

## **Migrant identities, mortuary citations, and power in Scandinavian Scotland**

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During the Viking period, relationships between Scandinavian migrants and local communities in Scotland were complicated at best. In this paper, I explore migrant identities, power, and memory in the Viking diaspora, through a critical examination of the mortuary evidence. By engaging with current theoretical discourse, one goal of this paper is to highlight how antiquarian and modern excavations of funerary material can be combined and reinterpreted to provide new perspectives on the past. Drawing on ethnographic approaches to migration, I argue that funerary practices were significant venues for the construction and reconstruction of community identities within the Viking diaspora. Anthropological perspectives underscore the ways in which funerary rites (re)construct “belonging”, through reconstituting social relationships and binding the living and the dead to the land. Moreover, Viking period settlement in Scotland bears some similarities to other historical episodes of colonisation. Thus, it is useful to interrogate the ways in which funerary rituals may have contributed towards creating and maintaining social inequalities, through selective practices of remembering and forgetting. The evocative nature of boat burials, animal sacrifice, and cremation, for example, may have generated intense sets of memories shared between witnesses. Simultaneously, choices about grave goods and places of burial interconnected the living and the dead, communities and landscapes, present and past. These mortuary citations helped settlers to express relationships and power ideologies, both within their own communities and to others around them.