

# Beyond Ethnicity: Symbols of Social Identity from the Fourth to Sixth Centuries in England

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## Introduction

The fourth to sixth centuries have been conceptualised as a time of transition, from the end of Roman Britain to the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon period. During this time there was a profound change in material culture relating to both settlement and burial practice.<sup>1</sup> The perceived mechanism behind this change continues to be vigorously debated, with views ranging 'between population replacement at one end and wholly endogenous change at the other'.<sup>2</sup> While such discussions are crucial to our understanding of this period, they have resulted in a preoccupation with the migration and with ethnic identity.

Generally, the population of fifth- and sixth-century Britain continues to be conceptualized as culturally distinct from that of the fourth century. By assuming such distinctions, comparatively few studies bestride the late Roman/early Anglo-Saxon divide in the same way that they would other periods of transition such as, for example, the Norman Conquest or the Reformation.<sup>3</sup> As recent research has shown, the temporal divisions used in archaeology have, to some extent, actively shaped perceptions of the past. Subsequently, archaeological interpretations can become self-perpetuating and 'constrained by paradigms of their own creation'.<sup>4</sup>

Predicated upon this assumed cultural distinction is a tendency for archaeologists dealing with the Roman-medieval 'transition' to dwell on themes of migration and ethnicity to the exclusion of others. These are themes that do not often feature when comfortably ensconced within a single time period. Firstly, there is a concern with the identification of material indicators of continuity or discontinuity and, secondly, there is a concern with the identification of 'natives' versus 'incomers'.<sup>5</sup> Much of this work in relation to the fourth to sixth centuries has focused on these debates in relation to the burial evidence. First, there have been a number of attempts made to identify an Anglo-Saxon presence in fourth-century Roman Britain through the identification of 'Germanic' burial rites within late fourth-century cemeteries. Correspondingly, the

presence of 'Roman' style objects in early fifth- and sixth-century graves have been viewed as indicating a Roman identity or aspiration. Such straightforward culture-historical approaches that correlate burial rites with population movements and ethnicity have received a great deal of criticism, particularly since the 1980s, on both theoretical and more practical grounds.<sup>6</sup> It has been noted that 'Romano-British'/'native' and 'Germanic' identities have been created by archaeologists because of a perceived antithesis between groups with monolithic characteristics that find closer resonance in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century racial stereotypes of 'Celt' and 'Saxon' than may have been relevant in early medieval contexts.<sup>7</sup> While current arguments are much more nuanced than this, there is still a pervasive focus on ethnic ascriptions of 'natives Britons' and 'immigrant Saxons' that is detrimental to a better understanding of the nature of *social* identities and how these may have undergone changes before and after the supposed hiatus of the early to mid-fifth century.

Few archaeologists would doubt that material culture is expressive of social identities when deployed in mortuary contexts. Items of dress have often been regarded as an important means through which many facets of the social personae are constructed and lived during life, and represented in death.<sup>8</sup> Yet even with the rise of social approaches towards portable artefacts in graves since the 1970s, studies have looked at the representation of social structure *within* cultural and chronological groups rather than *between* them. In doing so, archaeologists can begin to examine the burial rites and items of material culture previously described as 'intrusive' in ways other than ascribing ethnic attributions.<sup>9</sup> For example, Eckardt and Williams<sup>10</sup> have recently provided a detailed discussion of the use of Roman artefacts in early Anglo-Saxon graves. They suggest that Roman objects fulfilled a much more symbolic role in the graves of those buried in early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and that these objects were also important for signifying other aspects of social identity (for example, age and gender).

It is the potential symbolism of such objects in the construction of aspects of social identity that will be explored systematically in this paper. Recent research has shown that grave inclusions vary according to the age and gender of the deceased,<sup>11</sup> and an analysis of grave goods can reveal important social information with respect to the timing of significant age-related milestones and shifts in gendered identity with age. The social construction of age and the changing perceptions of different stages of the life course is an important area of study, but one that has only been addressed more recently.<sup>12</sup> Age and gender identity are inter-twined in complex ways and elucidating the relationship between the two is significant for our understanding of social identity and organization in the past. Yet recent studies have tended to look *within* either late Roman or early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries for evidence of age and gender variability in the provision and representation of identity. In contrast, this study aims to build on these studies and yet provide the first attempt known to this author to systematically compare mortuary variability, in relation to sex and age, from both late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. It will be shown that while there is no straightforward relationship between grave goods and social identity, the analysis reveals significant patterns of deposition. The skeletal evidence plays a crucial role in mortuary analyses; therefore, before discussing the grave goods, the skeletal data recorded for this study will be discussed along with a brief critique of the role of the skeleton in inferring ethnicity.

