Clothes make the man : early medieval textiles from the Netherlands

Brandenburgh, C.R.

2. The textiles from the cemetery of Bergeijk

Previously published as:
Brandenburgh, C.R., 2012: The textiles from the cemetery of Bergeijk, in: F. Theuws & M. van Haperen, The Merovingian cemetery of Bergeijk-Fazantlaan, Bonn (Merovingian Archaeology in the Low Countries I), 126-137.

The cemetery of Bergeijk was the first cemetery to be published by the *Anastasis*-project.[128] It was also the first publication of cemetery-textiles of this thesis. Therefore it was used to explore the ways we can look at cemetery textiles: Who were buried in this cemetery and is this an equal representation of Merovingian society? Are these textiles the reflection of people's everyday clothing or were they ceremonial garments, especially chosen for the occasion of the burial? Such questions inevitably involve a discussion of Merovingian burial ritual and the way in which textiles may have been used in this ritual. This whole section however has been moved to chapter 1 (section 1.5.2.2) where it serves as a general introduction for this topic.

Since no reference data was available on the time of publication of the Bergeijk-cemetery a comparison of the textiles form this site with those from other sites could not be attempted yet.

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128. See note 84.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The cemetery of Bergeijk yielded a considerable number of textiles. Of the 126 excavated graves, 17 contained one or more pieces of textile. This resulted in a total of 66 fragments of 40 individual textiles (appendix I). The fabrics were in most cases mineralized and imbedded in the corrosion on metal objects.

Many graves were reopened after burial, often displacing the objects within. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to reconstruct the garments of the deceased. However, in some cases it is possible to establish which textiles were worn under or over each other or specific dress accessories. The textile finds also enable some preliminary conclusions relating to the association of different fabric types to specific objects in the graves. Lastly, the cemetery provides a well dated body of textiles that can be compared to textiles from other regions. This will in the long term provide a detailed overview of the types of fabrics in use throughout the area, which may lead to a better understanding in production and (long distance) exchange of textiles.

2.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, DATA AND METHODS

It is commonly assumed in textile research that clothing is not merely 'practical' in function. In the past as in the present, dress holds a social dimension as well. In its simplest form, clothing, textiles, and dress accessories can be used to denote the identity of groups of people, or the position of an individual within a group. It is useful, therefore to not only reconstruct the deceased's dress, graves' furnishings and textiles deposited as grave goods in their own right, but also to search for variability of textiles within a cemetery, between different cemeteries, and over time.

There are two additional reasons to search for differences in textiles within and between cemeteries in the area under investigation.
First, there are changes in the settlement and burial system in the Bergeijk region. In the middle of the sixth century, new settlements and cemeteries were created in an area that hitherto was uninhabited. Following this period in the middle of the seventh century, new and bigger settlements were created, and the spatial organisation of the cemeteries changed. We do not know where the newcomers from the sixth century came from, or whether the people creating the bigger settlements in the seventh century were newcomers or descendants of the original sixth century colonists. It has been argued that the seventh century inhabitants were new to the area and came originally from the south.[129] The study of textile remains from cemeteries in the area may in the long term provide evidence to the origin of the area's inhabitants, or point to other trends which have so far gone unnoticed. Certain textual examples demonstrate that costume as an ethnic marker was not unknown, although its role in marking social distinctions was probably far greater.[130] Furthermore mobility of goods in this period was far greater than the mobility of people; changes in textiles, therefore, are not automatically a reflection of immigration. Second, since the cemetery provides a well dated body of textiles, an analysis of long term shifts in textiles will provide a detailed overview of the types of textiles in use throughout the area, which will lead to a better understanding of production and (international) exchange of textiles.

Detailed textile research of early medieval cemeteries in the Netherlands has only just fully begun.[131] A comparison of the fine chronology of the Bergeijk cemetery with those of other cemeteries is therefore not yet possible. As a result, this chapter will focus on the following questions:

1. In what textiles and clothing were people buried during the period the Bergeijk cemetery was in use?

2. Which differences and changes are visible within the cemetery over time?

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129. Theuws 1999.
130. Pohl 2006, 137.
131. There is an excellent study which gives a broad overview of the long term developments in textiles in northwestern Europe (Bender Jørgensen 1992). However, this study does not contain the fine chronology necessary to make a comparison with the cemetery of Bergeijk.

