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Romans, Christians, and pilgrims at Hierapolis in Phrygia: Changes in funerary practices and mental processes

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Abstract

There are many ways a deceased person can be brought to rest, and the shape and position of the funerary structures are likewise many. In the North-East Necropolis of Hierapolis can be followed a funerary history spanning at least 14 centuries from the 3rd/2nd century BC to c. AD 1300. The aim of the present paper is not to describe the physical evidence of funerary activities and changes, but to investigate if, in the periods of funerary changes, the changes can also be related to mental processes or cognitive concerns in the population who made the burials.

Keywords: *ad sanctos,* anxiety, coins, cremation, identity, legitimization, memory, pollution, reuse, views

The archaeological unit called a burial is normally composed of the funerary structure itself, the skeleton of the deceased and private belongings and offerings following the deceased. These can tell us something of death disposal and organization, of burial types and typology, of object typology and function, of chronology, of historical and cultural contexts, of characteristics of death rituals, and of the life and death of the buried person as extracted from osteological, DNA, and isotope analyses. The present volume can give examples of most of these funerary elements. But in a diachronic perspective can the funerary elements and changes of them also reveal some changes in mental processes among the inhabitants in the ancient Roman and Medieval society at large?

The point of departure for the present investigation will be the North-East Necropolis at Hierapolis (Figs. 12.1–2), where the three authors have worked in annual campaigns since 2007. The North-East Necropolis was mainly laid out in the Roman Imperial period, and stretches along the hill and hillsides above the town, including the area of the later sanctuary of St Philip, the apostle. It developed along the foot of the hill from scattered Hellenistic tombs, which were raised along a secondary road leading from the north towards the town (Ahrens 2015b; Ahrens, Hill, and Lieng 2015 in press; Ronchetta 2015). It is one of several necropoleis in Hierapolis, which were laid out in a large semicircle to the north, east, and south of the town from the Hellenistic period onwards. Some of these necropoleis are oriented towards main access roads, like the North, the North-West, the South-East, the South-West, and the lowest part of the North-East Necropolis. The East and the largest part of the North-East necropolis are instead located on the hills and slopes above the town without connection to traffic arteries (Schneider Equini 1972; Ronchetta 2008; 2012; 2015; this volume; Ronchetta and Mighetto 2007).

Tombs with a view in a time of stability

The first major funerary change in Hierapolis involves the layout and location of the necropoleis in general. In the ~~late~~ Hellenistic and early Imperial periods the tombs clustered along the main roads into the town, as we find them in many a Roman settlement, the exception being the South-East Necropolis, on a detached small hill at the southern end of the calcareous terrace on which the town was founded, facing and overlooking the road (Ronchetta, this volume). The tombs

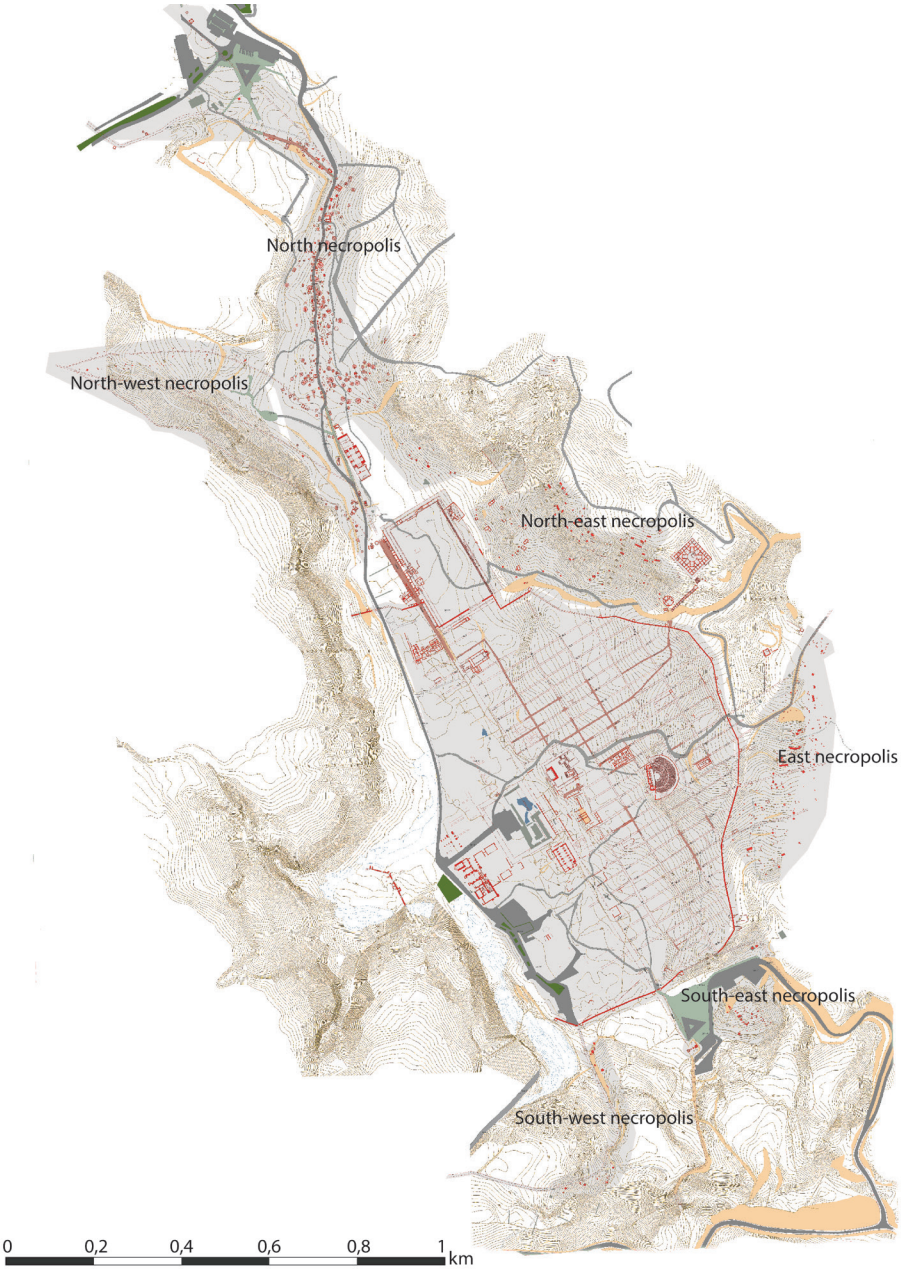

Fig. 12.1. Hierapolis. Town plan with necropoleis (courtesy of the Missione archeologica italiana a Hierapolis in Frigia; with adaptions).

communicated directly with the passers-by through their architecture, decorative elements, and inscriptions (Ahrens 2015 in press UPDATE a). The road, so to speak, was the arena for the population of the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods to manifest their wealth and social status. Even though the Hellenistic tumuli and most of the later tomb monuments were highly standardized in size and shape and did thus hardly stand out from the other monuments in the necropoleis, they would still demonstrate the affiliation of the tomb owner and his family with the part of the citizenry of Hierapolis that actually could afford such monuments. The building boom along the streets of tombs, particularly the North Necropolis, continued unbroken until the 4th century AD.

From the later 1st and early 2nd century AD, however, the hilltops with slopes north-east and east of the town became the new development areas for family tombs. Here, overlooking the town, the wide Lykos river valley below, and the high mountains beyond, the dead citizens could rest in silent peace, withdrawn from the busy life along the town's main road approaches.

The marked topographical change in the location of the tombs from along the main access streets to the

