

VU Research Portal

Romanisering van rurale gemeenschappen in de Civitas Batavorum

Heeren, S.

2009

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Heeren, S. (2009). *Romanisering van rurale gemeenschappen in de Civitas Batavorum: De casus Tiel-Passewaaij*. [, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. Rijksdienst Archeologie Cultuurlandschap en Monumenten.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Summary

Romanization in the Batavian civitas. The case of Tiel-Passewaaij.

Introduction

Soon after the permanent settlement of Roman legions in the Nijmegen area (ca. 15 BC), changes can be observed in the local communities of the Batavian area. By studying both the material culture and the organization of the rural settlements and cemeteries in a chronological framework as detailed as possible, it can be established what changes occurred and when that happened. In this way it can be outlined how the local communities developed from primarily self-supporting communities, embedded in a settlement system that was only marginally stratified, into dependent communities that produced for a market and had ties with urban and military settlements in the region. The widely divergent processes of change concerning material culture, social relations, identities, but also production and trade are often addressed as romanization. This concept plays an important part in the current study. The main sources employed in this study are the results from the fieldwork in Tiel-Passewaaij. When the large scale of the excavation (a large cemetery and several settlements) is combined with the excellent conservation properties of riverine clay soils (thousands of metal objects, ceramics, animal bones, etc. etc. – are well preserved), a high-quality historical imaging is possible. In the second place there are other excavations that yielded the same quality of information on a smaller scale or on specific subjects. These are used in addition to the Tiel-Passewaaij data.

The archeological evidence of Tiel-Passewaaij may be special today, but in the Roman period the studied community was more likely average. There is no indication at all that that the agrarian community differed from other communities on important subjects. The case of Tiel-Passewaaij is thought to be representative for rural communities of the wider region.

Chronologically this study is limited to the final decades of the pre-Roman Iron Age and the Roman period (ca. 50 BC – AD 450). Geographically this study is limited to the Batavian area, although some excavations outside of the area are taken into account as well. The extends of the Batavian territory are not precisely known but from a practical point of view we assume that it covered the riverine clay soils south of the river Rhine between the current Dutch-German border in the east, the coastal peat soils in the west and the sandy soils in the south, including a strip of these sandy soils south of the Meuse river. The ‘Batavian *civitas*’ or ‘river area’ are both used as synonyms to indicate the above described region.

Theoretical framework

For more than a century the concept of romanization has been used in provincial-Roman archaeology but it has also been heavily criticised. In paragraph 1.2 the history of the use of the term romanization is sketched, along with the criticisms and alternatives, in order to redefine it and to apply the different concept to the rural perspective of this study.

In the 19th and 20th century, romanization was primarily a colonial concept that took into account the Roman perspective almost exclusively and hardly ever dwelt on the role of the conquered societies. This concept was rooted firmly in the European colonialism of that age and most of all a matter of applying the written sources one-sidedly, since only the Romans left written records. In the 1980’s and 90’s the awareness of the colonial nature of the sources grew and new approaches to romanization tried to put the indigenous societies to the fore. One approach saw the native elites as the main agents behind romanization, as intermediates between the Roman upper layer and the native rural societies. At the same time, the post-colonial school got more and more support. Post-colonial scholars point to the colonial nature of romanization and reject the term completely. On the one hand the label romanization was declared a taboo, on the other hand a good alternative was not provided. ‘Creolisation’, ‘globalisation’ and ‘discrepant identities’ are a few of the proposed alternatives but apart from the strong points these too have drawbacks, or do not cover the same broad range of

subjects as romanization did. The lack of good alternatives is not the only reason to return to romanization. A second reason is that the archaeology of rural communities in the Batavian area has enough potential to bypass most of the post-colonial critique on the 'traditional' romanization. It is therefore better to redefine romanization than to abandon the term altogether.

Romanization must not be seen as a self-evident and essentialistic cultural denominator, as a uniform and unchanging set of values, customs and objects that are exclusively Roman (from Rome). In the current study, romanization is seen as a set of processes that occurred in any situation of contact between representatives of the Roman society as a whole and actors of any other identity or ethnicity. It concerns the adoption and adaptation of ideas, practices and objects that were seen as Roman ideas/practices/objects, by actors from all strata of society, in an individual way that suits his/her self-image (identity), which is flexible and situationally dependent.

Apart from romanization, the term community is also used frequently. One of the synonyms, settlement, does not wholly apply to Tiel-Passewaaij since it was established that the inhabitants of several different settlements buried their dead communally in a single central cemetery. The group of people that lived together in a settlement was only part of a bigger group of people that buried their dead together. The term community is a more or less neutral term that indicates a group of people that belong together, and the nature of that belonging can be specified at will (co-resident community or settlement versus burial community). The difference between the burial community and settlements was one reason for choosing a perspective of local communities. The second reason is the way the material culture is analysed in this study. Different objects (brooches, coins, farrings, etc. etc.) are analysed as a group and primarily their cultural interpretation is discussed, along with the dating and spatial distribution. By doing this, the general use of objects by the local group as a whole is studied and not, for instance, gender, age differences, profession, etc.