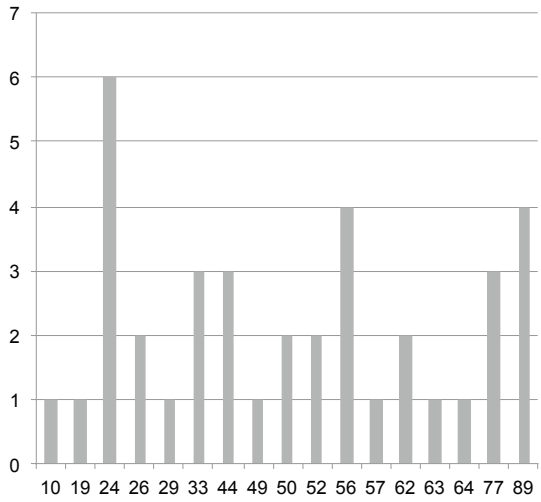

Fig. 2.1 Number of individual textiles per grave.

Fig. 2.2 Shield boss 64.abc1 with large fragment of 2/2 plain twill z/s attached.

2.3 DATASET

The cemetery of Bergeijk has yielded 66 fragments of textile. In some cases, several fragments of the same fabric were present within one grave. These identical fabrics have been grouped together, resulting in a total of 40 individual textiles, which were found distributed over 17 graves. Most graves contained one or two different textiles; six graves provided more (fig. 2.1). The dataset is not very large considering that only 13.5% of the graves are represented, with these being distributed over a period of c. 150 years. Furthermore, the excavated fragments are not a complete representation of the textiles present when the deceased were buried, since they were probably fully dressed while the graves were furnished with additional textiles. Therefore, developments or differences observed in the textiles are not supported by sufficient data and should be considered preliminary. Most of the textile remains were preserved in the corrosion layer of the metal objects. The textiles not in contact with metal decayed in the years after burial. Because of this, the remaining fragments are often very small, measuring between 0.5x0.5 and 3x3 cm. One extraordinary large fragment measured 5x10 cm (fig. 2.2).

Practically no restoration had been conducted on the metal objects in the graves. This was more or less advantageous for the textiles because in most cases they were well preserved and not polished off during restoration.

2.4 CEMETERY TEXTILES AS A SOURCE FOR TEXTILE RESEARCH

Research of cemetery textiles has many benefits. Cemetery finds are often reasonably well dated. The metal objects' fine chronology offers the possibility of creating a detailed typology of the associated textiles used throughout the Merovingian period in different areas. Furthermore, the sex and age of the deceased and the position of the textiles in the grave and in relation to the body are often known. Research of cemetery textiles therefore offers many opportunities for reconstructing the clothing of the deceased, and the manner in which graves were furnished during the Merovingian period. After the Merovingian period, burial tradition shifted from conspicuous deposition of grave goods towards wealth display by building chapels, sponsoring masses, and recitation of the deceased's names by clergymen. The contents of the graves from this

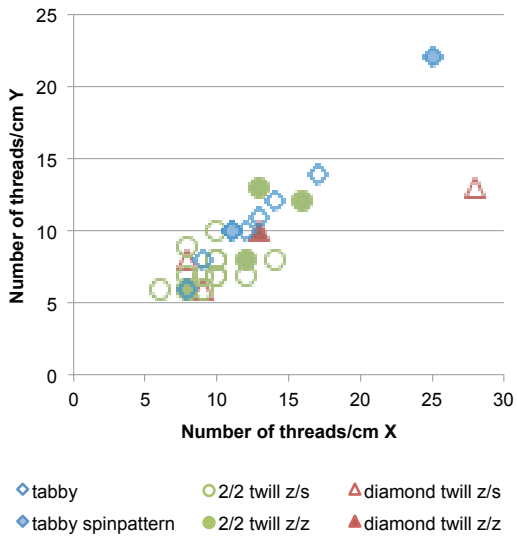

Fig. 2.3 The quality of the different fabrics in Bergeijk in number of threads per cm in warp (horizontal) and weft (vertical).

later period are more sober, for they lack the grave goods used in the previous period. This change of burial tradition did not coincide with the shift from pagan to Christian belief in northern Gaul; rather, it took place at a later stage, when Christian belief had already been established.[132] Unfortunately, the decrease of the number of grave objects over time leaves us with fewer textiles, making it increasingly difficult to reconstruct burial clothing in this later period.