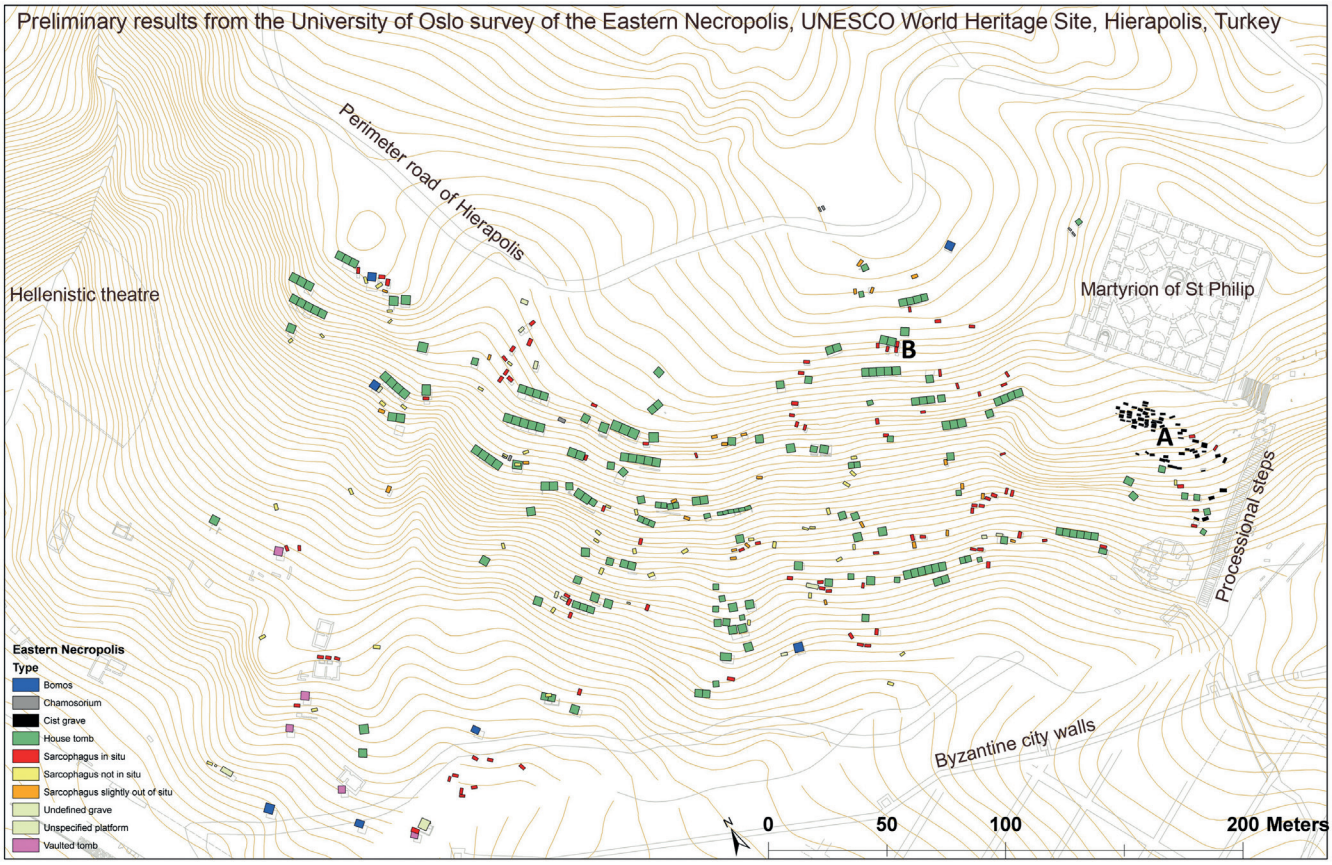

Fig. 12.2. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Survey plan 2010 of the necropolis including to the right the Martyrion building of St Philip. A: Early to Mid-Byzantine cemetery; B: Area of the Oslo University excavations (plan: David Hill; archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

town in the north and south of the city and to the hills of the North-East and East Necropoleis may reflect the Greco-Romans' new attitudes towards the experience and use of the surrounding landscape, as expressed, for example, through their pastoral poetry (Moore 2007, 90). In addition, the view enjoyed from the necropolis corresponded perfectly with accounts, from the Roman Imperial period, of the ideal landscape view (Ahrens 2011; ~~2015 in press UPDATE~~ a), and it reflected the contemporary Roman villa ideology which praised the relaxed *otium* life of the countryside in contrast to its negation, the town life's hectic *negotium* (see, for example, Mielsch 1987, 94–7; Ackerman 1990, 37–42). It must also be assumed that the view from the tombs onto the hometown played a significant part in the choice of burial places in the North-East Necropolis. The connection between tomb and hometown is very pronounced in the written sources. The desire for a burial in the hometown is a common topic in funerary inscriptions from Asia Minor and the place of the tombs of the ancestors was frequently mentioned in Greek literature and funerary inscriptions as a definition for the hometown. Some sources even point out, in particular, the view of the hometown from a tomb (Ahrens ~~2015 in press UPDATE~~ a). At the same time, the tombs, being not too distant, could easily be seen from the town and its immediate surroundings, each day reminding the citizenry of the inextricable connection between their ancestry and their hometown.

By withdrawing to more peripheral areas, like the hills and slopes of the North-East and East Necropoleis, the tombs no longer became objects of personal manifestations. In early Imperial times self-representation had moved into the arena of the town, where social and political status was displayed through public burials and by statues and inscriptions. These public honours were granted as a tribute to the most notable citizens in gratitude of their private financing of public and religious buildings, of festivals and games, and of general charity. According to preserved inscriptions from Asia Minor, this kind of euergetism reached its peak in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD (Zuiderhoek 2009, 17–22).

The Roman tomb complex chosen for the excavations in the North-East Necropolis lies near the top of the hill, less than 70 m west of the sanctuary of St Philip, as the crow flies (Figs. 12.2:B; 12.3–7). It included three saddle-roofed

Fig. 12.3. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Aerial view of the tombs in the North-East Necropolis selected for excavation, seen from the south (2009). Above the tombs C91 (still not excavated) C92 and C311 with the sarcophagi C308-10, and C212 (badly preserved). The row of five tombs below the excavation area carry from left to right the numbers C93–C97 (courtesy of the Missione archeologica italiana a Hierapolis in Frigia).

house tombs, two combined (C92 and C311) and one alone (C91) (Verzone 1961, 35; 1965, 57 fig. 7; Laforest *et al.* 2013, 147–8; Ahrens and Brandt ~~2015 in press UPDATE~~). The tombs are typical examples of saddle-roofed house tombs as found throughout the necropolis. In general, they measured in plan roughly 3 × 3 m, and in height around 3.80 m (measured from bedrock). They were built in a modular system with large interlocking blocks of local limestone (Schneider Equini 1972, 121, pls. 22a–b; D'Andria 2003, 191–2), and they were placed alone or in terraced units of 2–6 tombs. The type became standardized in a system found in many tombs in Asia Minor: they had a saddle roof, a panelled door made of a single stone block, and inside they were equipped with stone benches on three walls and with an extra bench on a higher level on the back wall. In connection with the double tomb (C92 and C311) were placed four sarcophagi (C308, C309, C310, and C212, all carved from local stone), three along the front and one on the east side. According to the finds inside the tombs, correlated with radiocarbon dates from a selection of the skeletons, the monumental tombs appear to have been raised some time in the late 1st/~~early~~ 2nd century AD, but in most, if not all tombs the depositions were not limited to this period, they continued long after this date.

The saddle-roofed house tombs occasionally carry inscriptions with the names of their owners, as in the case of the three investigated tomb buildings: tomb C92 belonged to Eutyches, son of Apollonios, from Lagina (pediment inscription: Gardner 1885, 345 no. 69; Judeich 1898, 157 no. 281), tomb C311 to the dyer Patrokles junior (Fig. 12.8) and tomb C91 to Attalos *Lapsos* (the lanky) (Pennacchietti 1966–1967, 295 no. 5), ~~who later~~ sold ~~his tomb~~ to Aurelios Artemonidos (Fig. 12.9). Apollonios, the son, and Ariste, the daughter of Eutyches, were buried in separate sarcophagi (C309, respectively C308) outside their father's tomb, both sarcophagi carrying the standard Roman inscription formula stating that whoever violates the tomb shall pay fines in one case to the *gerousia*, in the other to the *boule*, the *gerousia* and the tax office (Pennacchietti 1966–1967, 294–5 no. 2; 296 no. 4). The inscriptions testify firstly to the importance of family ancestry in a strict sense; secondly, they show concern for the legitimate grave use, and the anxiety of disturbance of the grave as an ancestral nucleus preserving the memory

