lewis M. E. (2007) *The Bioarchaeology of Children: Perspectives from Biological and Forensic Anthropology* (Cambridge 2007).
- Lindsay H. (2000) “Death-pollution and funerals in the city of Rome”, in *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*, edd. V. Hope and E. Marshall (London 2000) 152–73.
- Machatschek A. (1967) *Die Nekropolen Und Grabmäler Im Gebiet von Elaiussa Sebaste Und Korykos Im Rauhen Kilikien: Vorgelegt in Der Sitzung Am 15. März 1967* (Vienna 1967).
- Moore S. V. (2013) *A Relational Approach to Mortuary Practices within Medieval Byzantine Anatolia* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Newcastle 2013).
- Moore S. V. (2016) “Experiencing Mid-Byzantine mortuary practice: shrouding the dead”, in *Experiencing Byzantium: Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Newcastle and Durham, April 2011*, edd. C. Nesbitt and M. Jackson (London 2016) 195–212.
- Müller R. and Steuer H. (2011) *Fibel und Fibeltracht* (Berlin 2011).
- Otoni C., Rasteiro R., Willet R., Claeys J., Talloen P., Van de Vijver K., Chikhi L., Poblome J., and Decorte R. (2016) “Comparing maternal genetic variation across two millennia reveals the demographic history of an ancient human population in southwest Turkey”, *Royal Society Open Science* 3.2 (2016) e150250.
- Paxton F. S. (1990) *Christianizing Death: The Creation of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca 1990).
- Pearce J. (2001) “Infants, cemeteries and communities in the Roman provinces”, *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Journal* 2000 (2001) 125–42.
- Pitarakis B. (2009) “The material culture of childhood in Byzantium”, in *Becoming Byzantine. Children and Childhood in Byzantium*, edd. A. Papaconstantinou and A.-M. M. Talbot (Cambridge Mass. 2009) 151–67.
- Poblome J. (2014) “Shifting societal complexity in Byzantine Asia minor and dark age pottery”, in *LRCW 4. Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and archaeometry. The Mediterranean: A Market without Frontiers*, edd. N. Poulou-Papadimitriou, E. Nodarou, and V. Kilikoglou (Oxford 2014) 623–42.
- Poblome J. (2015) “The economy of the Roman world as a complex adaptive system. Testing the case in second to fifth century CE Sagalassos”, in *Structure and Performance in the Roman Economy: Models, Methods and Case Studies*, edd. P. Erdkamp and K. Verboven (Brussels 2015) 97–140.
- Poblome J. and First N. (2011) “Late Roman D. A matter of open(ing) or closed horizons?”, in *LRFW 1: Late Roman Fine Wares: Solving Problems of Typology and Chronology. A Review of the Evidence, Debate and New Contexts*, edd. M. A. C. Ontiveros, P. Reynolds, and M. Bonifay (Oxford 2011) 49–55.
- Poblome J., Bes P., De Cupere B., Lauwers V., Romanus K., Vionis A. K., and Waelkens M. (2010) “Sic transit gloria mundi. Does it really? Wasting seventh century AD Sagalassos (SW Turkey)”, in *LRCW3. Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean: Archaeology and Archaeometry. Comparison between Western and Eastern Mediterranean*, edd. S. Menchelli, S. Santoro, M. Pasquinucci, and G. Guiducci (Oxford 2010) 791–801.
- Poblome J., Malfitana D., and Lund J. (2012) “Scherben bringen Glück. HEROM’s editorial statement”, *HEROM* 1 (2012) 7–21.
- Poblome J., Talloen P., and Kaptijn E. (2017) “Sagalassos”, in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks*, ed. P. Niewohner (Oxford 2017) 302–311.
- Poulou-Papadimitriou N., Tzavella E., and Ott J. (2012) “Burial practices in Byzantine Greece: archaeological evidence and methodological problems for its interpretation”, in *Rome, Constantinople and Newly-Converted Europe. Archaeological and Historical Evidence*, edd. M. Salamon, M. Wołoszyn, A. Musin, P. Špehar, M. Hardt, M. P. Kryk, and A. Sulikowska-Gąska (Kraków 2012) 377–428.
- Radt W. (1999) *Pergamon. Geschichte Und Bauten Einer Antiken Metropole* (Darmstadt 1999).
- Rahtz P. (1978) “Grave orientation”, *ArchJ* 135.1 (1978) 1–14.
- Rebillard É. (1993) “Koimetérion et Coemeterium: tombe, tombe sainte, nécropole”, *MÉFRA* 105.2 (1993) 975–1001.
- Rebillard É. (2009) *The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca 2009).
- Rhee H. (2017) *Wealth and Poverty in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis 2017).
- Rife J. L. (2012) *Isthmia Volume IX. The Roman and Byzantine Graves and Human Remains* (Princeton 2012).
- Roodenberg J. J. (2009) “The Byzantine graveyards from Ilipinar and Barcin in Northwest Anatolia”, in *Archaeology of*

- the Countryside in Medieval Anatolia*, edd. T. Vorderstrasse and J. J. Roodenberg (Leiden 2009) 154–67.
- Saradi H. (2006) *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century: Literary Images and Historical Reality* (Athens 2006).
- Schneider E. E. (1999) *Elaiussa Sebaste I: campagne di scavo, 1995–1997* (Vol. 1) (Rome 1999).
- Schulze-Dörrlamm M. (2002) *Byzantinische Gürtelschnallen und Gürtelbeschläge im Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum. Band 1: Die Schnallen ohne Beschlag, mit Laschenbeschläg und mit festem Beschlag des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts* (Mainz 2002).