### Skeletal Data and Analysis

Initially, the cemeteries examined in this study involved two clusters of sites of late Roman and early Saxon date, one around Dorchester-on-Thames, the other Winchester (Table 1).<sup>13</sup> These cemeteries were selected because they have been pivotal to the discussion of the Roman to Anglo-Saxon transition and contain burials that are the focus of debate and contention. Unlike previous studies that combine osteological and artefactual data in the analysis of mortuary variability in Roman and early

Anglo-Saxon graves, this author undertook a detailed contextual re-analysis of the skeletal material. This was a substantial task and was deemed essential for a number of reasons. Osteological reports had never been produced for several cemeteries in the study sample (e.g. Abingdon and Cassington), while some of the reports available for other sites were in the form of an assessment only (e.g. Lankhills) and not sufficiently detailed for an adequate social analysis to be developed. Meanwhile, sites with perfectly good osteological reports (e.g. Berinsfield and Worthy Park) were also included in the re-analysis. This was, in part, because osteological techniques have developed substantially over recent years, but, more importantly, to ensure standardised methods of recording between all of the sites and to eliminate inter-observer error. This has been shown to be of particular importance when estimating age-at-death (a key facet of this study), because age estimates can vary profoundly according to the methods used.<sup>14</sup> This problem is exacerbated by the use of differing age categories between osteological reports, making it almost impossible to produce meaningful comparisons of age and sex profiles between cemeteries. Such problems of standardization are currently being addressed by osteologists<sup>15</sup> and hopefully future human bone reports will be much more compatible with each other.

The skeletal samples were examined for differences in growth, dental development and dental wear between Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon populations.<sup>16</sup> The primary aim of this was to ensure that the ageing methods used would be population-specific and thus more reliable. However, it is also interesting to compare the data from different sites. From Table 2, it is clear that not only were the eruption ages remarkably similar between sites of different periods, but so too were the rates of dental wear for the juveniles. These are factors that have been shown to vary between different populations and was the first tentative indication that there were closer connections between late Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon burial populations than is usually entertained.<sup>17</sup> The data were also divided geographically and dental wear comparisons made between the Hampshire and Oxford-

Table 1. Archaeological data (NB citations have been provided for those reports used to obtain information on grave goods. All skeletal data was collected through analysis of the remains by the author). \*This includes those individuals noted in the report, but also missing and extra individuals identified during the analysis

Region	Site	Period	No. Ind.
Upper Thames	Berinsfield (Boyle <i>et al.</i> 1995)	Early Anglo Saxon	119
Upper Thames	Abingdon (Leeds and Harden 1936)	Early Anglo Saxon	129
Upper Thames	Queensford Farm	Late/Sub Roman	164
Upper Thames	Cassington	Late Roman	63
Hampshire	Lankhills (Clarke 1979)	Late Roman	486*
Hampshire	Worthy Park (Hawkes and Grainger 2003)	Early Anglo Saxon	109
Hampshire	Victoria Road	Late Roman	134
Hampshire	Portway (Cook and Dacre 1985)	Early Anglo Saxon	71
Hampshire	Alton (Evison 1988)	Early Anglo Saxon	50

shire sites. Again the similarity in the eruption and rates of wear is marked. However, the geographical differences between the groups, is greater than that observed between time periods.

Dental development and eruption has a strong genetic component and is only minimally affected by environmental factors.<sup>18</sup> One could, therefore, argue that these results are consistent with what one would expect from a population with no significant 'intrusive' migrant elements. With regard to dental wear, we cannot rule out the possibility of an immigrant group demonstrating indistinguishable wear patterns to the 'natives', particularly if dietary practices were the same. However, this similarity in biological terms provides a broad justification for challenging traditional periods divides and looking at late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries for both similarities and differences in the provision of artefacts with the dead

Some previous work has provided similar conclusions. In a complementary study, Lloyd-Jones<sup>19</sup> made a comparison of dental non-metric traits between some of those same late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries analysed here. Non-metric traits are natural skeletal variants that are often used in comparisons of skeletal populations to infer ethnicity. Lloyd-Jones<sup>20</sup> found no statistical difference between late Roman and Anglo-Saxon populations with respect to trait expression. As Tyrrell has discussed,<sup>21</sup> certain traits are more valid than

others as indicators of heritability. For example, dental traits are more reliable than post-cranial skeletal traits because they are far less affected by environmental factors. Certainly, one does have to treat studies that utilize skeletal markers of ethnicity or 'biodistance' with caution.<sup>22</sup> While trait frequencies vary on a population level, when studying cemeteries, the results may be statistically compromised by the small sample sizes. Furthermore, Tyrrell states:

Many studies have treated trait frequencies as if they were an archaeological typology, using a mix and match approach to determine if skeletons in a cemetery belonged to related individuals, or to determine the 'ethnic' group to which an individual skeleton belonged. This is unacceptable since not only does it lead to misleading conclusions, but also promises to access information which morphological studies cannot at present ascertain.<sup>23</sup>