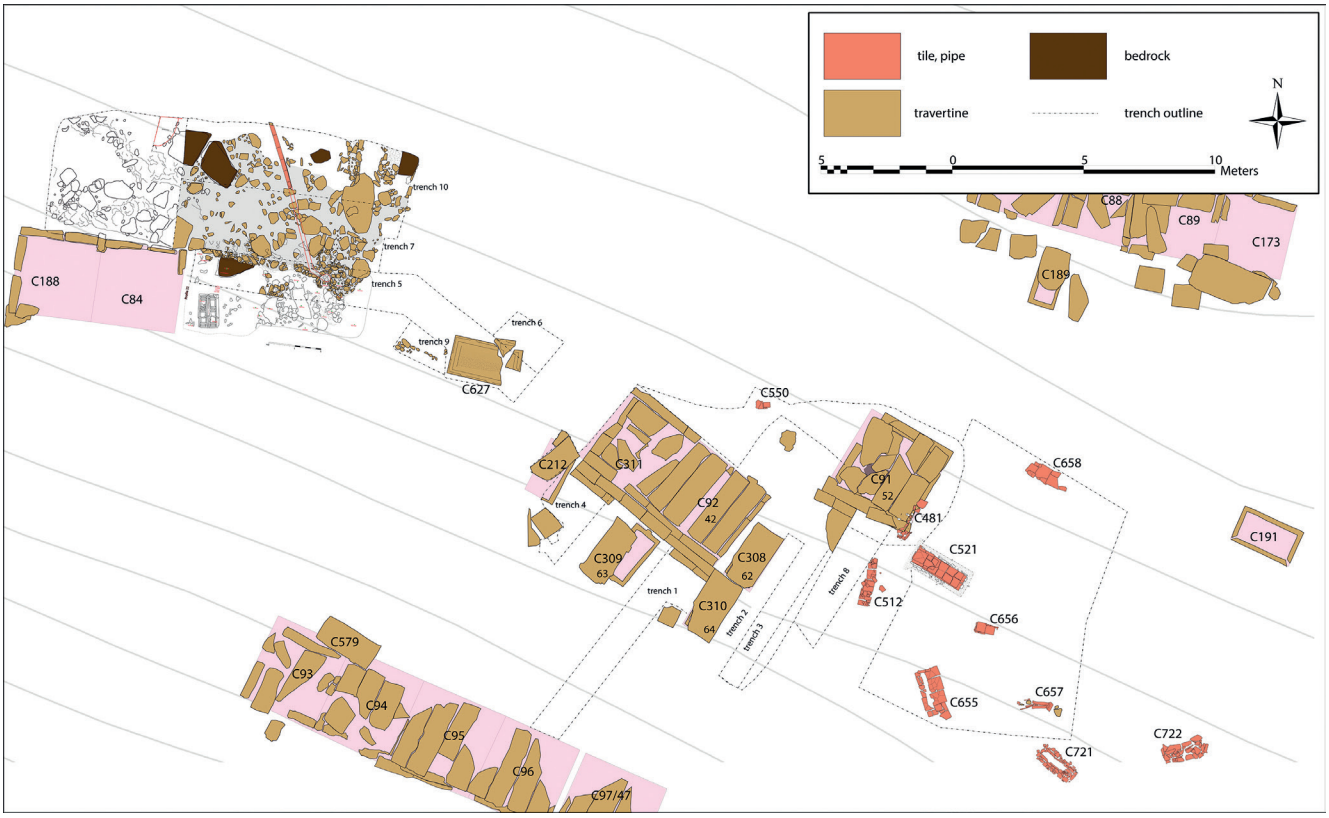

Fig. 12.4. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Plan of the same area as in Fig. 12.3 (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

of its past members. This was an expression of cognitive concerns or social anxiety which lasted all through the Roman period. In addition, the continued use of the same inscription formula for centuries, reflects a socially and politically stable society.

Fig. 12.5. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Tomb C311 with the sarcophagi C309 (t.l.) and C310 (t.r), seen from south (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

Tombs in a time of conflict

Tombs and sarcophagi

The building of new monumental tombs and the carving of new stone sarcophagi seem to stop in Hierapolis in the course of the 4th century AD, if not before (on the sarcophagi, see, for example, Vanhaverbeke and Waelkens 2002). However, a large portfolio of coins in the tombs investigated in the North-East Necropolis, supported by unpublished radiocarbon dates of skeletons, and by tombs from the North Necropolis, demonstrates that burials continued in the old monumental tombs until the late 4th or 5th centuries AD, and in a few cases into the 6th century AD (Travaglini and Camilleri 2010, 227: tombs 33 and 55). One sarcophagus (C310) outside the tomb of Eutyches (C92) received a Christian inscription (the two Greek letters Alpha and Omega finished the standard violation precautions) in the 4th century, when it was reused for burials (Pennacchietti 1963, 131–3 no. 1; 1966–1967, 295 no. 3; Robert and Robert 1967, 545) (Fig. 12.10). The names in this late Roman inscription were erased when the sarcophagus was reused a third time, at an unknown date. In the sarcophagus of Eutyches' son (C309) a coin of Justin II (565–574) may derive from a secondary burial of the late 6th century or later. Also in the North Necropolis there is evidence that

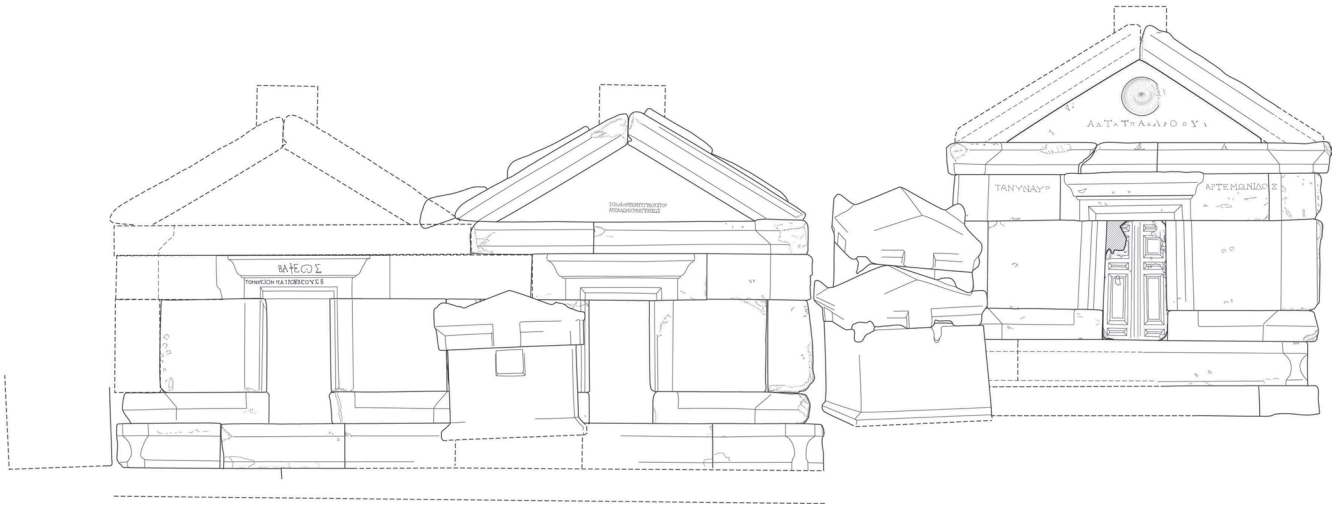

Fig. 12.6. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Drawing of the facades of the tombs (from left): C311 (reconstructed), C92 and C91, and the sarcophagi (from left), C309, C310, and C308 (behind) (drawing: Sven Ahrens; archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

Fig. 12.7. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Inside view of tomb C92, seen from south-west (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

the monumental tombs were still used for burials during the early Byzantine period (Schneider Equini 1972, 127; Laforest *et al*., this volume).

In Hierapolis there is hardly any evidence for the employment of simple tile or cist graves in the Roman Imperial period. In the South-East Necropolis one grave, possibly(?) from the 2nd century AD, has been found (see Ronchetta, this volume), to which should be added the undated, possibly late Roman grave 156a in the North Necropolis (Anderson 2007, 473–5; Moore 2013, 80). This changes in late Antiquity

Fig. 12.8. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Tomb C311: inscription on the lintel block of the tomb: BAPHEWS/ TOMNHMEIONTOPATROKLEOYSB (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

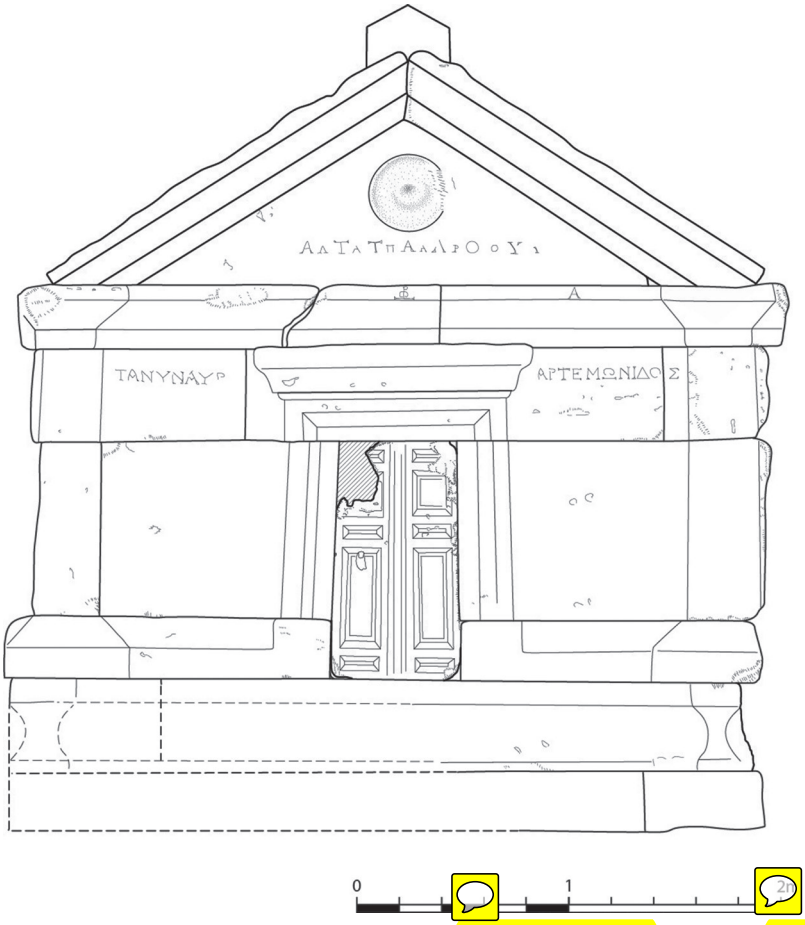

Fig. 12.9. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Tomb C91 with the inscriptions: ~~ALTATPAALROOYY~~ (pediment); ~~TA NYN AYR / ARTEMWNIDOS~~ (wall); ~~[H] RW A~~ (top edge of the architrave) (drawing by Sven Ahrens; archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

Fig. 12.10. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Sarcophagus C310 with an inscription finishing in the last line with two Greek letters: Alfa (left end) and Omega (right end), seen from west (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

when in the North-East Necropolis, such simple graves come into ~~frequent~~ use in the course of the 4th century, as can be seen in an area taken into use immediately east of Attalos' tomb (C91) (Fig. 12.11). By shifting large amounts of soil the sloping area was changed into an approximately horizontal terrace in which the new, simple pit graves were dug (Figs. 12.4; 12.12). Before being filled the tomb was emptied of its many burials and the bones presumably redeposited in some unknown place.

