



Österreichisches
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Cluster 3 des DAI



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CiA
2026

Histotaphonomy – Problems and Perspectives

A Workshop in the Framework of „CiA 2026“

Tuesday, 20 October 2026

Austrian Academy of Sciences
Georg-Coch-Platz 2, 1010 Vienna

co-organized by the Cluster „Body and Death“
of the German Archaeological Institute and the
Bioarchaeology Lab of the Austrian Archaeological
Institute

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www.dainst.org/forschung/projekte/cluster-3-koerper-und-tod/5731





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Histotaphonomy – Problems and Perspectives

In recent years, histotaphonomy has become a popular archaeological method for studying the microstructural changes to bone that occur after death. Various analytical techniques are employed, including transmitted light microscopy, BSE-SEM, and micro-CT. By examining differences in the microbial, chemical, and physical degradation of bone (diagenesis), archaeologists are able to draw conclusions about ancient post-mortem body treatments and burial environments. However, the interpretations are not without their challenges.

The upcoming 2026 'Cremations in Archaeology' conference in Vienna provides the perfect backdrop for this one-day event,

which aims to bring together researchers interested in the histotaphonomic analysis of human and animal bones. The focus is less on presenting final research results and more on highlighting the problems and discussing the questions that have arisen during the research process, as well as on the possibilities for research into body-related practices. Topics may range from sample preparation and analytical methods to issues of interpretation.

This free in-person event is co-organised by the Research Cluster 'Body and Death' of the German Archaeological Institute and by the Austrian Archaeological Institute's Bioarchaeology Lab.

Date: Tuesday October 20, 2026,
9:30 am – 4:30 pm

Venue:
Austrian Archaeological Institute (OeAI)
Austrian Academy of Sciences
Dominikanerbastei 16
1010 Vienna, Austria
4th floor, conference rooms 5–7

Programme

9:30 – 11:00 [Session 1](#)

Welcome and Introduction to the Workshop

The Organizers

Histotaphonomy in archaeology: past approaches and current state

Estella Weiss-Krejci

Austrian Archaeological Institute, University of Vienna, University of Graz

More than meets the bone: A methodological approach to taphonomy and post-mortem transformation

Kinga Durczak

Antea Group

11:00 – 11:30 [Coffee Break](#)

11:30 – 13:30 [Session 2](#)

Histotaphonomy – more questions than answers

Birgit Grosskopf

University of Göttingen

Taphonomic patterns of alterations in human bone microstructure across skeletal collections

Sveenja Schmidt

University of Göttingen

Bone in loam: contextualising bioerosion phenomena

David Brönnimann

University of Basel (online)

Multiscale imaging of localised bioerosion in experimentally buried bone

Théo Malezieux

University of Bordeaux (online)

13:30 – 14:30 [Lunch Break](#)

14:30 – 16:30 **Visit of the Bioarchaeology Lab with demonstration in the OeAI's microscopy room. Due to space limitations, we'll have to split into groups.**

