

Review of:

Spaces of funeral meaning. Modelling socio-spatial relations in burial contexts by Aline Deicke

The paper presents a first sketch of modelling funerary contexts as relational spaces occupied by object and human agents. It therefore, embraces the spatial turn and combines it with aspects of the actor-network-theory. The theoretical backbone of the contribution is the fundamental scholarship of Martina Löw's "Raumsoziologie", especially two categories of action namely placing and spacing.

The author develops a structuring model based on Löw's theories and moreover includes another category, namely the interpretative process aiming for the detection of meaningfulness behind the creation process (deposition process) and established spatial arrangement (find context).

The text is written in a clear and understandable manner, which allows to retrace the idea from theory to practice. The complex structuring models for information from funerary contexts are illustrated with a case study of the urnfield period.

The proposed approach is highly refreshing and also promising. With the clear-cut presentation, the paper definitely deserves to be published. Since it is only a preliminary outlook, no corrections or alterations are needed. Instead, one is already waiting for the actual database structure, a future test with more data sets and maybe the adaptation to projects from other burial cultures.

However, I would like to ask a question deriving from my own field. With regard to funerary practices, not all positions of agents within a burial might actually show the place of deposition. Inhumation burials might interact with the placement of object during the decomposition of the human remains. Objects, initially put on top of the corpse, are therefore likely to change the intended relation to the body. In consequence, the intended spacing is not necessarily inferable from the place of discovery. Is there a certain mode for "inaccuracy" or "variability" (maybe error rate), which could be integrated?