When parts of the necropoleis of Aphrodisias were dismantled to build the 4th-century town walls, the bones seem to have been treated with comparable respect (Staebler 2008, 193–4), and we may imagine that the same happened to the tombs disturbed when the more or less contemporary Byzantine walls were built in Hierapolis. A written source supports the assumption that the bones were treated respectfully during construction works in the 4th century: when writing against grave-robbing Gregory of Nyssa (Letter 31 to Letoius bishop of Melitene, 7a) explains that the dismantling of tombs

Fig. 12.11. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Cist grave C721; seen from west (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

and the reuse of the building material in publicly important building projects was considered pardonable by his coevals, 'if someone spares what deserves respect and leaves the interred body intact, so that the shame of our nature is not exposed to the sun, and only makes use of the stones from the facing of the tomb in order to build something else.'[1]

After the tomb had been emptied the door of Attalos' tomb was subsequently closed and sealed with mortar (as found in situ during the excavations) (Fig. 12.9) and the tomb covered by soil up to its pediments. It is not known who was responsible for this move or for what reason it was done, but it is worth noting that the depositions in Eutyches' tomb (C92) also stopped at about the same time, or soon afterwards, while those in Patrokles' tomb still continued, perhaps for some decades more. The intervention in Attalos' tomb and the discontinued use first of Eutyches' tomb and later of Patrokles' tomb stand as a clear emblem of a change in funerary customs at Hierapolis and corresponds chronologically to drastic changes in the monumental topography of Hierapolis around the year AD 400.

Fig. 12.12. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Section of the large heap of soil dumped around Attalos' tomb (C91) (t.l.), in which can still be seen cist grave C521, seen from west. Notice the curving dark bands in the soil, demonstrating the filling actions of the build-up (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

At that moment, in the centre of the town, started the destruction of the temple of Apollo, the oracular, patron god of Hierapolis (D'Andria 2007, 19–25; this volume; Semeraro 2007, 172, 191–6; 2008). It was gradually torn apart stone by stone, some reused for other buildings, some sent to the lime kilns, some hacked to pieces, and the site of the temple was eventually turned into a dump for building materials. In a similar way the round temple, the *tholos*, of the Pluto sanctuary nearby was demolished. The cave with the entrance to the Underworld was screened off and hidden behind a tall *spolia* wall; at the same time started also the gradual demolition of the sanctuary *theatron* above the cave (D'Andria 2013, 175–7). Instead, outside the town in the area of the North-East Necropolis, a new sanctuary grew up in connection with the tomb of the apostle Philip (D'Andria 2011–2012; 2014; this volume; Caggia 2012; Caggia and Caldarola 2012). The sanctuary, giving a new Christian topography to the town, was composed of a bath complex at the foot of the hill, a ceremonial staircase leading up to the tomb of the apostle, in the 4th century already isolated and incorporated into a building structure, in the 6th century turned into a three-aisled basilica built around the tomb (which was a standard saddle-roofed house tomb like the others found in the North-East Necropolis), and from there another staircase led up to the 60 × 60 m square monumental early 5th-century Martyrion of St Philip enclosing an octagonal church space, presumably raised on the spot where Philip was martyrized (for a plan of the sanctuary, see D'Andria 2011–2012, 8, fig. 3; this volume, Fig. 1.10). The sanctuary became the new *locus sancti* of the town, and, in opposition to the pagan sacred areas, it also became a place of gravitation for burials, presumably

attracted by the *ad sanctos* concept (on this see below). One such area of burials was laid out on the partly terraced slope just to the south-west of the Martyrion and contained some 80 documented more or less preserved cist graves, built of roughly cut stones and spolia from destroyed monumental tombs (Ahrens and Brandt 2015 in press UPDATE) (Figs. 12.2:A; 12.13). The badly preserved graves were in general oriented north-west/south-east following the orientation of the Martyrion and the cemetery terrace, and in general they measured around 0.50/0.85×1.45/1.90 m. All skeletal remains, found 0.10–0.20 m below surface level, were poorly preserved and dislocated. Unfortunately, the soil conditions in Hierapolis have usually a very negative impact on the preservation of bone material (Kars and Kars 2002, 174–7). In addition, natural collapse or man-made destruction of the grave covers, as well as multiple burials inside the same grave, and possibly reuse of the graves, have certainly contributed to the dislocation of the skeletal remains. Dislocated skeletal remains from the surrounding cemetery may also have ended up in the graves, but on this definite evidence is lacking. Indeed, none of the skeletal remains are articulated or allow for further inferences on the number, position, sequence, and orientation of the skeletons in the burials.

Radiocarbon dating of selected skeletons from the Martyrion cemetery may be attributed to ~~two~~ periods of use (Ahrens and Brandt 2015 in press UPDATE). Four samples (*c*. AD 400–7th century) coincided with the lifetime of the Martyrion before it collapsed in the mid-7th century earthquake, the same earthquake which also razed the town; two other samples point to a possibly limited continuity: one sample of the 7th–8th centuries coincides with the collapse of the building and later demolition activities (phase V), while the date of the other sample to the 9th–11th centuries agrees with the reactivation of the old building on a much smaller scale in the same centuries (phase VI) (D'Andria and Gümgüm 2010, 97; cf. also Verzone 1960, 13; R. D'Andria 2012, 635, fig. 1).

In the early Byzantine period the new peri-urban sanctuary of St Philip became the new pole in a changed burial topography and in which monumental tombs were subdued to the monumentality of the temples of the new religion. The burials became individualized, detached from the strong family bonds of the past. The tomb was no longer a solid, eternal container of family members, but a temporary resting place for the individual awaiting resurrection at the end of time. The pagan grave inscription bids a permanent 'Farewell', the Christian a temporary 'May you live (in God)', as death was not considered the end of life, but as the beginning of true life (Rush 1941, 254–6). In addition, the terms *heroon* (as used, for example, on the cornice above the door of Attalos' tomb) and *mnemeion* (as used in the inscriptions of the tombs of both Eutyches and Patrokles), alone or in combination, were gradually displaced by the term *koimeterion* (place of sleep) (Trombley 2013, 353).

Fig. 12.13. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Plan of part of the cemetery area south west of the Martyrion of St Philip, marked A on Fig. 12.2 (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

Significantly, the old formulas stressing ownership and punishment of tomb violation gradually disappear; the importance of memory and ancestry seems to fade, creating a new attitude towards death in which family bonds are replaced by a new religious bondage (see, for example, also Yasin 2009, 61; Moore 2013, 80; D'Andria, this volume); in fact, on Christian gravestones (as witnessed at Corinth) the family name disappeared, the stones were, as it seems, 'purposely designed as short-term memorials for the deceased' (Ivison 1996, 107). Furthermore, with the Christians the position of their graves was no longer determined by the areas of the old extra mural necropoleis and the place of the family tombs, but by their location in cemeteries, which gradually became administered by churches (Ivison 1996, 105). A burial in proximity to or even inside a church offered the possibility to be included in church ceremonies, like the general celebration of the liturgy, processions, or even masses for the dead (Ivison 1993, 26–7; Marinis 2009, 165–6; Yasin 2009, 64). Such a location quite often meant a burial close to the relics or even the body of a saint – *ad sanctos* – offering the advocacy, protection, and blessing provided by the saint, like the following inscription from Tyana exemplifies: 'I, a woman of many sins, (…) suoa, rest close to you. You strike me with awe, you, who is in the mind of (…) the good one: Pray for me!' (Berges and Nollé 2000, no. 144).