On a more theoretical level, such studies also assume a rather homogenous stance with respect to the genetic origins of both groups, viewing them almost as hermetically sealed. Given that 'migration period groups themselves were believed to have been characterized by fluidity and heterogeneity',<sup>24</sup> this seems an unrealistic assumption.<sup>25</sup>

With respect to long bone growth, contrary to the dental evidence, differences were observed between the skeletons

Table 2. Mean ages of wear for each stage of the first permanent molar (M1) with 'known ages', derived from dental development (NB stage 4 has an artificially smaller standard deviation because the upper limits of the age range is beyond the scope of dental development ageing)

M1	STAGE 0		STAGE 1		STAGE 2		STAGE 3		STAGE 4	
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.
Site										
RB	5.34	0.46	7.39	1.93	9.25	3.34	14.48	3.95	16.48	1.20
AS	5.44	0.48	7.57	1.94	9.16	2.13	12.73	4.03	16.30	2.08
Hants	5.79	0.87	7.71	1.85	9.29	2.90	14.13	3.71	15.40	1.54
Oxon	5.40	0.57	7.22	2.01	8.65	2.54	12.00	4.26	16.81	2.01
All sites	5.38	0.45	7.50	1.90	9.20	2.73	13.24	4.00	16.35	1.82

Table 3. Mean stature for adult males and females at the sites in the study sample. The present author collected all data and estimates were calculated using the formulae of Trotter and Gleser 1952. Mean stature estimates were not included for Portway and Alton because poor preservation at these sites meant that very few complete long bones were available

Period	Site	Male	Female
Anglo-Saxon	Abingdon	174.4	161.4
Anglo-Saxon	Berinsfield	177.2	164.0
Anglo-Saxon	Worthy Park	173.6	160.3
Romano-British	Cassington	170.5	160.9
Romano-British	Lankhills	171.7	157.8
Romano-British	Queensford Farm	170.3	156.2
Romano-British	Victoria Road	171.2	157.6

at the Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries examined for this study. Figure 1 shows that age-specific femur length was slightly greater during the Anglo-Saxon period. However, this should by no means be interpreted as an indication of genetic distance; in contrast to dental development, bone growth is profoundly affected by environmental factors (*e.g.* poor diet and infection) and differences in growth between populations generally relate to these external factors. Mean adult height of both males and females is also greater from the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in this sample (Table 3) and this factor, together with the long bone growth evidence, argues strongly for a general improvement in health status during the later period.<sup>26</sup> This is given further support from a study by Roberts and Cox (2003) which presents an extensive survey of palaeopathological data over time and finds a general reduction in health stress indicators from the Roman to Anglo-Saxon periods.<sup>27</sup>

When one examines skeletons from different cemeteries it becomes apparent that subtle differences often exist with respect to the suite of morphological characteristics observed. For example, the pubic symphyses in one female population in this study sample were much more gracile (*e.g.* Lankhills and Victoria Road) than those observed at some other cemeteries (*e.g.* Berinsfield and Queensford Mill). Again, this did not seem to relate to period, but rather geography. One cannot put this down simply to the genetic admixture because the environment plays such a strong part in skeletal morphology and populations generally encompass an enormous range of variation that tends to be greater than that observed between populations. Again, our interpretation of the skeletal evidence is coloured by our perceptions of this period. If we were comparing skeletal remains from, for example, the earlier and later Medieval periods, variations are more likely to be ascribed to lifestyle/environmental differences as opposed to genetics. I would argue that we should correspondingly place more emphasis on the impact of shifting external forces in our interpretations of skeletal material from the late Roman to early Anglo-Saxon period.

A more fruitful focus of recent research into the movement of past people has been the use of stable isotopes, in particular those of Strontium and Oxygen. When applied to populations of the fourth to sixth centuries, studies appear to be demonstrating a much more complex pattern of individual and population mobility than that previously suggested through the direct association between grave goods and ethnicity.<sup>28</sup> This work also indicates that grave goods need to be interpreted in more nuanced ways in terms of the identity/ies being expressed and this will be explored further below.

### Comparison of Burial Assemblages

Skeletal information and factors relating to the body were entered into a database table and linked relationally

to further tables containing information on other grave variables using Microsoft Access™ on a one-to-many basis. The layout of the database was based upon the design produced by Huggett<sup>29</sup> as this allowed a detailed and efficient linking and analysis of both skeletal and cultural variables.