In paragraph 1.4 the excavations in Tiel-Passewaaij are put into the context of a century of archaeological investigation of rural settlements. From 1904 – the first archaeological excavation of a rural settlement in the river area – until the 1960's it was not known what the houses of rural settlements in the Roman period looked like. There were explicit ideas about 'the Batavian hut' being a roundhouse, and all sorts of groundplans were reconstructed, but really convincing houseplans of the Roman period were not found in the river area. Van Giffen had excavated rectangular farmhouses in the north of the Netherlands but it was not yet realised that these house forms also applied to the Roman part of the Netherlands. From the 1960 onwards many Iron Age and Roman period houses were excavated, starting on the southern sandy soils (Haps), but also in the coastal peat area (Rijswijk) and the river area (Druten). The scale of the excavations was increasing steadily and soon the objective was not any more to excavate single farmsteads, but to investigate complete settlements. Apart from a further increase in large-scale excavations the 1980's brought also important new approaches towards the interpretation of rural settlements. In contrast to the sharp distinction between military and civilian archaeology practiced in the countries surrounding the Netherlands, Dutch archaeology has a tradition of integrated research in which rural communities are analysed in close connection to the surrounding landscape (biological-ecological research) and to the urban and military sites of the region.

Chapter 2 provides a history of the archaeological fieldwork in Tiel-Passewaaij. The pastures and orchards of Passewaaij were visited during several field surveys from the 1960 to the early 90's and already a few sites were identified as possible settlements dating to the Roman period. When the hamlet Passewaaij was designated for a large-scale housing estate, archaeology was considered, but at the start of the building activities no excavation was organized. When finds and features were discovered in the building blocks, the local society of amateur archaeologist (BATO) got permission to excavate the site. This first settlement site was called Oude Tielseweg and was excavated by BATO in the years 1992-1995, with small additions in later years. When the building activities moved forward in later years, it became known that a cremation cemetery from the Roman period was about to be disturbed. The state service for archaeology (ROB, nowadays RACM) dug some trial trenches in

1995 and 1996 and concluded that the cemetery was in a good state of preservation. VU University Amsterdam took over the excavations from 1996 onwards and until the summer of 1999, the cemetery was excavated almost in full. In the meantime small portions of another settlement, called Passewaaijse Hogeweg, were unearthed. When the fieldwork at the cemetery was completed, this settlement was also excavated (1999-2004) for a large part. The remaining part of chapter 2 concentrates on the scientific questions and concepts that influenced the way the fieldwork was organized, but these differ in some respects to the questions of the present study.

In chapter 3 the structure and development of the three excavated Passewaaij-sites (the two settlements and the cemetery) are studied. The first paragraphs describe the methodology and some problems concerning the exact chronology. Then the different periods and phases of habitation are presented. The main aim is to reconstruct which buildings, graves, pits, ditches and other features have existed simultaneously.

The Passewaaij streamridge developed during the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age (ca. 1200-700 BC). After its initial formation, several phases of habitation and renewed water activity succeeded each other (habitation periods I and II). The character and dating of these early periods of habitation are hardly known, since the remains of each period are covered by new sediment from successive floodings. Our information is limited to some layers of cultural finds between the river sediments. After the last river phase the stream became a residual channel that held water still but was not streaming actively any more.

The habitation of the last decades of the Iron Age and the Roman period (ca. 150 BC – AD 450; habitation period III) could be extensively studied because it is not covered by sediments but found immediately below the topsoil. Period III can be subdivided into eight phases. Phase 1 concerns a cluster of graves dating to ca. 150-80 BC. The first features of settlement date slightly younger, with a starting date between 75-25 BC (phase 2). Initially one or two farms existed simultaneously, some decades later two or three. The farms were situated far apart, dispersed over the higher streamridge, positioned with the long sides of the buildings parallel to the residual channel. The farmhouses were large (25 to 38 m. in length) and most of them had a two-aisled part (with one row of roof-bearing posts) and a three-aisled part (with pairs of posts). We assume that the living quarters for the inhabitants were situated in the two-aisled part and that the other part was a byre-section for cattle or other animals. Each farmyard consisted of a farm and a few small outbuildings (granaries?) as well as some ditches for drainage. A long ditch parallel to the residual channel separated the habitation on the higher streamridge from the lower grounds that were flooded more regularly. The cemetery was not yet in use: we do not know where the people from this early phase of habitation buried their dead. From around AD 40 the structure of habitation started to change (phase 3). Firstly, new farmhouses were constructed differently. The farms were much shorter, between 10 and 16 m long, and most of them were two-aisled buildings with only a few central roof-bearing posts. Phosphate-staining within the houses indicates that even the shortest houses still had a byre-section. Secondly, the residual channel lost its influence on the orientation of the houses. When compared to the earlier houses, the new houses were rotated a quarterturn and positioned further away from the residual channel. More importantly, some simultaneously existing farms were built close to each other. We could therefore speak of a nucleated settlement from this phase onwards. Concerning the outbuildings there is a clear decrease in numbers but an increase in the size of the new buildings. Thirdly, the cemetery was now in use and was located between a single farmstead to the northwest and the nucleus of several houses to the southeast. The earliest graves date from between 50 to 60 AD. Most graves consist of a burial pit filled with grave gifts and cremated human remains, covered by a small mound, with a circular or rectangular ditch around it. In the second half of phase 3 the architecture of houses and outbuildings changed once more. A wooden veranda or portico was added to some farmhouses and some outbuildings are considerably larger and constructed like a military granary, a *horreum*. Another