In Rome, according to the Law of the Twelve Tables from the mid-5th century BC interments had to be located outside the ritual borders of the city (Cicero, *de legibus* 2.58). This custom was generally observed until the 5th–6th centuries AD when the tombs appeared more frequently inside the borders of cities of the West Mediterranean (Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 1995; Gonzalez Villaescusa and Lerma 1996, 40; Haug. 2003, 273–88; Leone 2007a, 198–200; 2007b; Piepoli 2008, 579–80). This new situation is normally explained pragmatically as the result of war and sieges, or ideologically connected to the moving of relics of dead saints and martyrs from outside the city to their name-churches inside. Both explanations may carry some truth, but also a third explanation shall be considered, one which operates on the mental or cognitive level (Brandt 2012, 151–2).

Burials were regarded as polluters of the sacred space of the town, and burial practices contained elements of purification through the execution of animal sacrifices. When such acts were banned by emperor Theodosius in AD 391 and 392 (*Codex Theodosianus* 16.10.10–12), it must have created a cognitive crisis among the pagans as this eliminated their possibility to be purified. The Christians, however, considered their dead bodies as sacred and holy, permanently purified at the moment of baptism. For them the pagan pollution dogma accordingly made no sense. We have no method to discover if the Christians were the first to bury their beloved ones inside the ritual borders of the Roman cities, but the Theodosian decree and Christian theology were certainly important elements in the process, which gradually transformed the ancient classical cityscapes from a sacred space into an area of holy places, defined by the churches, which gradually became the new grounds for interment of the dead (Brandt 2012).

An important technique used in this transformation process was for the Christians to appropriate pagan symbols and give them a new meaning. We shall see one example of this below discussing the presence of coins in the tombs. Since pollution was a central concept in Roman burial ideology, the word had no place in a Christian funerary context. By redefining who polluted who, in what way and when, the Christians created a positive attitude towards death and the word pollute changed its meaning. In *Codex Theodosianus* 16.10.10 of AD 392, one of the decrees regulating the use of temples and animal sacrifices, it is stipulated that *nemo se hostiis polluat* – 'no person shall pollute himself with sacrificial animals.'[2] Seen with pagan eyes this decree was senseless – how could the killing of a sacrificial animal be considered an act of pollution, when animals were sacrificed just in order to purify polluted humans and things? By using the word pollute, a strong word in Roman juridical language, Theodosius gave a reason as to why animals could not be sacrificed as part of religious practices.

Such was the situation in the Roman West, but we should be careful in applying Roman traditions to the Greek East. Plutarch (*Lykurgos* 27) tells that the Spartans were the only people in Greece to consciously bury their dead inside the town walls, but no law text or inscription has been preserved which clearly states that burials could not be made inside the defined town area. However, it was normal practice also in the East to bury the dead outside (Schörner 2007, 11), but perhaps for other reasons than those flagged in the West. If a law existed it may have been transferred orally (Schörner 2007, 19), alternatively it was observed with some exceptions due to traditions and/or taboos (for one kind of death taboos in Greek funerary practices, see, for example, Brandt 2015, 111–2). One exception was apparently that important men and benefactors of the town could receive the honour of being buried inside the town borders. It should, however, be noted that Sikyon once asked approval to do so from the oracle at Delphi (Schörner 2007, 15–16); some restrictions of sacral character must, therefore, have been felt even among the Greeks, whether connected to pollution or not.

On two occasions Roman emperors, first Hadrian (*Corpus Iuris Civilis. Digesta* 47.12.3.5) and then Antoninus Pius (*Scriptores Historiae Augustae: Pius* 12.3), issued decrees which made the burying of people *intra muros* illegal (Schörner 2007, 18), underlining that from a Roman point of view this was a custom which could not be accepted. In the Greek East the latest burials recorded archaeologically or

by written sources inside a town's territory, happened in the late 2nd/early 3rd century AD (see Schröner 2007, 209–88 catalogue). Accordingly, there is reason to believe that in late Roman times the Roman burial dogma was observed also in the East, perhaps in the 4th/early 5th centuries AD even reinforced by the new walls built around many towns in Asia Minor, as, for example, at Aphrodisias, Blaundos, Laodikeia, Perge, Sagalassos, Sardis, Selge, and Hierapolis (Jacobs 2012, 118, table 1; Jacobs and Waelkens 2014, 94; on Hierapolis, see Scardozzi 2006, 119–22; 2008; 2015). Late Roman and Byzantine law codes, like the *Codex Iustinianus* from the 6th century AD, consistently repeat the Roman prohibitions against intramural burial (*Codex Theodosianus*. 9.17.36; *Corpus Iuris Civilis*. *Digesta* 47.12.3.5). It is, of course, difficult to assess whether these laws still were obeyed or if there are other reasons why in the early Byzantine times burials *intra muros* are a rare occurrence in the East. It seems, though, that in Asia Minor people must have abided by the law more faithfully than in other comparable regions within the Roman Empire (for other areas, see, for example, Achim 2015, 288, and her list of regions with literary references; add Fox 2012). This law-abiding character may also be the reason why no churches at Hierapolis, not even the cathedral built in the late 5th/early 6th centuries AD, have burials *intra ecclesiam* before the mid-Byzantine period. According to *Codex Iustinianus* (1.2.2) not only burials *intra muros*, but also burials in *apostolorum vel martyrium sedem* were not allowed (Achim 2015, 290). It can be doubted that a concept like the Western burial church existed in the East (on Western burial churches, see, for example, Yasin 2009, 61–100). A comparable situation can be observed in Greece (Laskaris 2000, 147). In fact, as far as can be said at the current state of research, burials within the town area did not occur till the mid-Byzantine period at Hierapolis.

The change from built monumental tombs and stone sarcophagi in the Imperial period to individual cist graves and reuse of Roman tombs in late Antiquity appears quite decisive. There were, however, also pagan funerary rites which seemingly continued into the late Roman period and even later. Two of these rites were the deposition of coins in tombs and cremation.

Cremations

Let us start with cremations, which was a common burial rite in Asia Minor, particularly in the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods (Ahrens 2015a). Hierapolis followed suit, as documented in the North Necropolis (Ahrens 2015a, 210.53; Anderson 2007, 477–8; Okunak 2005, 57; Ferrero 1996, 91; Verzone 1961–1962, 637). Finds of cremated bones in tomb C92, and of an *ostotheca* from the Imperial period in the sanctuary of St Philip demonstrate that cremation was also practised in the North-East Necropolis. Recent discoveries in Patrokles' tomb (C311) (Figs. 12.4; 12.6) amplify notably the evidence for cremation burials, as in this tomb about one third of the depositions registered (out of a MNI of 103) are cremations (see Kiesewetter, this volume). Four charred or burnt bone samples were tested for radiocarbon dates, giving the following results (2 sigma calibrated):

Sample no. 403073: AD 90–100, 125–250
Sample no. 403072: AD 255–300, 315–405
Sample no. 405530: AD 265–275, 330–420
Sample no. 403071: AD 420–570[3]

On the basis of these we can state with some certainty that cremation was practised from the 2nd/3rd until the 5th/6th centuries. Though it is important to add that cremation in these periods, and especially in the latter part, was not exclusive, it alternated with inhumations, as the overlapping radiocarbon dates of the unburnt skeletons demonstrate:

Sample no. 405527: AD 5–125
Sample no. 403270: AD 180–190, 215–340
Sample no. 405526: AD 235–385
Sample no. 405529: AD 235–385
Sample no. 405525: 255–300, 315–405

An equally late date for cremations in Asia Minor has till now only been established for burials at Pessinus, also there alternating with inhumations: 3rd/4th centuries; even one late 5th century, but explained as belonging to deceased with a foreign cultural background (Lambrechts 1969, 127–31, 135).[4] While cremation was still practised in some regions of Asia Minor in the 3rd century AD (Ahrens 2015a, 203), it is exceptional after that century. An increase of inhumation during the 2nd century and the decrease of cremation in the 3rd century in Rome and in the Empire in general can currently not be linked to new religious ideas (Scheid 2007, 19, 25).[5] So when the practice of cremation decreased in the Roman Empire in the course of the 3rd century, it was not the result of a Christian impact on funerary rites. However, inhumation was the preferred rite for any Christian (Ahrens 2015a, 205), which can explain why cremation was almost completely abandoned when most of the population had adopted the Christian faith from the 4th century onward.

In periods of social, cultural, economic, and/or religious changes, the changes may, for many, create a cognitive crisis, when old norms of life are challenged by new ones. If the changes are felt dramatically, they may be regarded as a threat to the established order and can at times be counteracted by reinventing, renewing, and/or reinforcing old traditions; and old everyday customs can take on new symbolic meanings to signal opposition. One such dramatic

change may have been the conversion from a pagan to a Christian society. In some local societies the change may have been gradual and peaceful, in others signalled by returning episodes of violence. At Hierapolis both ancient written and archaeological sources give the impression that the religious change in the town did not happen without confrontations (Huttner 2013, *passim*).