While this research has involved both a considerable amount of skeletal analysis as well as its correlation with mortuary data, the rest of this paper is focused upon the objects themselves and their possible roles in symbolising aspects of social identity in death. Consequently, because there are far fewer grave goods buried with individuals from Romano-British sites, a large proportion of this burial evidence was effectively excluded from the following analysis. The study of Romano-British cemeteries will, therefore, be confined to the proportion of burials at Lankhills with grave goods only, neglecting those in Oxfordshire entirely.<sup>30</sup> This situation is far from ideal and creates certain shortcomings in the discussion below, nevertheless, some broad trends in the provision of artefacts with the dead can be discerned.

It is evident that at both the late Roman and the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries the grave goods fluctuate in both quantity and type throughout the life course of individuals and between the sexes. Some of these differences have already been noted by researchers addressing Anglo-Saxon and (to a slightly lesser extent) Romano-British cemeteries but have not been compared before.<sup>31</sup>

If one examines the burial ritual surrounding those skeletally immature individuals, usually categorized as children, we can note that at cemeteries of both periods, the goods buried with individuals prior to the age of four years tend to be those described as 'gender neutral' in that they are buried with both skeletally sexed males and females (for example coins and vessels). At both Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries there appears to be a shift in social status occurring at about the age of seven to twelve years that coincides with the expression of a more strongly signified gender identity. After the age of approximately four to seven years individuals at Lankhills were buried with large deposits of bracelets, finger rings and necklaces, and these were amongst the richest burials in the entire cemetery.<sup>32</sup> We see a similar pattern at the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries where at the same age individuals begin to be buried with gendered grave goods.<sup>34</sup> The age of approximately seven years appears to be significant for many temporally and ethnically diverse populations and so we cannot assume this similarity between late Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries reflects cultural continuity, but it does suggest a similar symbolic grammar and social mores may underpin the burial rites in both populations.

Amongst the skeletons usually defined as 'adult' one also sees fluctuations in the deposition of grave goods with regard to age and sex between Lankhills and the

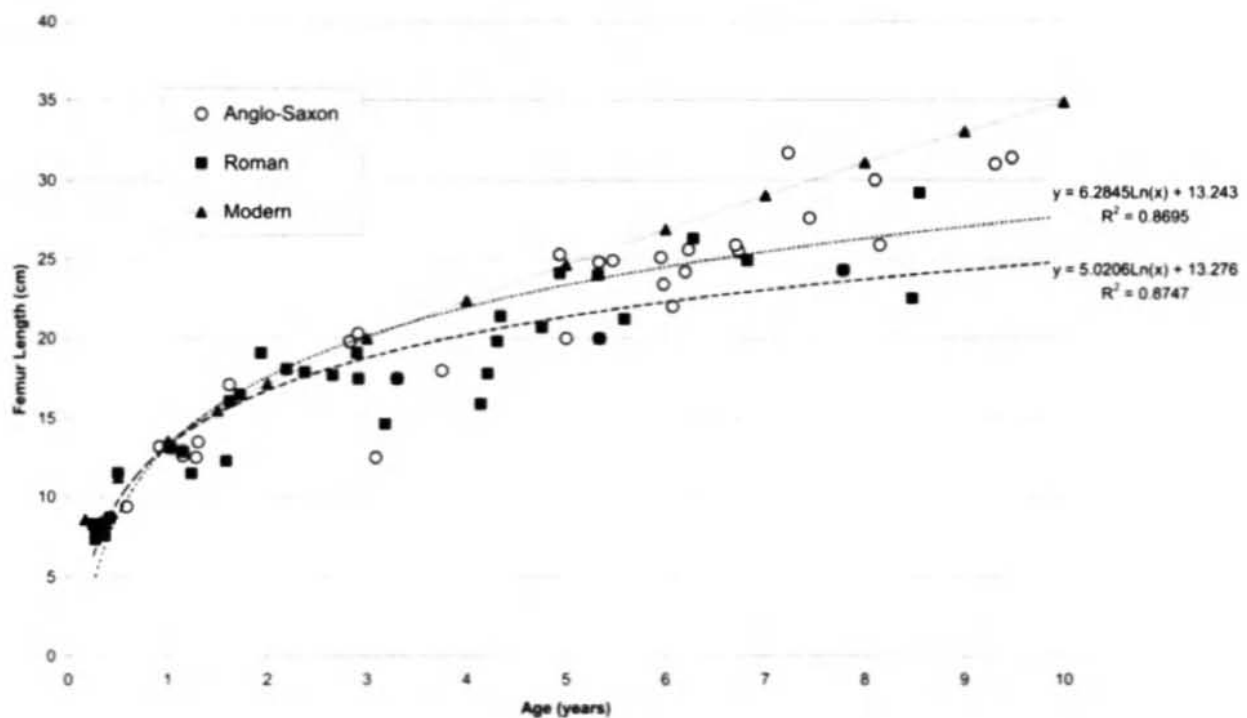


Figure 1. Femur length plotted against dental age for juvenile skeletons at the Anglo-Saxon and Romano-British cemeteries

early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. The majority of items of personal adornment at the late Roman cemetery of Lankhills were restricted to those young adult females aged eighteen to twenty-four years. Older females, particularly those from the age of thirty-five years and over, were buried with very few items of personal adornment. At the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, this pattern is less apparent. Older females tend to be buried with similar assemblages to younger adult females, though they were buried with notably fewer beads and, overall, a smaller average number of brooches.<sup>35</sup>