novelty was a large system of straight ditches that ran hundreds of metres from the settlements into the surrounding fields and flood-basins.

In the second half of the 2nd century new developments occurred. The length of the farmhouses increased and their construction altered considerably: the single row of roof-bearing posts was left out and instead a combination of wall- and inner posts supported the roof. Some of these new buildings had glass windows, some roof tiles and a few posts were founded on horizontal wooden planks. Just like the veranda's or portico's from the previous phase, these are seen as elements of a militarily inspired architecture. The large ditches were still in use and cleared out. Concerning the outbuildings a large *horreum* and a large stable were built. Most likely the stable was for horses, while cattle were still lodged in the byre-sections of farmhouses.

In the 3rd century (phases 5 and 6) two farms existed together and later only one house remained. The demographic decline is also apparent in the decreasing number of graves in the cemetery. The difference between phase 5 and phase 6 is only a matter of methodology, a difference in orientation of the principal buildings. One farmyard of phase 5 consisted of large buildings (farmhouse, *horreum*, stable) and two silver hoards and dispersed coins are associated to this yard. Phase 6 seems to lack both outbuildings and the coins in some quantity. Two coins of Philippus Arabs and ceramics date this phase to the mid-3rd century. A date of ca. 240-270 is mentioned but a shorter period of 240-260 is also possible.

Phase 7 belongs to the Late Roman period and is dated around 280/290 to 350. These dates are far from certain and continuity from the Middle Roman settlement into phase 7 cannot be ascertained nor denied. However, a short discontinuity is assumed. Both the types of buildings and the style of the ceramics are common in the area north of the Rhine, indicating a possible Germanic origin of these new settlers. This habitation lasted for two generations, since the two houses were not in use simultaneously. Apart from a late 3rd century coin hoard between much older graves, the immigrants made no use of the cemetery. We do not know where they buried their dead.

Phase 8 (ca. 350-450) consists of a single inhumation grave and some scattered finds only. It is especially some valuable brooches (gold and silver) that indicate ritual deposition.

The previous overview concerns the three excavated sites only. However, another two settlements and a cemetery are situated further to the east in Tiel-Passewaaij. These were not excavated but known from surface finds, investigation by boring and some trial trenches. The settlement Hogeweg/Zennewijnseweg is at least as big as Passewaaijse Hogeweg and in use in the same periods (Late Iron Age, Early and Middle Roman; Late Roman possible but not certain). In the Wetlands Passewaaij, outside the current dike, a possible temple or sanctuary is located close to a cemetery, of which one late 1st century cremation grave and one Late Roman or medieval inhumation were found. Further to the east lies another settlement of Early and Middle Roman date.

In chapter 4 the demography of the local community is discussed. Tiel-Passewaaij is the first complex of sites in the Netherlands where several settlements and a cemetery of the Roman period have been almost completely excavated and published. This situation offers the possibility to study the same local population by two different methods, one based on the cemetery (number of graves per phase) and one based on the settlement (number of houses existing together per phase). The trend of population growth and decline is identical in settlements and cemetery: steady growth in the 1st century, an optimum in the period AD 90-120 (cemetery) or AD 90-150 (settlement) and a decline towards abandonment between AD 250-270. In contrast to the identical trends, the numbers of the cemetery and settlements vary widely. The burial community consisted of ca. 77 people in the period AD 90-120. The people of both settlements combined amount to a maximum of ca. 56, but a lower number is more likely. We can surmise that people from other settlements than the two excavated ones were buried in this cemetery as well, but other variables (like the supposed period of use of the wooden byre-houses) must also be taken into account.