- Scott E. (1999) *The Archaeology of Infancy and Infant Death* (Oxford 1999).
- Severin, H.-G. (2003) “Aspekte der Positionierung der Kirchen in oströmischen Städten”, in *Die spätantike Stadt und ihre Christianisierung*, edd. G. Brands and H.-G. Severin (Wiesbaden 2003) 249–58.
- Similox-Tohon D., Sintubin M., Muchez P., Vanhaverbeke H., Verhaert G., and Waelkens M. (2005) “Identification of a historical morphogenic earthquake through trenching at ancient Sagalassos (sw Turkey)”, *Journal of Geodynamics* 40.2 (2005) 279–93.
- Sintubin M., Muchez P., Similox-Tohon P., Verhaert G., Paulissen E., and Waelkens M. (2003) “Seismic catastrophes at the ancient city of Sagalassos (sw Turkey) and their implications for seismotectonics in the Burdur – Isparta area”, *Geological Journal* 38.3-4 (2003) 359–74.
- Soupault V. (2003) *Les éléments métalliques du costume masculin dans les provinces romaines de la mer Noire: III^e–V^e s. ap. J.-C.* (Oxford 2003).
- Spanu M. (2000) “Burial in Asia Minor during the imperial period, with particular reference to Cilicia and Cappadocia”, in *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World*, edd. J. Pearce, M. Millett, and M. Struck (Oxford 2000) 169–78.
- Steskal M. (2017) “Defying death in Ephesus: strategies of commemoration in a Roman metropolis”, in *Cityscapes and Monuments of Western Asia Minor: Memories and Identities*, edd. E. Mortensen and B. Poulsen (Oxford 2017) 229–36.
- Swift E. (2003) “Late-Roman bead necklaces and bracelets”, *JRA* 16 (2003) 336–49.
- Talbot A.-M. M. (2009) “The death and commemoration of Byzantine children”, in *Becoming Byzantine. Children and Childhood in Byzantium*, edd. A. Papaconstantinou and A.-M. M. Talbot (Cambridge Mass. 2009) 283–308.
- Talloon P. (2019) “The rise of Christianity at Sagalassos”, in *Early Christianity in Asia Minor and Cyprus*, edd. S. Mitchell and P. Pilhofer (Leiden 2019) 164–201.
- Talloon P. and Beaujean B. (2015) “Excavations at site PQ5”, in *The 2013 Excavation and Restoration Activities at Sagalassos* (KST 36.2), edd. M. Waelkens, J. Richard, J. Poblome *et al.* (2015) 48–49.
- Talloon P. and Poblome J. (2019) “The age of specialization. Dionysus and the production of wine in Late Antiquity: a view from Sagalassos (sw Turkey)”, *Olba* 27 (2019) 413–42.
- Talloon P. and Vercauteren L. (2011) “The fate of temples in late antique Anatolia”, *LAA* 7.1 (2011) 347–87.
- Thüry G. E. (2016) *Die antike Münze als Fundgegenstand* (Oxford 2016).
- Thompson L. L. (2002) “The martyrdom of Polycarp: death in the Roman games”, *JRel* 82.1 (2002) 27–52.
- Toynbee J. M. C. (1972) *Death and Burial in the Roman World* (Baltimore 1972).
- Vanhaverbeke H., Vionis A. K., Poblome J., and Waelkens M. (2009) “What happened after the 7th century AD? A different perspective on post-Roman rural Anatolia”, in *Archaeology of the Countryside in Medieval Anatolia*, edd. T. Vorderstrasse and J. J. Roodenberg (Leiden 2009) 177–90.
- Vionis A. K., Poblome J., and Waelkens M. (2009) “The hidden material culture of the Dark Ages. Early Medieval ceramics at Sagalassos (Turkey): new evidence (ca. AD 650–800)”, *AnatSt* 59 (2009) 147–65.
- Volp U. (2002) *Tod und Ritual in den christlichen Gemeinden der Antike* (Leiden 2002).
- von Hesberg H. (1992) *Römische Grabbauten* (Darmstadt 1992).
- Waelkens M., Başer S., Lodewijckx M., Viaene W., and Degeest R. (1989–1990) “Sagalassos 1989. The rescue excavation in the Potter’s Quarter and the ‘Sagalassos Ware’”, *ActaArchLov* 28–29 (1989–1990) 75–98.
- Waelkens M., Harmankaya A., and Viaene W. (1991) “The excavations at Sagalassos 1990”, *AnatSt* 41 (1991) 197–213.
- Waelkens M., Vanhaverbeke H., Martens F., Talloon P., Poblome J., Kellens N., Putzeys T., Degryse P., van Thuyne T., and Van Neer W. (2006) “The late antique to Early Byzantine city in southwest Anatolia. Sagalassos and its territory: a case study”, in *Die Stadt in der Spätantike-Niedergang oder Wandel*, edd. J.-U. Krause and C. Witschel (Stuttgart 2006) 199–255.
- Wataghin G. C. (2003) “Christian topography in the late antique town: recent results and open questions”, *LAA* 1 (2003) 224–56.
- Watts D. J. (1989) “Infant burials and Romano-British Christianity”, *ArchJ* 146.1 (1989) 372–83.
- Yasin A. M. (2005) “Funerary monuments and collective identity: from Roman family to Christian community”, *ArtB* 87.3 (2005) 433–57.
- Yasin A. M. (2009) *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean: Architecture, Cult and Community* (Cambridge 2009).