When one examines specific types of items that were present in cemeteries of both periods some interesting patterns emerge. Bracelets are the most common item of personal adornment recovered from the late Roman cemetery of Lankhills, while from the entire sample of Anglo-Saxon cemeteries only four bracelets were recovered. Three of these were excavated from the Upper Thames sites of Abingdon and Berinsfield and were buried with children aged four to twelve years. The only other bracelet in the Anglo-Saxon sample was recovered from the grave of an adult female from Portway. All bracelets were worn on the right forearm. While bracelets are a rare find in early Anglo-Saxon graves, they have been recovered from settlements.<sup>36</sup> At the Romano-British cemetery of Lankhills, the deposition of bracelets also appears to have been governed, to some extent, by the age and gender of the deceased. No sexed males were buried with bracelets and there is a distinct peak in the quantity of bracelets buried with those aged eighteen

to twenty-four years and also with children aged over four years (Fig. 1). The same is true of many items of personal adornment at the Lankhills site. Comparatively few females over the age of thirty-five years were buried with bracelets and none over fifty years were buried with either bracelets or necklaces.

Finger rings are another item of personal adornment not commonly recovered from Anglo-Saxon burials, but found relatively frequently at Lankhills and Romano-British cemeteries elsewhere in the country. It is notable that seventy-five per-cent of finger rings recovered from the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries were buried with individuals between the ages of eight to twenty-four years – essentially the same age as those buried with bracelets. They were not buried with individuals younger than eight years of age and no finger rings were recovered from female burials over the age of fifty years. In fact Abingdon is the only site where finger rings were buried with females over the age of twenty-four years. Almost all finger rings were worn on the left hand and none were buried with males.

Like bracelets, finger rings were much more common at late Roman cemeteries. At Lankhills thirty were recovered in all, one of which was buried with a male. As with bracelets and necklaces, the finger rings were buried primarily with those aged four to twelve years and eighteen to twenty-four years of age. Although a substantial proportion of the jewellery buried with individuals below the age of thirteen years was worn, almost all finger rings were unworn (twelve out of the