Chapter 5 is about social, economic and cultural interpretation of the Tiel-Passewaaij finds. The central question is what information the material culture provides about the people and their practices. Existing models for the interpretation of military gear (Nicolay) and seal boxes (Derks/Roymans) are the starting point for social and cultural interpretations of other material culture. Military equipment and horse gear are found in large numbers in rural settlements. These objects were brought along by veterans of the Roman army who returned to their homes after 25 years of service. During that time the veterans (and their families) experienced Roman practices, knowledge and material culture in and around the military forts. When they returned to resettle in their communities of origin, they brought back these experiences and shared them with other members of the communities. The pieces of military gear served as signs of their veteran status and as souvenirs to remember their long life of service in the army. Since especially the Batavians provided large numbers of auxiliary soldiers, it is not surprising that the finds of military equipment are abundant in the Batavian rural area. Seal boxes are interpreted likewise. Seal boxes are used to seal wax tablets containing a written message and interpreted as indirect evidence for writing and reading skills. Because written correspondence and the sealing of tablets was primarily practiced in the Roman army, the Tiel-Passewaaij literacy must be attributed to the same veterans that brought home the pieces of military gear.

Other categories of material culture can be interpreted along the same lines. Key and lock, weigh-beam and weights, fingerings, utensils for body care, are all objects that were brought to this region by the Roman army and introduced to rural communities some time after. The oldest examples and the knowledge how to use them will have been introduced in rural contexts by veterans of the Roman army, while later on these objects could also have been bought on the market by rural people other than veterans. The same holds true for most wheelthrown pottery, which is to a large extent connected to Roman ways of eating, drinking and cooking, as well as the consumption of Mediterranean foodstuffs. The first demand for these products will have been created by veterans, but slowly became more and more accepted by other members of the rural communities.

Since practices around body care and personal decoration (brooches, bracelets, fingerings, hairpins) are about appearance, they are closely connected to the identity of individuals. The fact that returned veterans handled 'Roman' material culture in an environment where those objects were alien (at least in the early and middle 1st century), is an indication that they expressed a (partly) Roman identity. Since the origin of this romanization lies in the army camps, it concerns a variant of Roman military culture, which is notably different from an urban or elite culture.

In relation to the economical interpretations the handmade pottery is studied. The central assumption is that an assemblage consisting mainly of handmade pottery (both vessels and spindle-whorls and loom-weights) mirrors a self-sufficient economy, since manual labor like the manufacture of textiles and pottery is practiced in addition to the main agricultural profession. If on the other hand pottery assemblages consist mainly of wheelthrown ware (and spindle-whorls and loom-weights are lacking), the importance of manufacture (other than agricultural) had declined and we can assume an integration in market mechanisms, since the community could concentrate on the main agricultural profession and other objects (like pottery and textiles) were bought from the market, in exchange for the agricultural surplus.

The decline of handmade pottery through time is attested both in settlement contexts and in grave inventories of Tiel-Passewaaij. In the settlement a selection of ceramic assemblages of different dates was studied. In the graves the number of handmade vessels as opposed to wheelthrown vessels per phase was taken. Both show the same trend. The shift from assemblages solely consisting of handmade pottery (period of Augustus) to assemblages with wheelthrown ware only (the period AD 90-120 saw the disappearance of the last handmade ware) took place in about a century. We can conclude that rural communities produced an agricultural surplus and from the early 2nd century onwards and all other needs were bought from the market.

Chapter 6 studies the local economy and addresses both production and consumption. After the introduction, the first few paragraphs discuss the agrarian production of Tiel-Passewaaij. Concerning animal husbandry, the information about the buildings (farmhouses with byre section as well as stable-outbuildings) is combined with the results from the study of zoological remains. Cereal production is analysed by quantification of botanical remains on the basis of the capacity of the granaries (surface area of the outbuildings). Next, the demography and the local consumption are calculated and combined with the available space for crop cultivation on the streamridge. This quantification model results in the conclusion that a large part of the cereals that could be produced in the limited space of the streamridge, must have been consumed by the local population itself. Only when the size of the local population started to decrease, a limited surplus of cereals could have been produced. Because the storage capacity of the 2nd century *horrea* is much larger than the possible production, we can suspect that not only cereals were stored there but also hay, as winter fodder for stabled animals. Since the surplus of cereals was very limited, the agrarian surplus will most likely have consisted of living animals and animal related products like meat, hides, dairy. The section about animal stables showed that the stabling capacity was substantial. If we realise that only some animals (very young animals and pregnant females; weak or sick animals; young horses receiving basic training) were stabled and that the main part of herds lived outside the settlement, we can reconstruct large herds. Sheep were held for wool mainly. Cattle were both used locally (for traction) as well as sold to the market, but not bred specifically for meat-production. In the course of the Middle Roman period the percentage of horse was rising. We assume that horses were bred for use in the military cavalry and received a basic training in the settlements where they were raised.