In the apocryphal *Acta Philippi*, perhaps written down some time in the 4th or 5th centuries AD, we are told with what violence the apostles Philip and Bartholomew were hanged from a tree, head down, with iron hooks and nails through their ankles and heels, how Philip's sister and follower, Mariamne, was stripped naked in front of the public, and how an abyss opened and swallowed the Roman proconsul, a viper-cult temple, its priests and 7,000 worshippers, men, women, and children, all included (Bouvon, Bouvier, and Amsler (eds.) 1999, 342–431;[6] D'Andria 2011, 36–38; this volume; cf. also Huttner 2013, 355–71).

The story, even if imaginative and fantastic, contains some basic, real topographical and archaeological foundations. The site is traversed by a tectonic fault line from the depths of which hot water and poisonous gases gush forward here and there. A viper-cult temple can refer both to the temple of the patron and oracular god of Hierapolis, Apollo, and to the sanctuary of Cybele and the god of the Underworld, Pluto, where a curled, sculpted snake has been uncovered. The first temple, as already mentioned (p. 000) was, in around the year 400 AD, violently destroyed and gradually demolished stone by stone, as the round temple of the Plutonium may also have been.

Unfortunately we can only guess with what other kinds of violence Hierapolis had been confronted in the years previous to these actions, and still perhaps for some time continued to be confronted with. According to Amsler (1996), in an article, written before the latest discoveries of the combined Cybele and Pluto sanctuary, the Acts of Philip reveal one level of conflict, which originally existed between Cybele and Apollo, but which in the 5th century was transferred to a conflict between Cybele and St Philip, between paganism and Christianity.

Hierapolis was not the only place where the conversion from pagan to Christian belief caused local conflicts and upheavals (see, for example, Saradi 2008, and the discussion by Bremmer 2014). A classic example is given by the town Apamea (the metropolis of second Syria), in which the fanatic archbishop Marcellus is reported to have destroyed many pagan temples (Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.21; see also Trombley 1993, 123–9), whether referring to actual or partly imagined events.

If we can accept that death, from a societal point of view, is often more important for the living than for the dead (Oestigaard 2015, 374), it should not be dismissed that the family that owned Patrokles' tomb (C311) might have 'reinvented' the use of cremation, a distinctly non-Christian burial practice, in periods of tension in the town between pagans and Christians, to symbolically underline the family's strong adherence to pagan traditions. The family used cremation to create or maintain their own 'death myth', i.e. within the framework of an overriding cosmological and religious scheme and according to the available set of ritual possibilities, it composed and conducted 'the funeral in accordance to: specific causes of death, the ancestors, the spiritual world, or using the deceased as a medium for social outcomes in the reconstruction of society' (Oestigaard 2015, 368). The old traditional cremation rites were thus in late Roman and early Byzantine times at Hierapolis used, not as part of a generally accepted custom of the past, but for a specific societal purpose. The late cremations at Pessinus may have been used in a similar way.

Coins

Another common, but by no means obligatory, pagan Greek practice, was to place one or more coins in the grave. In some cases, the coins were placed in the mouth of the dead, a circumstance in which the coin has often been interpreted as payment to the ferryman Charon, who brought the dead souls across the river Styx to the Underworld, to be joined with the ancestors. The rite, often referred to as 'Charon's obol', was also widely practised in the Roman West even though Charon was not originally part of the Roman religion, and the rite may there have had another religious origin (Stevens 1991, 228), and at times perhaps also another meaning. It has, for example, been suggested that coins found in graves in and around Rome could have been given to the deceased as protection against metaphysical or transcendental forces on their afterlife journey (Ceci 2001, 90–1; on the journey cf., for example, Brandt 2015, 125, 130, 136, 149), alternatively as a provision for the journey or as an offering to the dead.

Coins have been found in many graves in the excavations in the North-East Necropolis, but there seems to be a stronger presence of them in the find material from the 4th and early 5th centuries, than from previous centuries (Indgjerd 2014, 61, fig. 15). It is not known if these coins were placed in the mouth of the dead or otherwise placed in the burials (Indgjerd 2014, 61–2). Two coins from the 4th century found with the cover of cist grave C521 suggest rather that, as a specific part of the burial ceremony, they could have been placed in the grave at the end of the interment and not given specifically to the dead. Cist grave C721, close by the previous one, contained three coins from the 4th and early 5th centuries. Finds from necropoleis in the neighbourhood of Hierapolis (as at Buldan and Laodikeia) confirm that placing coins in graves was common in the late Roman/early Byzantine periods (Ceylan 2000, 78; Şimşek 2011, *passim*). An increase in the amount of coins per burial has also been noted in other areas of the Mediterranean from the

3rd century AD onwards (Stevens 1991, 225–6). Depositions of multiple coins occurred also in early Christian graves in Greece (Laskaris 2000, 321–3) and in Rome, where Pope Gaius (AD 283–296) is reported to have brought with him to the grave three contemporary Diocletian coins (Migotti 1997, 93, quoting Leclercq 1924, 2185, note 5, who refers to Aringhi 1651, *Roma subterranea*, 1. IV, c. xlviii, t. ii, p. 4263).

The rite of placing coins in burials was still practised and connected with the ferryman Charon in the late 4th-century Athens (Alföldy-Gazdac and Gazdac 2013, 308). The Christian rite of the viaticum, the placing of the eucharist in the mouth of the dead, partially supplanted the rite of the Charon's obol in early Christianity. While the term itself meant provision for the journey (Rush 1941, 91; Grabka 1953, 19; Stevens 1991, 220–1) and the rite still very much resembled the pagan rite in the way it was performed, its meaning had been adapted to the Christian ideas (Grabka 1953, 20–1; Paxton 1996, 32–4). In Christian popular belief the journey of the soul after death could be full of dangers, and provisions for the dead were considered to be necessary (Grabka 1953, 23–6). The coins, just as cross amulets or the eucharist, could help protect the soul on this journey.

The rite was also extensively practised in the mid- and late Byzantine period (Ivison 1993, 216–19; Laskaris 2000, 321–4) just as in the Medieval West (Travaini 2004; Schulze-Dörrlamm 2010, 363–7). At that time the coins in Eastern Mediterranean graves may mostly have served as apotropaic amulets (Ivison 1993, 219–21; Lightfoot, Ivison, *et al*. 2001, 378). Two coins from the 10th century were found accompanied by other mid-Byzantine grave goods in tomb C92, and a coin from the 11th century came to light in neighbouring tomb C311. All three depict a bust of Christ, making their function as icon amulets most likely.

The increased use of coins in graves especially in the 4th and 5th centuries AD in Hierapolis, but also other places (see, for example, Stevens 1991, 224), requires some attention (Table 12.1):[7]

Table 12.1. Hierapolis. Numerical distribution of dated coins according to centuries from the 3rd century BC to the 7th century AD found in respectively tombs in the North Necropolis, as sporadic finds in the North Necropolis, and in the North-East Necropolis. The numbers for the North Necropolis and sporadic finds are taken from Travaglini and Camilleri 2010, 227–9.

	Necropolis/centuries									
BC/AD	*3*	*2*	*1*	*/1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
North[1]	0	0	1	4	2	3	12	6	3	0
Sporadic N	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	18	0	0
North-East	1	0	0	0	1	4	17	16	2	0
Total	1	0	1	4	3	7	49	40	5	0

[1]Including Tumulus tomb C in the North-East Necropolis

A similar, but slightly less pronounced distribution can be observed at Laodikeia (Simsek 2011) (Table 12.2):

It may be argued that the increased number of coins in the graves is just a result of an augmented minting activity due to increased emissions in bronze by the state in addition to frequent redefinitions of weight standards, shape and value currency systems (Travaglini and Camilleri 2010, 30, quoting Burnett 1987, 131–9). At Hierapolis, for example, coins of the 4th and 5th centuries made up 89% of all coins identified for the period 1st–5th century AD (Travaglini and Camilleri 2010, 25, graphic 5). Since the coins from the necropoleis in Hierapolis are mainly found in large, monumental graves with many depositions over time, it is not possible to read these figures in relation to the total number of graves within each century. At nearby Laodikeia a large number of closed-context burials have been excavated and we may here see if the increase was the result of the number of graves containing coins and not only a result of an increase in numbers of coins in each grave (Table 12.3).

The result implies that the high number of coins found in graves from the 3rd to the 5th centuries was the result of an increased use of this custom, not explicitly connected to increased minting activity. While in the preceding centuries the number of graves with coins oscillates between roughly 5% and 15% of the total number of registered graves in each century, in late Antiquity the percentage oscillates between roughly 40% and 90%. Could this increased use of coins in the grave be a reflection of a similar mental attitude as we

Table 12.2. Laodikeia. Numerical distribution of dated coins according to centuries from the 2nd century BC to the 7th century AD found in all tombs excavated and as sporadic finds.