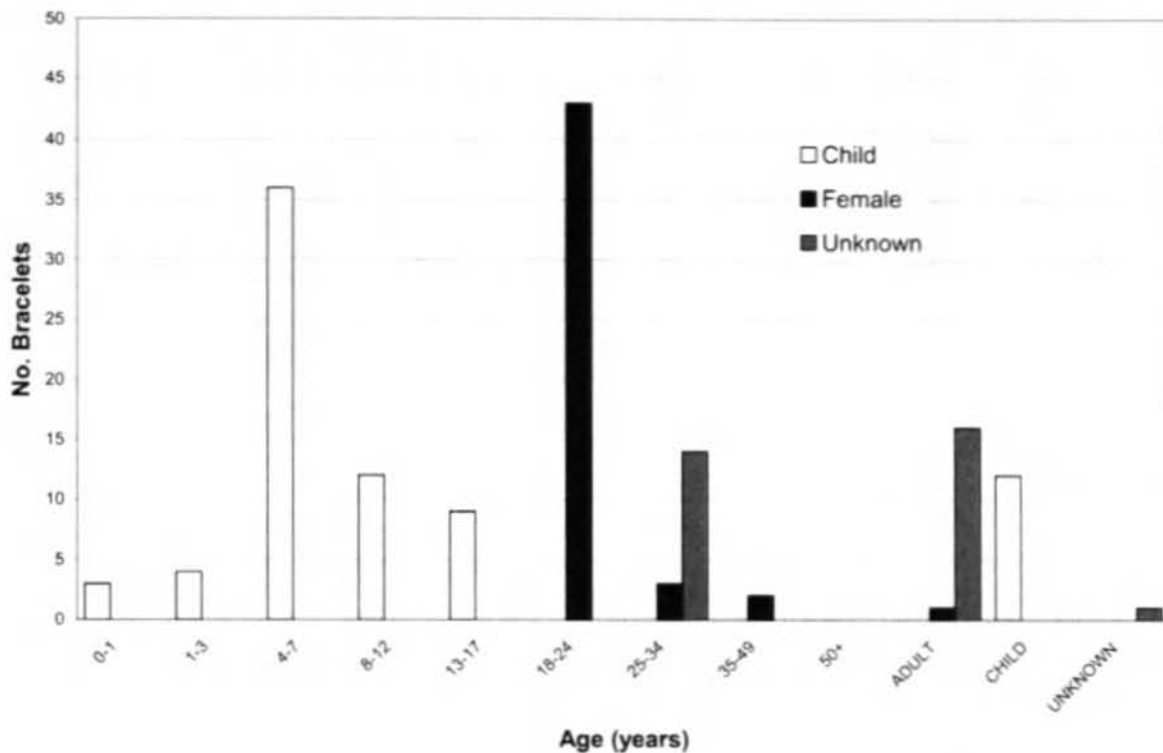


Figure 2. Number of bracelets buried with each age group at Lankhills

thirteen). Perhaps it was culturally inappropriate for this age group to be wearing finger rings; they may have represented a specific relationship/social status during life that they were not yet privy to. Numerous finger rings were also buried with the eighteen to twenty-four year old females and these, with the exception of those buried with one individual, were also unworn. This, however, is consistent with the mode of deposition of other items of personal adornment with this age group, which tend, more often, to be placed in a pile next to the body rather than worn. Several older females were also buried with finger rings, although they were only rarely buried with items of jewellery (see above). In contrast to those finger rings buried with the younger females, they were *always* worn.

It has been suggested that the females buried with worn personal ornaments at Lankhills represent an 'intrusive' ethnic element, possibly linked to Pannonia or Sarmatia.<sup>36</sup> This is based on the large number of bracelets worn on the arms of several individuals, along with necklaces of amber and carnelian beads more commonly seen in Sarmatia.<sup>37</sup> However, when one looks at this group in more detail the situation assumes greater complexity. It is the immature individuals, below the age of twelve years that wear the large quantities of bracelets. The adult females tend to be relatively young (eighteen to thirty-five years) and wear only a couple of bracelets, sometimes worn on different arms (three out of four were also wearing a necklace and one was wearing three finger rings). When discussing these burials, Swift<sup>36</sup>

has suggested that once these women had children, they passed their bracelets to them to wear, keeping only a couple for themselves. The majority of those adult females buried with large deposits of personal ornaments, however, were not wearing them at all and the same is true of many of the immature individuals. The common factor between all of the individuals with jewellery, worn or unworn, is their gender and age (Fig. 2) and I would suggest that it may be these aspects of identity, rather than ethnicity, that are significant. This is also supported to some extent by the Evans *et al.* recent study which examined Strontium and Oxygen isotope samples from the skeletons of these rich female burials.<sup>39</sup> The results revealed that these individuals were more likely to have grown up within Britain rather than the Continent even if the mourners selected elements of mortuary costume from Continental traditions and may have been the descendants of immigrants

In the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, it has been shown above that the deposition of relatively rare items such as bracelets and finger rings occurred much more frequently with immature individuals. When we examine the age and sex distribution of those 'Roman' objects or those argued to be of 'Roman style' buried in early Anglo-Saxon graves, a distinctive pattern emerges showing, again, that a much greater proportion were present in the graves of young individuals (Fig. 3). Furthermore, brooch types such as penannular and quoit, which have featured strongly in debates concerning ethnic identity,<sup>40</sup> while buried with all age groups, were most often buried

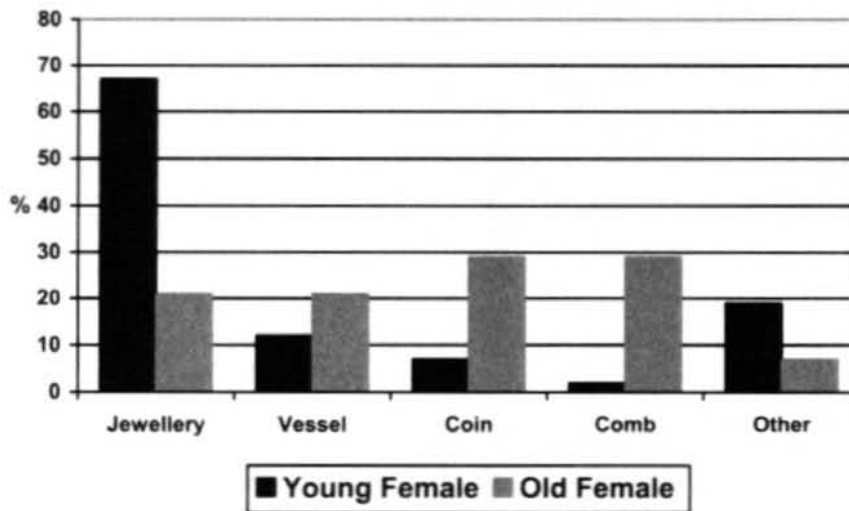


Figure 3. Percentage of the overall quantity of each grave good type buried with females of different ages at Lankhills (younger = 18–34 years, older = 35+ years)