So far, only the local production was addressed. Another approach would be to study the local consumption. The numbers of imports presented in chapter 5 are large and apply not only to basic needs like pottery and clothing but also to luxury-items like brooches and toilet instruments. On the one hand it concerns quite cheap mobile items, on the other hand it is about thousands of objects, possibly hundreds a year. The local community must have brought a considerable surplus to the market to balance the many things they obtained from it. The studied local production made a surplus already likely, but in combination with the local consumption the production of a surplus is considered even better founded.

The previous chapters 3 to 6 have been studying the results of the Tiel-Passewaaij excavations. However, the subject of the present study is the Batavian *civitas* as a whole. Chapter 7 is a regional comparison that has to make clear whether Tiel-Passewaaij was an average community or more likely an exceptional one. Other excavations in the Batavian area are studied and compared to the Tiel-Passewaaij results on specific points, as well as some excavations in other parts of Germania inferior. Almost all settlements have the same buildings as Tiel-Passewaaij: wooden farmhouses with a byre section are the normal house type of the river area. A large variety of constructions exist, but all types of constructions encountered in Tiel-Passewaaij have parallels somewhere in the Batavian area. In a small number of settlements a villa in stone was built, alongside wooden byre-houses, for instance in Druten-Klepperhei. The development towards a stone villa is an exceptional and fundamentally different development of rural settlement.

The Tiel-Passewaaij burial community was considerably larger than the several co-resident communities (settlements). This situation is not unique and was also encountered in Oss-Ussen and Zaltbommel-De Wildeman. In the cases of Wijk bij Duurstede-De Horden en De Geer, Nijmegen-Hatert and Zoelen-Scharenburg it is likely as well but cannot be proven. Collective burial sites that were used by inhabitants of more than one settlement represent most likely the normal situation. Both Roman period sites of Wijk bij Duurstede (De Horden and De Geer) were incorporated in a system of ditches comparable to the extensive system of straight ditches that connected the settlements with the cemetery and the surrounding fields of Tiel-Passewaaij. The same is true in Oss-Ussen. In Geldermalsen-Hondsgemet, Oosterhout-Van Boetzelaerstraat and Druten-Klepperhei only one

settlement was found enclosed by ditches, but it is likely that other sites in the immediate vicinity were connected as well. Outside the river area the same systems of ditches were found in Rijswijk-De Bult and Midden-Delfland. The ditches were found in all extensive excavations of sites of the middle-Roman period. In many smaller excavations they were not discovered, but it may be that the surface area was not large enough to disclose the existence of straight and long ditches. The evidence suggests that large systems of ditches were present at all rural settlements from the (late) Flavian period onwards.

The large number and wide variety of finds in Tiel-Passewaaij, especially the thousands of metal objects, may leave the impression to be extraordinary. Some smaller excavations that were investigated with the same methods (among others the intensive use of the metal detector) prove the opposite. In Tiel-Medel site 6 and Geldermalsen-Rijs en Ooyen, the same proportion of metal finds (number of finds per hectare) were retrieved, distributed between the same categories. Similarly, the ceramic assemblages of Tiel-Medel site 6 and Utrecht-Hogeweide dating to the early 1st century were comparable to those of Tiel-Passewaaij in terms of percentages handmade versus wheelthrown ware, and the functional categories of the latter.

Two large cemeteries, Nijmegen-Hatert in the Batavian area and Tönisvorst-Vorst in the Xanten area, are comparable to the Tiel-Passewaaij cemeteries in several respects. The grave forms (pits with small mounds on top, circular or rectangular ditches around) are the same, although Tönisvorst-Vorst had only rectangular ditches. The foundation period of Tönisvorst is possibly a decade earlier (AD 30-60) than Tiel-Passewaaij (AD 50-60) and Nijmegen-Hatert about a generation earlier (AD 10-30). The decline of handmade pottery shows the same trend in all three cemeteries, although it disappeared earlier in Nijmegen-Hatert (around 2% in the period AD 60-90) than in Tiel-Passewaaij and Tönisvorst-Vorst (around 2% in the period AD 90-120). The demographics are also quite similar. Nijmegen-Hatert shows an increase of the number of graves in the 1st century with an optimum in the Flavian period, and a steady decrease over the 2nd century. Tiel-Passewaaij and Tönisvorst-Vorst show the same trend only the peak is slightly later, in the period AD 90-120. To continue, the nature of the grave goods is more or less the same. Most of the grave goods consist of pottery, and most forms and types are found in all three cemeteries. Metal objects (brooches, hairpins, mirrors) and glass (table ware, but also ointment containers) are present but in very modest numbers. Later in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, the numbers of grave goods per grave are increasing in all three cemeteries and even some complete services are encountered. Other cemeteries like Zoelen-Scharenburg and Zaltbommel-De Wildeman yielded comparable grave goods. A slightly deviating cemetery is Geldermalsen-middengebied, where richer grave goods (like bronze vessels) were found. Finally the variation in grave ritual. All before-mentioned cemeteries consisted primarily of cremation graves, but most cemeteries (Geldermalsen-Middengebied, Zaltbommel-De Wildeman, Zoelen-Scharenburg but also Zoelen-Mauriksestraat) yielded also some late-Roman inhumation graves, just like the single inhumation at the Tiel-Passewaaij central cemetery and the Tiel-Wetlands cemetery outside the dike. To conclude we can establish that Tiel-Passewaaij is the average community in many respects (buildings, structure of the community, grave ritual, chronology, demographic trend, material culture). Of course there is regional variability, like the stone built villa's like Druten-Klepperhei and the richer grave goods from Geldermalsen-middengebied, but the differences are far less numerous than the similarities. Tiel-Passewaaij can justly be described as a type-site for rural habitation in the Batavian area.