Some critical remarks are in order. In most cases, textiles are preserved only in contact with metal artefacts; therefore remains of cloths are almost exclusively found in graves containing metal dress accessories. Many graves lack metal objects. The persons buried there were dressed either without accessories or with objects made of other materials, such as bone or wood. One could theorize that only a small, more wealthy portion of society could afford metal artefacts and that the textiles excavated in cemeteries are those from the upper part of Merovingian society, but considering the context of the cemetery, this is not likely. Some of the graves without metal objects may have belonged to poorer populace, but objects made of organic materials could have been equally precious and worn with luxurious textiles as well. Moreover, metal object deposition gradually disappears during the course of the later seventh century. Since no textiles are available from these 'empty' graves, it is difficult to determine whether excavated textiles are a realistic mirror of the type and quality of clothing in this period or whether these textiles were only worn by a small percentage of the population.

The cemetery of Bergeijk does not allow us to investigate all these potential leads. First, no human bones were preserved. The age of the deceased could therefore not be ascertained, and gender determination was based on presumed gender associations of the objects present in the grave. Consequently, differentiating between textiles from graves of men and women becomes somewhat disputable, for one should not overlook the possibility that women may have been buried with weapons or men with female objects. Archaeological evidence for women being buried in rich weapon graves is available from Eastern Europe[133] and Scandinavia.[134] Closer to home is the man buried in female attire in the Oosterbeintum cemetery, in the northern part of the Netherlands.[135] Second, a large part of the graves were reopened while the cemetery was in use. In most cases this was not economically motivated (i.e. grave robbery), but was probably part of the complex process of treatment of the dead.[136] During the graves' reopening, objects were often displaced. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to reconstruct the primary position of the textiles in the graves. However, some insight in the process of mineralization enables us to take a more optimistic perspective. Mineralization, a chemical reaction whereby metal incorporates the textiles lying on or beneath it, occurs in the first months after deposition

132. Effros 2002a, 5-12.

133. Pohl 2004, 31-32.
134. Price 2002, 149-153.
135. Knol e.a. 1996, 302, table 18 and fig. 33. The person in Oosterbeintum grave 398 is osteologically a man, but is buried with grave goods that are typical for women's graves.
136. Van Haperen 2010.

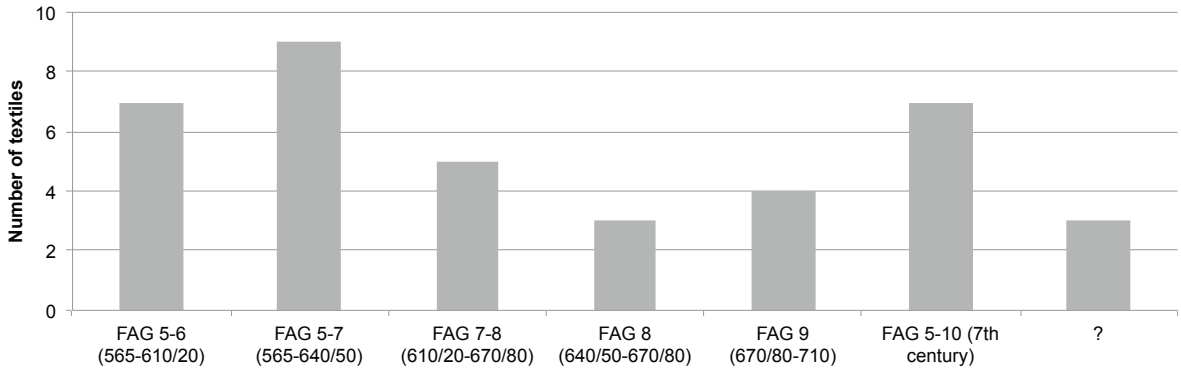

Fig. 2.4 Number of textiles per phase.

in the grave.[137] It is assumed that the graves were usually reopened after the soft tissues of the body had decayed, leaving only the bones, hereby marking another phase in the transition from the living to the dead.[138] Reopening, therefore, must have taken place after mineralization had occurred. Consequently, the textiles adhering to metal objects were in their primary position unless they were displaced during this short period by animals or the decay of the body's soft tissues. Although the objects may not have been excavated in their original place, in theory it is possible to reconstruct which type of fabric/garment was associated with which dress accessories.

2.5 RESULTS

2.5.1 The textiles from Bergeijk

During the early Middle Ages, several types of weaves were in use, but in the Bergeijk cemetery, only fabrics woven in tabby, 2/2 plain twill, and 2/2 broken diamond twill were observed. Most graves containing more than two textiles show a variety of fabrics. In one grave (grave 33), there is only one cloth type present.