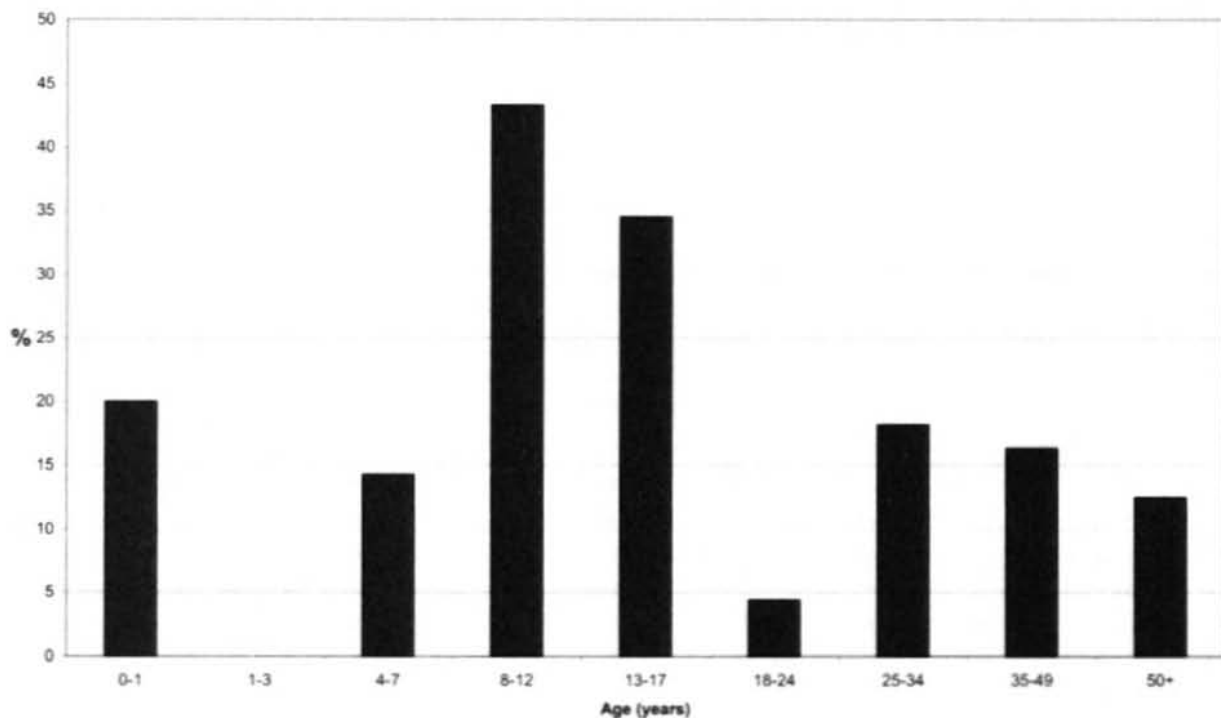


Figure 4. The proportion of items of personal adornment in each age group that may be considered 'Roman' in style or origin buried with individuals at the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries

with those between the ages of eight to seventeen years. At Portway all 'Roman' style or re-used Roman brooches were buried with individuals between the ages of thirteen to twenty-four years.

Perforated Roman coins were recovered from all early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and although they were buried with almost all age groups from infancy onwards, there were some age-related biases. For example, at Portway, where they occur most frequently, they were only buried with individuals between the ages of eight to twenty-four years. Overall, very few were buried with individuals

over the age of twenty-five years, and none were buried with females over fifty years. No males were buried with perforated coins. Once more, the repeatedly strong association of these 'Roman' objects in the graves of immature individuals suggests that the 'otherness' that is being constructed here is one that relates to age rather than ethnicity. This is consistent with the proposition of the study by Eckardt and Williams<sup>41</sup> which also suggests that these 'Roman' items in Anglo-Saxon graves could be contributing to the expression and creation of other aspects of social identity.

This analysis has primarily focused on the comparison of items of personal adornment, which has largely precluded a discussion of male burials. There is, however, the issue of cross-bow brooches in the graves of male individuals at the late Roman cemetery of Lankhills. It was unfortunate that because of poor preservation, age-at-death could not be estimated for most of these individuals. However, those that could be aged were found to be over thirty-five years (and usually older). Given the association of these brooches with older males one could surmise that they were associated with positions of power or a status achieved with age, rather than bestowed by birth. This would fit in with the work of others who suggest that such burials reflect a more overt display of power by local leaders by the late fourth century.<sup>42</sup> These objects symbolise not only a masculine identity, but also one that is inextricably and simultaneously linked to age and status.