	Finds/centuries								
BC/AD	*2*	*1*	*/1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
All tombs	2	19	13	10	15	36	42	0	19
Sporadic finds	1	1	2	1	3	11	0	0	0
Total	3	20	15	11	18	47	42	0	19

Table 12.3. Laodikeia. Numerical distribution according to centuries of the total number of graves excavated and graves containing coins, followed by the percentage distribution of graves containing coins. The graves are, in principle, organized according to the latest datable object according to the date given to each grave by Şimşek 2011, and the coins allocated to their latest dates.

	Graves/Centuries								
BC/AD	*2*	*1*	*/1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*
Graves	6	16	149	87	24	16	31	4	2
Graves w/coins	2	2	15	4	9	14	17	4	2
% Graves/coins	(33)	13	10	5	38	88	55	–	–

saw in the use of the late cremations: in periods of change, cognitive conflicts and crises may lead to a reinvention and use of old traditions, giving them a new symbolic meaning? This twist of possible pagan meanings in the use of coins in graves, whether originally intended for Charon, or for other ideological, symbolic, or magical purposes in the world beyond death (cf. Stevens 1991, 228–9), meant that the Christians could easily turn the custom into their own ideology – as they did with the use of the word pollution discussed above (p. 000). However, as has already been observed, to neutralize the symbolic meaning of cremations, the Christians did not find a good answer.

In a transition period, when many, out of convenience, adopted the new religion and rituals, one can perhaps also envisage a third, temporary solution to explain the presence of coins in the graves. Taboos, old customs, and beliefs, classified as folk beliefs (or superstition) (Tarlow 2011, 156–90; 2015, 406–10), are connected to other parts of human rationality than new doctrines and rituals, and are difficult to uproot overnight. This may have caused many individual solutions, not written in decrees, dogmas, or textbooks. Death has always been surrounded with anxiety, both for the moment of death itself and for what happens to the soul afterwards. On the threshold of death some, in a transition period between the use of old traditions and the constitution of new doctrines, may have played a double game: even if buried as a Christian, in a simple Christian grave with a Christian ritual *ad sanctos*, their kin may have equipped the deceased with a coin for Charon (or for other pagan purposes) – just in case…

The many possibilities of interpretation of the uses of the coin in the graves make it difficult to understand the full meaning of this habit in each individual case, but that the coin played an important role in the transition of burial rituals from pagan to Christian, may well be deduced from the sudden reinstitution in the late Roman period of an old custom, which in the Imperial period had often been ignored.

Tombs in a time of recovery

In the mid-7th century Hierapolis was hit by a severe earthquake, which marked the end of the classical city (for archaeological circumstances and coins dating the event, see Travaglini and Camilleri 2010, 41–5). Small signs of economic and social changes (Zaccaria Ruggiu 2012, 423, 430–1) give the impression that the town, by that point, for some time had suffered hardships which made it difficult to mobilize the necessary resources to recover, as it had managed in the past after an earthquake catastrophe (Brandt, forthcoming). The reasons for this fatal situation may have been many, but were not limited to Hierapolis alone: from the second half of the 6th century many classical cities were reduced in size, moved, or they simply perished. The answer may perhaps also be found in the 6th century, when the Byzantine Empire was ravaged by a concentrated series of high-intensity earthquakes over two generations, by repeated outbreaks of the Justinian plague, by a couple of serious short-term climatic changes, and then topped by the Persian wars in the early 7th century. Together these dramatic natural and human circumstances most likely started a demographic change resulting in a downward population spiral, which would have lasted for a few generations before it stopped and followed by many more before the Byzantine Empire reached the former level of manpower (Brandt, forthcoming; this volume). When the earthquake hit Hierapolis in the mid-7th century the town may thus already have been in an advanced stage of depopulation. Hierapolis was accordingly abandoned except perhaps for some scattered squatting activity (as suggested from the information in D'Andria *et al*. 2005–2006, 383–92; Zaccaria Ruggiu and Cottica 2007, 158–9; Zaccaria Ruggiu 2012, 430–1; Cottica 2012, 457–9, 465).

When a new settlement, or a web of smaller nucleated settlements, started to grow in Hierapolis in the late 8th century AD a completely new urban structure grew out of the ruins of the classical city (on the development of the new town, see Arthur 2008, 87; 2012; Arthur and Bruno 2007; Arthur *et al.* 2012, esp. 580–1), and new modes of burial developed with the new settlement(s). By now inhumation was the only burial practice and simple cist graves (without preserved names) were the dominant grave type, the new modes in Hierapolis were principally connected to the burial context, i.e. the location of the cemeteries. They can at present be listed (with some very approximate dates) as follows:

1. Cemeteries with chapels in old, abandoned church buildings: the cathedral (for recent literature, see Ciotta and Palmucci Quaglino 2002; Arthur 2006; 2012, 268, 280; Arthur and Bruno 2007, 520–3; Peirano 2006; 2008; 2012; Romeo 2007), the church above the theatre (Gullino 2002; Arthur 2006, 152–4; 2008; 2012), and the church of St Philip (D'Andria 2011–2012; Caggia 2014): 9th–12th centuries.
2. A cemetery in previous church cemeteries: the cemetery of the Martyrion (Ahrens and Brandt 2015, in press): 9th–11th centuries(?).
3. Burials in previous monumental Roman tombs: North-East Necropolis (Ahrens and Brandt 2015, in press): 8th/9th–13th centuries.
4. A new cemetery around a new church: The church-cum-cemetery north-east of the north agora (Arthur 2002, 219–21; 2006, 68–9, 118–24; 2008, 87; 2012, 290–2; Arthur and Bruno 2007, 523–8; Arthur *et al*. 2012, 573–6): 10th–11th centuries.
5. Burials in connection with new living quarters within ancient buildings: the old bath building at the bottom of the ceremonial stairs leading to the sanctuary of St Philip (Caggia and Caldarola 2012, 631–2; Caggia 2014, 153–4 and n. 33): 10th–11th centuries(?).

In a period of recovery, whether starting from a re-settlement ex-novo or from the expansion of a surviving scattered settlement, the creation of an identity and a legitimization of its existence would have been essential. The creation of identities lies more in the past than in the present; among the Christians, as it had also been among the pagans, the identity was created by reconnecting with ancient memories and heroes. In the present case, this meant that the saints and martyrs, who had once peopled the bygone town and ancient landscape, were brought back to life in a new light. Foremost among these was, of course, the apostle Philip, whose tomb was still visible, but also other, for us known (Cyriacus and Claudianus: Huttner 2013, 341) and unknown saints and martyrs may have played their role through the revival of their ancient, abandoned churches, whether these were restored to some of the lost splendour or only occupied by small chapels with accompanying burials.

The recreation of an identity was apparently closely linked with another necessity – the need for sacred grounds in which to bury the dead. Here the abandoned churches served a special function, as possibly the graveyard created on the south-west side of the Martyrion of St Philip soon after it was built in the early 5th century AD. One skeleton, in grave C21, was buried there in the time period AD 895–1020 (according to a 2 sigma calibrated radiocarbon date), that is at the same time as when, in the Martyrion building, two small churches or chapels were active: one lay outside the building along the south-east wall, near the east corner, the other in one of the rooms of the south-western wall, close to the west corner. The two chapels collapsed in a new devastating earthquake by the end of the 10th century, never to be rebuilt.

In the same quake the church of St Philip, restored a couple of centuries previously, collapsed and soon after gave way to burials in the central nave, by now open to the sky, in the close vicinity of the tomb of the saint. A chapel was installed in the north side aisle. The burials in the central nave may well be referred to as a kind of *ad sanctos* ideology (Caggia 2014, 151–2), even if some consider the concept not appropriate for such late burials (Marinis 2009, 158–9). The graves, in the case of a reborn old burial ideology, would not have been attracted by the physical relics of the saint (relics which had been moved already in the 6th century), rather by the memory of his life – and in which the changed occupation and function of the church moved from a place of sermons to one of burials was not so much to guarantee a safe journey of the dead to the world beyond awaiting resurrection, but to retain the memory of the saint in order to maintain his protective powers both in life and in death. It shall, however, be noted that the graves in the nave were few, only six in number, and marked more clearly than other contemporary tombs. One may, therefore, ask whether the interments here, and in the other two churches with chapel and graves (group 1 above), were not in use for common people, rather for a select group of the society, whether connected to the social position of the individuals interred or to emerging potent families creating a family sepulchre (Ousterhout 2010, 92; Moore 2013, 84–6) – in the house of their appropriated patron saint or martyr.