2.5.1.1 Tabby weaves

In Bergeijk, nine fabrics were woven in tabby, of which six were made out of wool. The other three tabbies are probably woven out of linen, but positive fibre identification was not possible due to damage to the fibres. Most tabbies were woven out of z-spun yarns in both warp and weft. Two of the woollen tabbies were woven in a spin-pattern.[139] These patterns are created using both z- and s-twisted threads in the warp. The different direction of the twist of the yarns bestows a very subtle but clear striped pattern to the fabric. The first is woven in warp-pattern: 1z-1s-1z-1s..., and is a rather open weave with 11x12 threads/cm. The other fabric is much finer (25x22 threads/cm) and woven in warp-pattern: 4z-4s-4z-4s...

2.5.1.2 2/2 twills

In most cases where the fabric was evidently woven in 2/2 twill, it was not possible to ascertain whether it was a 2/2 plain twill or a variety of this weave, such as diamond twill. Only where the fragments were of a considerable size was the pattern in the twill visible. Consequently, most of the smaller fragments are assigned to the group of 2/2 plain twill, making this group considerably overrepresented. A large share of the textiles from Bergeijk were woven in a variety

137. Gillard e.a. 1994.
138. Van Haperen 2010.
139. Find numbers 63.d1 and 89.h1.

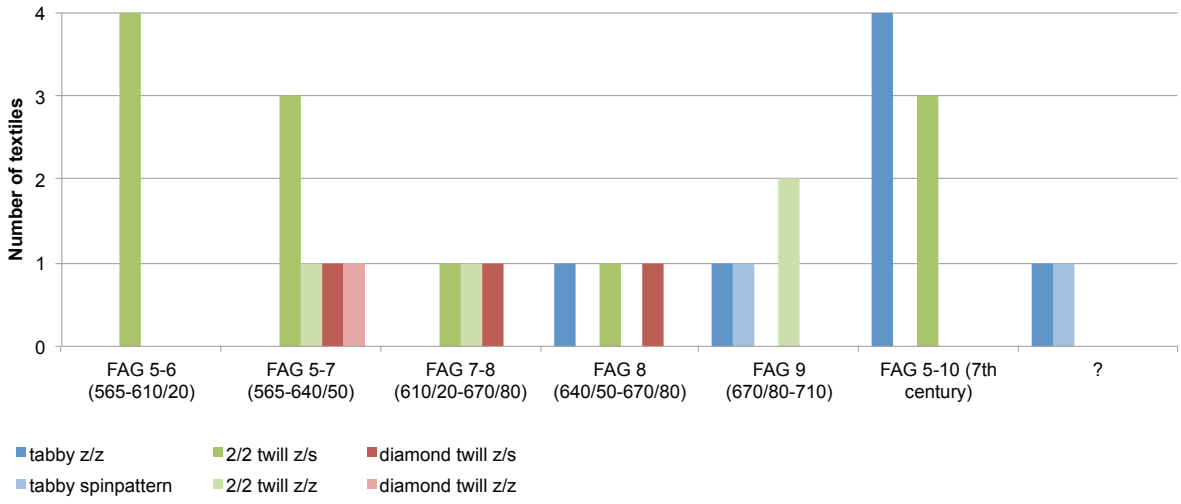

Fig 2.5. Distribution of the different types of weaves per phase.

of 2/2 twill. The majority of these textiles were woven of woollen fibres, with z-spun warp threads and s-spun weft threads. Few examples are present of woollen twills woven in z-spun yarn in both warp and weft. No linen fibres have been observed in this group of textiles, although several fibres could not be identified.

With several finds, it was not possible to ascertain the type of twill, either because the weave was very decayed or because the fabric was contorted. These fabrics are indicated as '2/? Twill'. Some textiles were decayed to such an extent that identification of weave was not possible. Also present in the cemetery were two fragments of plied rope.

2.5.2 Quality of the fabrics

A common method of estimating a fabric's quality is establishing the number of threads per centimetre in both warp and weft. As visible in figure 2.3, there are considerable differences in quality of the textiles from Bergeijk, with most tabbies and 2/2 twill z/z in the higher quality groups, and 2/2 twill z/s in the lower quality. Diamond twills are present in all qualities.

The cemetery of Bergeijk differs notably from textiles excavated in settlements in the Netherlands. In settlements, the majority of textiles possessed thread counts below 12 threads/cm.[140] In Bergeijk, the fine and coarse groups are more evenly represented. This difference is not caused by the fact that the settlements only contained woollen fabrics, since in the cemetery of Bergeijk most textiles were woollen as well, and the few linen textiles were rather coarse.