## Conclusion

The term 'transition' has been important in creating a particular perception of the late fourth to sixth centuries AD and our approach to this period has been to look for material vestiges of times past and promises of things to come. Archaeologists have recently questioned this perception and the way that it governs our interpretation of the evidence.<sup>43</sup> By examining age and gender identity at cemeteries either side of the Roman/Anglo-Saxon divide, this research has aimed in some way to avoid the more dominant discourses that have structured the archaeological agenda of the period. While material symbolism may well play an active role in the maintenance of ethnic boundaries, it could equally be used to create other aspects of identity and group identification. The evidence presented here builds upon previous studies that have also sought alternative explanations for the symbolism expressed by grave inclusions of this period and, I would argue, complements the findings of recent Strontium and Oxygen isotope research from the skeletal

remains. It has shown that objects previously interpreted as important for the construction of ethnic identity (for example, 'Roman' objects in early Anglo-Saxon graves) may in fact be related more closely to age and gender identity. Distinctive patterns in artefact provision with respect to age and gender have been identified in both late Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in the sample. While there are some similarities with respect to the timing of these changes, particularly during childhood, there are also some significant differences (for example, there is not such a dramatic reduction in grave goods with older females at the early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries). While comparisons were hampered by the lack of grave good evidence from the Romano-British period, limiting the conclusions drawn, I would argue that this study still provides useful information for inferring changes in social organization over time.

Finally, the brief examination of osteological evidence in this study suggests that future research should aim to forge greater integration between skeletal and artefactual evidence. In so doing, the potential for misinterpretation, particularly with regard to factors such as ethnicity, will be greatly reduced. The skeleton provides a wealth of social information regarding culture, lifestyle, diet, environment and population movement, which, when examined in a contextually sensitive way, can be a powerful investigative tool for illuminating the life-ways and origins of past peoples.<sup>44</sup>

## Acknowledgements

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## Notes

1. Esmonde Cleary 1989, 173.
2. Scull 2000, 403.
3. See Esmonde Cleary 2001; Hills 2002; Halsall 1995 for discussion.
4. Jones 1997, 139.
5. See Halsall 1995; Harrison 1999; Esmonde Cleary 1993, 2001.
6. Lucy 1998, 2000, 163–73, see also Moreland 2000.
7. Moreland 2000.
8. Sørensen 2000.
9. See Harrison 1999.
10. Eckardt and Williams 2003.
11. See Sofaer Derevenski 1997a; 1997b.
12. E.g. Crawford 1991; 1999; Gowland 2001; Sofaer Derevenski 1997a; 1997b; Stoodley 1999; 2000.
13. Grave good dates for each site were obtained from the following

- published sources: Abingdon (Leeds and Harden 1936), Berinsfield (Boyle, Dodd, Miles and Mudd 1995), Alton (Evison 1988), Portway (Cook and Dacre 1985), Worthy Park (Hawkes and Grainger 2003), Lankhills (Clarke 1979).
14. See Bouquet-Appel and Massett 1982; Aykroyd, Lucy, Pollard, and Roberts, 1999.
  15. Brickley and McKinley 2004.
  16. Millard and Gowland 2002.
  17. See Hoffman 1979; Holman and Jones 1998.
  18. Saunders 2000.
  19. Lloyd-Jones 1997.
  20. Lloyd-Jones 1997.
  21. Tyrrell 2000a; 2000b.
  22. Mayall 2000.
  23. Tyrrell 2000b, 302.
  24. Moreland 2000, 37.



25. See Hills 2001, 57–72 for a discussion of some of these points.
26. Poor health and/or living conditions profoundly affect growth during childhood and ultimately adult stature. See Stinson 2000 for a review of the biological and cultural factors affecting stature.
27. Roberts and Cox 2003.
28. Budd, Millard, Chenery, Lucy, Roberts 2004; Stoodley *in prep*; see also Hills 2002, 63 for a discussion
29. Huggett 1992.
30. See Booth 2001 for a detailed discussion of Romano-British burial rites in Oxfordshire.
31. E.g. Crawford 1991; 1999; Stoodley 1999; 2000; Lucy 1998; Philpott 1991; Swift 2000.
32. Gowland 2001.
33. Crawford 1999; Stoodley 1999, 2000.
34. Gowland 2006.
35. Richards 1995, 57.
36. Clarke 1979, 385; see Swift 2000, 42, 72–77 for a detailed discussion of the evidence.
37. Swift 2000, 42.
38. Swift 2000, 42.
39. Evans, Stoodley and Chenery 2006.
40. Eckardt and Williams 2003.
41. Pearce 1999, 164; Halsall 1995.
42. See Harrison 1999.
43. See Halsall 1995.
44. See Larsen 1997; see also papers in Gowland and Knüsel 2006.

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