As for the graveyard of the Martyrion (Figs. 12.2; 12.13), probably more open and easily accessible for the common people than abandoned churches, the excavations have given no answer to what happened in this mid-Byzantine period. It may still have continued to be used (even without serving chapels), in the same way as the nearby Roman tombs of Attalos (C91) and Eutyches (C92) (Fig. 12.14). In a sampling of 15 skeletons found in both graves for radiocarbon dating (with a 2 sigma calibration) the burials range in date, rather evenly distributed, from the mid-8th to the very late 13th century, dates which comply well with objects found in the tombs. To this shall also be added cist grave C512 from the artificial 4th century earthen terrace covering tomb C91 (see above, p. 000 and Figs. 12.4, 12.12), a grave radiocarbon-dated to AD 695–970 (Ahrens and Brandt 2015 in press UPDATE). These tombs may well have been considered part of the Martyrion graveyard, but they could even have been considered as an independent burial area. Here was neither a new nor an old sacred building, which could have defined the surrounding land as sacred. However, the Roman sarcophagus (C310) standing in front of Eutyches' tomb to the east, carrying a standard Roman formula inscription, ends with the two Greek letters Alpha and Omega, a clear reference to its once Christian pedigree (Figs. 12.4; 12.10). If here was once a Christian burial, the ground may have been considered sacred by the mid-Byzantines, and the abandoned tomb buildings close by would thus be well adapted to receive more burials.

Who were buried in the tombs of Attalos and Eutyches in mid-Byzantine times? Analysis of strontium isotopes in their skeletal remains gives some interesting results worth a short consideration (Wong *et al*., this volume). Strontium isotopes in human bodies reflect the level of strontium content in the soil from which humans and animals take their food. The strontium isotope data of a local population will therefore give similar values; values that differ from these ought to belong to an originally non-local population. According to the analyses the late Roman/early Byzantine population has very stable strontium isotope values; in the mid-Byzantine population the values are very unbalanced (see Wong *et al*., this volume Fig. 14.4). In the tomb of Eutyches were found five pilgrim badges from three different monasteries in France and one from Rome datable to the late 13th century (Ahrens 2011–2012). The obvious question to ask is whether Eutyches' tomb, for the whole or only for some of its later active sepulchre period, was used as a burial place mainly for non-locals, and in case for non-locals of a large variety of origins? Could some of the burials even have been for 13th-century Turks for a period settling in Hierapolis (Arthur 2012, 297–8)? Such questions,

Fig. 12.14. Hierapolis, North-East Necropolis. Eutyches' tomb (C92): Mid-Byzantine, non-articulated depositions in the space between the benches of the tomb (context B7); north t.l. (archive of the Oslo University Excavations at Hierapolis).

however, can only be answered more confidently when we have substantial isotope data from other burial grounds in the mid-Byzantine Hierapolis.

What characterizes the three burial locations so far discussed is a search for an identity through the use of ancient monuments and a legitimization of their use as sacred grounds for burials. In the church-cum-cemetery (group 4) near the north agora we find an *ad hoc* solution to a possibly expanding burial problem with no ties to the past, instead it reveals a future solution. If Hierapolis had continued to grow in the mid- and late Byzantine times, the town would have needed to create more burial grounds, grounds which would have had to find their location together with a new church/chapel independent of the town's historical past. The legitimization of the new ground and its identity would then most likely be connected to other saints and martyrs with no historical roots in Hierapolis.

Concluding remarks

In the present presentation, in three stages, covering a period of nearly 1,300 years, an attempt has been made to write the history of entombments at Hierapolis from a view of changes in funerary practices and mental processes.

In the first stage, in the Imperial period, we could observe how part of the population built their tombs away from the busy roads leading into the town on the peaceful hills behind with a magnificent view of the town and the surrounding landscape. The view of the hometown may have played a particular role in the choice of these remote necropoleis. It may further reflect the Greeks' and Romans' taste for the countryside and for villa life, as witnessed in the contemporary pastoral literature. In parallel with this development, the display of wealth and expressions of self-representation and euergetism moved from the monumental tombs to the public space of the town. However, for both

areas of burials, along the roads or on the hills, we can observe a repetitive use of standardized monumental tombs and stone sarcophagi placed in family precincts. This mediates an idea of a society in harmony and stability built on a strong family organization, and so do, despite their expressions of anxiety and social preoccupations, the repetitive tomb inscriptions following the same formulas for centuries. This harmony and stability seem to have been broken with the introduction of the Christian religion. This, in the second stage, as we have tried to communicate, due to a changed burial ideology, caused conflicts and counter reactions.

The conflicting burial ideologies can in short be described as a development from pagan, large, monumental, strictly protected family tombs in privately owned, extensive extra mural areas to Christian, simple, individual graves in small defined hallowed areas dedicated to the physical presence of a dead saint or martyr (i.e. burials *ad sanctos*) – outside the town walls. At Hierapolis no late Roman/early Byzantine tomb has yet been found inside the walls. It is a change in which gradually the old family burial traditions cede to burials bonded by a Christian, religious content, but till the end of Hierapolis as a classical city, destroyed in the earthquake in the mid-7th century AD, both burial solutions lived side by side, at times contesting, at times overlapping and supporting each other. In this development from pagan to Christian burials, some pagans, in periods of ideological tensions, may also have 'reinvented' old burial customs, like cremation and the deposit of coins in the graves, as a means to demonstrate their anti-Christian sentiments. The Christians answered by turning the custom of the coins into a burial habit of their own, but appear not to have had a similar answer to the cremation rite.

After the abandonment of the town in the mid-7th century some four to five generations may well have passed before a slow resurrection of the ancient settlement started, possibly in the late 8th century. In this third stage the new settlement needed an identity and a legitimization of its existence, which it tried to do through new burials by establishing a link with the past through the appropriation of old Christian burial grounds and abandoned churches, in the last case, perhaps, occupied by burials of emerging, leading families. This interest in the past can perhaps be read as part of a renewed *ad sanctos* mentality, not based on the physical presence of a dead saint or martyr, but on their memory. The results of the analysis of some strontium isotopes begs the question of whether certain burial modes were reserved for non-locals, like pilgrims, tradesmen, or nomads. As in the pagan world the mid-Byzantine community tied their present life to the past, in this way finding an important social stabilizer in the, by definition, conservative agricultural society. The church-cum-cemetery by the north agora gave a signal towards a future, which never materialized due to external political events over which the small town had no control.

The moral of this story is threefold. By looking at the burial practices through the lens of mental processes we have tried to unveil how burial ideologies and belief systems shifted over time, thus revealing more the content of funerary actions than their form (Brandt 2012, ix).

Secondly, among colleagues in the field we have often heard complaints about the chronological compartmentalization of Medieval studies where short-term changes are given much attention, but the long-term ones disappear between one specialized time period and another (Brandt 2012, x). People did not live in time periods, they lived in a continuous cultural stream of actions and events where changes were continuously created and supplanted in periods overlapping each other. In order to understand Ancient and Medieval man we need to look at society as a long continuum, not as stopping places of a train moving from one time period to another. Here may lie one challenge for future studies of Roman and Medieval burial practices, both in Asia Minor and beyond.

Thirdly, it has for long been an accepted 'truth' that cremation, as a burial practice, went out of use in the Mediterranean region in the course of the 3rd century AD, even if examples of later use have been forwarded. The dates established for late cremations at Hierapolis leave open a question as to what criteria have been used for the dating of cremations in the past, on accompanying finds, or on the notion that cremations cannot be late. What is needed in the future is a large-scale study of radiocarbon dates from cremated bodies in every necropolis where these are registered, especially in necropoleis in which burials cannot be dated via other contextual data. We shall then certainly get a different picture of the spread of cremations in time than that which we have today.

Notes

1 Translation: Silvas 2007, 224.

2 Translation by C. Pharr 1952.

3 The dates were provided by Beta Analytic Limited (Miami, Florida).

4 Could there also have been late cremations in the North Necropolis at Hierapolis? See De Bernardi Ferrero 1996, 91 on tomb 1, in which apparently one of four funerary areas inside the tomb was excavated: 'The excavation has brought to light bones belonging to successive disturbed burials, many of which were burnt, as well as ceramic fragments of a wash-basin for domestic use, dating to the Vth–VIth centuries A.D.'? A search in the Hierapolis storerooms confirm both the presence of cremated bones as well as the date to the 5th–6th centuries of the ceramics found in the tomb. In a recent architectural study Filippo Masino and Giorgio Sobrà suggest a date of the tomb to the 4th century (personal communication September 2015).

5 For a late cremation from the necropolis under the church of St Peter in Rome, see Sinn 1987, 53, 265–6, no. 714, a cinerary marble urn containing, together with the cremated bones, a Constantinian coin issued shortly after AD 317; the necropolis under St Peter's was abandoned when the church was built starting *c*. AD 322, giving an *ante quem* date for the urn (we are grateful to Prof. Paolo Liverani for this information).

6 The text is composed of two more or less parallel stories; 'Extrait des voyages du saint et glorieux apôtre Philippe depuis l'Acte quinziéme, dans lesquels figure le Martyre' and 'Martyre du saint et glorieux apôtre Philippe, digne de toute louange'.

7 In this and the following tables the coins are allocated according to their latest date.

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