2.5.3 Developments in textiles

In the cemetery of Bergeijk, graves have been grouped into three phases. Phase I consists of graves from the late sixth century and the first half of the seventh century (510/20 – 640/50). Phase II is relatively short, from 640/50 – 670/80, and phase III lasts from 670/80 to c. 730/40. The textiles have been analysed according to this chronology, but in order to compare the textile remains from Bergeijk to those from other cemeteries and create a fine textile-chronology, they have also been analysed according to the Franken AG-phases.[141] Comparing the different

140. Brandenburgh 2010a.
141. Müssemeier, Nieveler, Plum & Pöppelmann 2003.

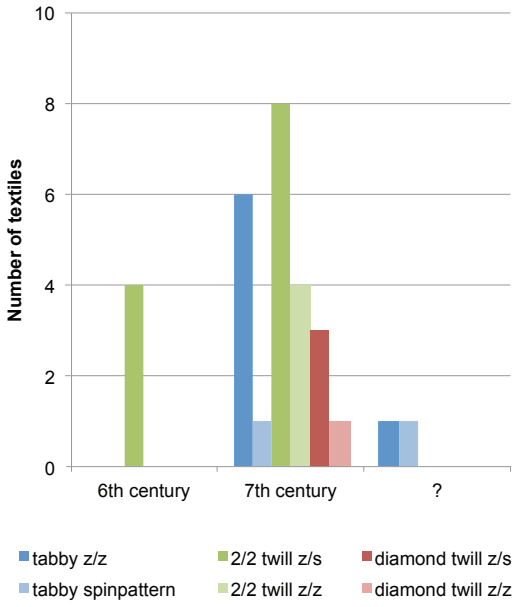

Fig 2.6. Distribution of the different types of weaves in the later sixth and seventh century.

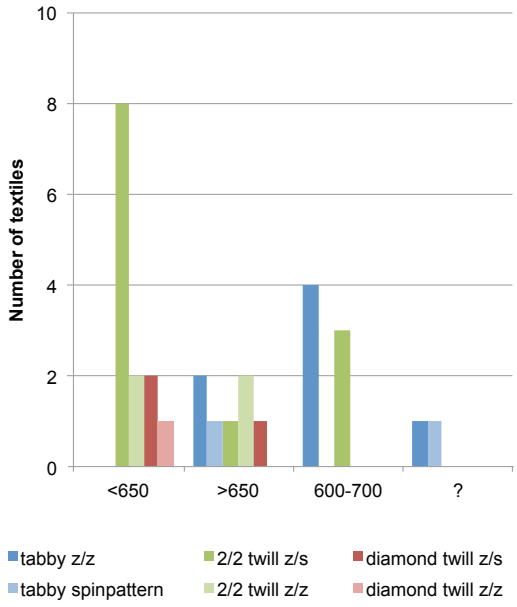

Fig. 2.7. Distribution of the different types of weaves before and after 650 AD.

weaves throughout time can, in the case of Bergeijk, seem a somewhat misleading exercise since some phases, such as phase III, are represented by only one grave. Its textiles may not reflect the totality of that particular phase, and may differ from the other graves in that period. To analyse the textile remains through time, they have been grouped together into the following phases (fig. 2.4). The first two phases FAG 5-6 (565-610/20) and FAG 5-7 (565-640/50), seem to have a large overlap. However, the three graves assigned to the first phase are dated in the period 5-6 and are representative of the sixth century,[142] while most of the graves and textiles assigned to the period 5-7 in reality are dated in phase 6-7 (580/90-640/50) and are more representative of the first half of the seventh century.[143] Phase FAG 7-8 (610/20-670/80) and FAG 8 (640/50-670/80) are each represented by two graves. The last phase FAG 9 (670/80-710) consists of only one grave. Seven textiles could not be dated more accurately than the seventh century, and three are of an unknown date.

The different weaves are not evenly represented through time (fig. 2.5). In the first phase, only 2/2 twills z/s are present. In the following phase, different types of weaves come into use: initially diamond twills z/s, 2/2 plain twills z/z and diamond twills z/z emerge, and in the second half of the seventh century, tabbies also occur. The increase of weave types in the seventh century becomes more evident when textiles are grouped together in the sixth and seventh century (fig. 2.6). We must, however, keep in mind that among the 2/2 twills there may be diamond twills that were not recognised as such due to textile fragmentation. It is therefore possible that the variability of weaves in the sixth century is larger than shown in figure 2.6 and it is impossible to conclude anything about the popularity of the 2/2 plain twills over other types of twills. Comparing the periods before and after

142. Graves 33, 44 and 64.
143. Grave 19 contains one textile and is assigned to phase FAG 5-7; Graves 24 and 62 together contain eight textiles and are assigned to FAG 6-7.