The comparison of Tiel-Passewaaij with other excavations in the previous chapter disclosed certain trends concerning chronology, the grave ritual and other subjects. Chapter 8 is a synthesis of all information from the previous chapters and addresses social, cultural and economical aspects of the Batavian rural society.

In the Middle and Late Iron Age, permanent settlement over several generations was scarce since frequent floodings threatened all habitation. In the course of the Late Iron Age, the intensity of river

activity seems to have decreased, since some settlements that were inhabited for centuries started in the Late Iron Age. Oosterhout-Van Boetzelaerstraat and Geldermalsen-Hondsgemet were founded in the first part of the Late Iron Age (La Tene C) and the oldest settlements that continued into the Roman period known to date. Tiel-Passewaaij, Wijk bij Duurstede-De Horden and Oss-Westerveld are slightly younger foundations, dating to the last decades of the Late Iron Age (60-30 BC, La Tene D). These younger settlements may be connected to the historically recorded immigration of the Chatti, but other groups may as well have migrated into this area when the lessened river activity made the region suitable for habitation.

More foundation dates of settlements than the above are not available but it is suspected that many sites were founded in the final decades of the Late Iron Age or the first decades of the Roman period. Almost all habitation continues well into the Middle Roman period.

The river area (but also most neighbouring regions) witnessed a widespread depopulation in the 3rd century. The settlements and cemeteries of Oss-Westerveld and Wijk bij Duurstede-De Horden seem to end in the early 3rd century already. Tiel-Passewaaij and Nijmegen-Hatert continue until after the middle of the 3rd century. The causes of the depopulation and the exact chronology are still unclear, but the depopulation is a fact.

A small number of sites were inhabited in the late 3rd- and early 4th century, like Tiel-Passewaaij, Tiel-Medel site 6 and Wijk bij Duurstede-De Geer. At least in Tiel-Passewaaij it concerns immigrants from the region north of the Rhine and not a continuous development from the earlier habitation.

From the second half of the late-Roman period (ca. 350-450) a little more sites are known: Wijk bij Duurstede-De Geer was still inhabited (while the Tiel-Passewaaij settlement was discontinued) and also Geldermalsen-Rijs en Ooyen yielded settlement finds of this period. In at least five middle-Roman cremation cemeteries Late Roman inhumations were found: Tiel-Passewaaij central cemetery, Tiel-Passewaaij Wetlands, Zoelen-Mauriksestraat, Zoelen-Scharenburg, possibly Zaltbommel-De Wildeman, Geldermalsen-middengebied. Although the evidence is quite sparse, we can conclude a limited resettlement of the region in the Late Roman period.

Concerning the grave ritual regional trends are observed as well. In the Late Iron Age and first decades of the Roman period hardly any graves are found, in contrast to settlements from the same period. Some small clusters of graves indicate that the burial sites were used by one family only. The graves itself are small pits with some cremated remains, mostly without grave goods or demarcation. Sometimes unburnt parts of human remains are found scattered in the settlements. Excarnation may be part of the grave ritual.

Dramatic changes in the grave ritual occur in the early 1st century AD. The grave forms are quite different, now including grave gifts and small monuments (with mounds and ditches) made to last and to be seen. The burial community was now greatly extended to several families in more than one settlements. The earliest of these collective cemeteries is Nijmegen-Hatert (founded AD 10-30), but most of them date around the middle of the 1st century (Tiel-Passewaaij, Oss-Ussen, Zaltbommel-De Wildeman). The new collective grave ritual is most likely a result of the integration of rural communities in the Roman society. Despite this background and the use of imported grave goods the grave ritual cannot be labeled 'romanized', since no specific Roman funerary practices (like tombstones, inventories connected to hunting, writing, or jewellery) were included.