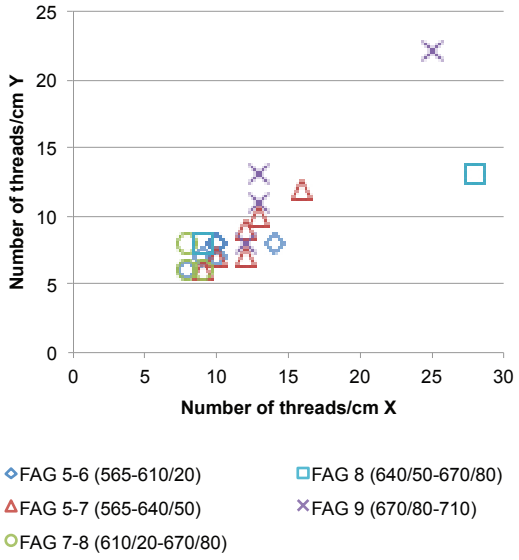

Fig. 2.8. Quality of the textiles per phase in number of threads per cm in warp (horizontal) and weft (vertical).

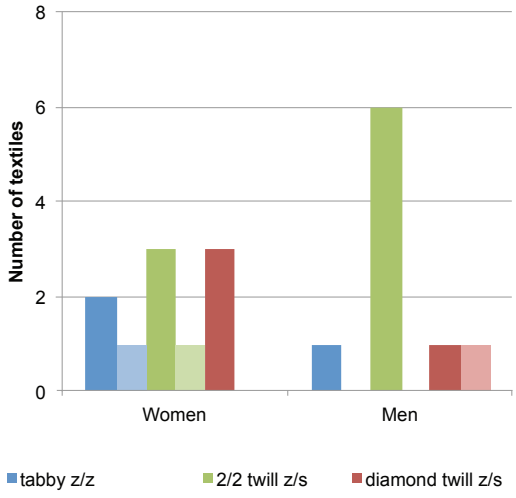

Fig. 2.9 Distribution of the different weaves in graves of women and men.

650 AD (phase I opposed to phase II-III) brings to light some differences as well. The z/s twills seem less dominant after 650, and other weaves like z/z twills and tabbies are increasingly present (fig. 2.7). The textiles from the earliest phase are all of coarse to medium quality, while the later textiles are more fine (fig. 2.8). This is partly caused by the new types of textiles such as tabby and 2/2 twill z/z, generally of finer quality (fig. 2.3), which were previously not present.

2.5.4 Textiles from graves of men and women

Gender determination is based on 'male' or 'female' objects present in the grave. Five graves, containing a total of 11 textiles, have been assigned to women. Seven graves, containing 18 textiles, were probably men's graves. The dataset from Bergeijk is too small to discern differences per phase but may serve as a building block in a future comparative study.

When comparing graves of men and women from Bergeijk, some differences emerge, but considering the small dataset, these differences are not significant (fig. 2.9). In women's graves, there is an equal share of 2/2 plain twills z/s and 2/2 diamond twills z/s. In men's graves, the majority of textiles are 2/2 plain twill z/s with only one example of diamond twill. This distribution should not be given too much weight, since in most cases it was not possible to differentiate between different variations of 2/2 twill. Hägg has previously called attention to the clear pattern of gender-related textiles for Scandinavian and German cemeteries in the North Sea region during the period 750-1000. Women's graves tend to contain equal amounts of plain twills and diamond twills, whereas diamond twills are practically absent in men's graves.[144] More textile research is needed on Dutch cemeteries to provide a larger gender-related dataset and to enable a comparison with other regions and periods. Some differences in quality between men and women are visible in figure 2.10. Textiles from men's graves are grouped together in a relatively small cluster of quality, while textiles associated with women have a wider range of qualities, both slightly coarser and some considerably finer. The finer textiles are represented by two textiles from two women's graves from the end of the seventh century.

144. Hägg 1993, 86-89.

2.5.5 Graves rich in textiles

Several graves contain three or more individual textiles. It is sometimes possible to confer an impression of textile wealth in these graves, although it is not possible to fully reconstruct the clothing in which the persons were buried. The following paragraph will elaborate on the textiles in grave 24, 56, 77 and 89.

2.5.5.1 Grave 24

Grave 24, a man's grave, contained at least three different types of weaves and several threads. The grave was reopened, as a result of which the objects in the grave were displaced. Several objects belonging to one belt[145] had fragments of the same type of textile as well as straw adhered (fig. 2.11). The textile is a dense and somewhat irregularly woven woollen z/z diamond twill with 12-15x9-12 threads/cm. The textile was present on the front side of a plate buckle, suggesting that it (partly) covered the belt while in its original position. Considering the fact that the grave was probably reopened after mineralisation had taken place, the straw attached to the objects was in its original position as well. This means the belt was either lying beside or beneath the body. It is also possible that the belt was not part of the clothing of the deceased, but was a loose object lying in straw or on a straw filled pillow, partly or entirely covered by the diamond twill.

On the backside of plate buckle 24.ee1, three fragments of a woollen 2/2 twill z/s were present (fig. 2.12). This textile is rather coarse, woven with 10x7 threads/cm, and was worn or lying under the belt. On the front of the same buckle, several strands (5mm thick) or untwisted bundles were visible.

On the face of strap end 24.x1, a second woollen 2/2 twill z/s is present, with 12x9 threads/cm (fig. 2.13). This twill is only slightly finer than the one described above, but has similar thread thicknesses and may therefore be the same fabric. In that case, and if it is worn in its normal position hanging from the belt, this strap end may have been partly covered by a fold in the same garment worn under the belt.

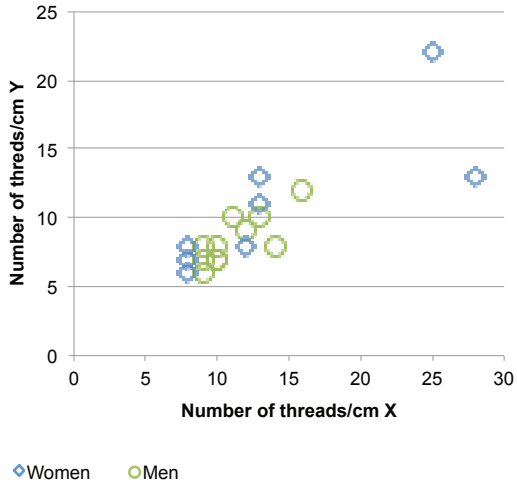

Fig. 2.10 Quality of the textiles in graves of women and men via number of threads per cm in warp (horizontal) and weft (vertical).

On two indeterminate fragments of iron, a woollen 2/2 twill z/z and straw were present. This textile is much finer and more regular than the diamond twill, although the thread count is not much higher (16x12 threads/cm). Neither the function of this textile nor its original position in the grave or its relation to the body are clear. The presence of straw on the object suggests it was lying besides or under the body.
Lastly, on a small fragment of iron, a negative cast of a z/s fabric was present. The weave and thread count of this fabric could not be ascertained.

2.5.5.2 Grave 56

Grave 56 yielded at least three different weaves. It is unclear whether these textiles belonged to one burial. It is possible that the grave was used secondarily, since it contained a substantial number of glass beads in the upper half of the grave as well as a spearhead,

145. Three fragments of indeterminate iron, one fragment of plate, one plate buckle and one belt plate together contained six fragments of the same textile.

Fig. 2.11 Fragment 24.hh3, part of a belt, with straw and z/z diamond twill attached.

Fig. 2.12 Back (above) and front side (below) of plate buckle 24.ee1. On the back, fragments of 2/2 twill z/s are present; on front, several strands of fibres.

Fig. 2.13 Strap end 24.x1 with 2/2 twill z/s.

Fig. 2.14 Fragment of non-mineralized diamond twill z/s, found in association with belt plates 77.q (above) and 77.o (below).

artefacts not usually buried together due to different gender association. All textiles were adhered to indeterminate fragments of iron, making it difficult to affix a function to the textiles. The grave contained two woollen 2/2 twills z/s: one coarse with 6-7x6 threads/cm, and one finer with 8x9-10 threads/cm. Both weaves have similar threads and are open and distorted. It is possible that the different thread count was caused by the garment stretching during wear and that both fragments are from the same cloth. Also present in the grave is a fine woollen tabby with 14x12 threads/cm. A coarser tabby with 8x6 threads/cm is made out of a plant fibre.