Systems of long and straight ditches are found in almost every archaeological investigation where the excavated area is large enough to detect the ditches. The few available archaeological dates point to the Flavian or late-Flavian period or early 2nd century. The ditches are dead straight, hundreds of metres long and if two corners are found, many of them prove to be expressed in a Roman measurement scale (120 feet, or *actus*, equal to 35,5 m.). Possibly, Roman land surveyors of *agrimensores* were employed to develop the ditches. In Roman law there is a clear relation between land-ownership, demarcation of land (by ditches or otherwise) and the payment of taxes. The emergence of these ditches may indicate that the agrarian communities had to pay taxes or that the

ownership of the land (or rather: the use of land, since the Roman state owned all land) was measured and registered. Tax and land registers are not known in concreto but have existed in all provinces. Tacitus wrote that in the Early Roman period, the Batavians were exempt from taxes. We do not know when this tax-freedom ended, but if the assumption about the connection between the ditches and the introduction of taxation is correct, the taxes were introduced in the Flavian period. Maybe the taxes were introduced by Vespasian as a retribution for the Batavian revolt, or by Domitian in connection to the founding of the province of Germania inferior, or by Trajan in connection to legal and juridical reorganizations.

Several sites yielded early 1st century imports from olive-oil- and fish-sauce amforae, as well as botanical remains from exotic species like coriander. These finds show that inhabitants from rural settlements added Mediterranean elements to their meals from Tiberian times onwards. If the basics of the meal also changed cannot be ascertained: the same cereals that were produced in the Iron Age were still produced in the Roman period, but it is possible that these were consumed in different ways (bread instead of porridge). A generation later than the above mentioned foodstuffs, the Roman mortarium was adopted, indicating that the ways of food-preparation changed as well. Dishes, beakers and bowls were in use already earlier, but still in small numbers. These forms did not occur in the locally manufactures handmade ware so their introduction could mean that Roman ways of eating and drinking (a plate per person, serving food in bowls not cooking pots, changing bowls and plates with each course of the meal) were introduced. On the other hand, the small numbers and the fact that they occur alongside the traditional forms, we must allow for the possibility that the new forms of tableware were not used in Roman ways but continuing old customs. However, from the middle of the 1st century onwards, the number of dishes, beakers and bowls are rising sharply, and in the late 1st century they emerge in fixed combinations in grave inventories. The combinations like for instance one bowl, three dishes, a beaker and a jug are the combinations that would be used on the dinner table. In the later 2nd century some complete table services (12 parts or more, for instance 4 dishes, 4 small bowls, 4 large bowls) are deposited in graves. It is especially the fixed combinations and complete services of tableware that are strong indications that the objects are used in the Roman ways of eating and drinking, since the objects are deposited in the combinations that were used at the table. We can conclude that in the course of the 1st century, the meals, ways of eating and drinking and of preparing food became romanized to a large extent.

Romanization also showed on other aspects of daily life. As was shown in chapter 5, the use of toilet-instruments reveals new ways of body care. Brooches, fingerings, hair-pins and bracelets points to new ways of dress and personal decoration. Both aspects of daily life are also connected to the development of new identities. Writing and reading, measuring and calculating, and roman religious ways were also practiced in rural communities, albeit not as frequently as the aforementioned aspects.

Chapter 9 provides a synthesis of the romanization trajectory in the Batavian area, one could say the Batavian way of being Roman. The new content of the term romanization was realized in two ways: firstly a theoretical redefinition of the term romanization, and secondly the chosen perspective of this study, the material culture (both mobile finds and built structures) of rural communities. Applied in this way, the concept of romanization bypassed the most important points of post-colonial critique and gave insight to the Batavian trajectory of romanization with its unique features.

Paragraph 9.2 provides a chronological account of the romanization of the river area. Starting point is the final decades of the Late Iron Age. Settlements consisted of one or two dispersed farmyards with a single farmhouse including a byre section and some small outbuildings. If the scarce and ill recognisable graves are found at all, it concerns a few clustered pits with some cremated remains, or scattered unburnt human remains. Ceramic assemblages consist of locally manufactured handmade ware only but some metal finds indicate sparse trade contacts with wider networks. In the first decades of the Roman period (Augustan and Tiberian times) the number of imports rose but the structure of the settlements remained unchanged. The imports could have been purchased with the military pay that

the first recruits among family members left behind, since early coins dating to this period are numerous. The first concrete evidence for veterans who returned to the rural settlements after their discharge date from the Tiberian period. From that time onwards, the changing material culture like the imports of Mediterranean taste elements (olive oil, fish-sauce) to the meals, different ways of dressing and personal decoration, can be ascribed to the returned veterans.

From the middle of the 1st century, some settlements became organized differently, with a clustering of smaller farmhouses. Alongside the smaller houses stood fewer but larger outbuildings, some of which are recognisable as military-style horrea. Handmade pottery forms half of the ceramic assemblages and the other half are imports of wheelthrown ware (pots, amphorae, dishes, bowls, the first beakers and also mortaria). The numerous metal finds (brooches, military gear, the first fingerings and a few toilet instruments), are all imports. Concerning the grave ritual profound changes occurred. In many places in the Batavian area collective cemeteries were started, in which several families of more than one settlement buried their dead.

The changes in the nature of the finds reveal two things: firstly the (selective) adoption of Roman habits, customs and material culture, for instance ways of eating and drinking and food preparation, personal decoration and body care. Secondly the (partial) integration in Roman economic structures: an agrarian surplus was delivered to the market and in return the local communities received substantial numbers of imports. The partial social, cultural and economic integration in the Roman world had a considerable impact on the self-definition of local communities, expressed in a collective grave ritual.

The settlements continued to develop in the later 1st century and early 2nd century. A portico or veranda was added to some main buildings. A large system of straight and long ditches incorporated settlements, cemeteries and the surrounding fields. Both developments changed the view of the rural landscapes and were the result of the integration in the Roman society. One could speak of the romanization of the landscape. Furthermore, most settlements had one large horreum and some stables, while the farmhouses still had a byre-section. This implies both an intensification (larger crops, larger herds) and a centralization of the local production – the dominance of one family who had the horreum and the large stable next to their farmhouse. At the same time the handmade ware disappeared completely and the ceramic assemblages consist of imported wheelthrown ware completely. The agrarian surplus was large enough to provide for all the needs other than agrarian products. Basic needs like clothes and pottery were bought from the market, but also luxury-items like brooches, toilet instruments, fingerings, hair-pins and bracelets. Keys and locks, weigh-beams and weights, miniature deities and so on date to the 2nd century, indicating that these originally Roman uses and objects were also adopted and practiced in the Batavian countryside.

Other classes of evidence (meaning epigraphy mostly found outside the Batavian territory) make clear that from Trajan onwards, Batavian veterans often received Roman citizenship. As citizens, the sons of the veterans could serve in the legions and receive a higher pay. Their sons could even become commanders of army units. In other words, chances for social advance rose considerably and romanization also manifested itself on social aspects of society.

It is thus established that the Batavian rural population was integrated in the Roman world in economic, social, cultural and political-juridical ways from the early 2nd century onwards. In economic ways because rural communities produced a substantial surplus to the market and received large numbers of imports of all sorts in return. In social ways because veterans of the Roman army and their families had means of social improvement and could participate in the Roman society in several ways. In cultural ways because many different Roman practices and objects were (in one way or another) adopted and practiced by members of rural communities. The large numbers make clear that the new practices were not an exception but a part of daily life. In political-juridical way because the Batavian civitas was now part of a new province and received a formally recognised capital. Alongside the romanization on all aspects mentioned above, a Batavian identity remained. This is not only based on the epigraphy of Roman citizens mentioning their Batavian descent, but also on the

continuity of house-building traditions and the grave ritual, that lack distinctly Roman influence, albeit clear developments over time.

The Batavian way of being Roman meant for some inhabitants of the river area to enter military service in Rome's armies and develop a career there. Others stayed at home, produced an agrarian surplus and received Roman items in return, which they learned to use and appreciate by contacts within their own community or outside in central places. All inhabitants of the rural countryside participated in the Roman world, although in different ways and in varying degrees.

This trajectory of romanization was shaped by an intensive and far-reaching influence from the Roman army. Large numbers of Batavian young men served in the Roman army and they and some family-members spent 25 years of their lives in and around military camps. Many of these Batavian Romans returned to their settlements of origin after completing the service, bringing along their experiences and knowledge of Roman ways, customs, uses and objects. The romanized veterans and their families shared this experience and knowledge with other members of the rural communities, thus playing a key role in the romanization of the rural area. The impact of the romanization of the rural populations is recognisable in the changing material culture, both built and dug structures (farmhouses, outbuildings, systems of ditches) and mobile objects (imported ceramics and metal objects). The military families can be seen as transcultural mediators of the Batavian trajectory of romanization, set in motion by the imperial system of ethnic recruitment. A second aspect is the founding of military camps along a fixed frontier, being the river Rhine. The stationing of large number of soldiers who did not produce their own food in the region resulted in an enormous demand for foodstuffs. This demand was met by an increased agrarian production by the rural communities in a wide region around the army camps. In this way, the founding of the limes resulted in the economical integration of these communities, followed by integration on other areas as well. The romanization that was set in motion by the ethnic recruitment, could be substantiated by the market exchange. The result was a romanization of many aspects of daily life, yet with continuing Batavian elements.