2.5.5.3 Grave 77

In the centre of the grave, the remains of two belt fittings were found.[146] It is not clear whether both belts were originally positioned on the body. It is possible that one was placed beside the body. The position of both strap ends in the lower half of the grave may indicate that they were lying in their original location, had they been positioned on the body. There are at least two, and possibly three, different textiles in this grave, of which one is associated with these belts. Five fragments of a non-mineralized woollen diamond twill z/s have been found in association with two copper belt plates 77.q1 and 77.o1 (fig 2.14). This diamond twill is regularly woven with 8-10x8-10 threads/cm. The other two textiles are associated with pieces of shoe or leg wear. This ensemble consists of a plate buckle, counter plate, and strap end. On strap end 77.r1, a woollen textile was present. The fabric had decayed to the extent that the weave could not be ascertained, but its threads were thinner (0.5-0.75mm) than those on the belt plates (0.75-1mm). It is however possible that the fabric on this strap end is identical with the diamond twill described above. Strap end 77.q4, also belonging to leg or shoe wear, had been in close contact with a coarse and somewhat open woollen 2/2 twill z/z, woven with 8x6 threads/cm. The threads of this fabric were 1mm thick.

Fig. 2.15 Belt fitting 89.h1 with two types of textile adhered.

Assuming that both the belts and the leg or shoe wear were worn on the body, the deceased was dressed in or covered by at least two types of fabrics, the diamond twill covering the area around and below the waist, and the 2/2 twill z/z swathing the lower part of the legs. If positioned beside the body, the belts could also have been lying on, covered by, or wrapped in the textiles.

2.5.5.4 Grave 89

Grave 89 is the only grave from phase III to yield textiles. This grave, assigned to a woman, contains very fine and very varied textile remains. The grave was reopened, but the 'Ophoven' type belt it contained was still in its original position. This makes the grave very interesting, because it enables a reconstruction of which types of fabrics were worn from the waist down in relation to the belt.

Belt fitting 89.h1 was part of the strap suspended from the waist. On the front of this object, two different fabrics were present (fig. 2.15). This implies that the belt was lying in the folds of one garment and was partly covered by a second outer

146. Textiles are associated with belt plates 77.q and 77.o, counter plate 77.r1, and strap end 77.q4.

garment or shroud. Partly wrapped around one edge is a very fine woollen tabby, 25x22 threads/cm, woven with a spin pattern in the warp: 4s-4z-4s-4z... The threads were very fine and regularly spun with a thickness of 0.2 mm. The belt was probably lying in the folds of this fabric. Also covering the belt was a coarser 2/2 twill z/z woven with 12x8 threads/cm. The threads were irregularly spun, ranging from 0.5-1mm in warp and 0.2-0.3mm in weft, resulting in a very uneven and open fabric. The fibres had the curly appearance of wool but were damaged; no positive fibre identification was possible.

A bit lower on the body was strap end 89.k2. Textile and straw were present on one side of the strap end, indicating that it had been lying on a fabric on the grave's bottom. This textile and straw may have been part of the container's lining or of a mattress on which the deceased was lying. The textile was a fine 2/2 twill z/z, smoothly spun and woven with 13x13 threads/cm. The regularity of both weave and threads is very different from the fabric found in association with the belt fitting a bit higher on the body.

It is not clear whether buckle loop 89.b1 was part of the same belt, since it was found on the other side of the body, in the waist area. It is also possible that it belonged to a pouch or other type of strap. On the front side of this buckle loop were two layers of the same fabric: a z/z tabby woven with 13x11 threads/cm. The threads of this fabric were very irregularly spun, varying from 0.2-0.7 mm thick. The threads bore the somewhat curly appearance of wool, but no positive fibre identification could be made.

In summation, it is most likely that the person buried in this grave was lying on a mattress or cloth made of a fine 2/2 twill z/z. The person was dressed in a garment composed of very fine tabby woven in a spin pattern covering at least part of the legs. Over this lay another garment (or shroud?) made of a coarser fabric, very irregularly spun and woven. The function of the fine 2/2 twill found on the buckle loop is not clear. It may have belonged to a pouch or a garment covering the waist but not the legs.

2.6 SOME PRELIMINARY TRENDS IN BURIAL TEXTILES

When comparing the different graves described above, it is obviously not yet possible to discern any clear patterns in burial clothing. Only in graves 24, 77 and 89 it is to some extent possible to reconstruct which types of textiles were worn over each other and how metal dress accessories were arranged in relation to the textiles or clothing. These graves belong to different genders and are dated at least a hundred years apart.[147] In grave 56, the textiles could not be localised so precisely. It is evident, however, that the deceased was dressed in or covered by four different textiles of varying quality. In grave 24, the male deceased wore a garment made of a coarse 2/2 twill under the belt. This garment ranged at least to the upper legs. A finer diamond twill covered the belt. It is possible that this textile belonged to a garment such as a cloak; it may also have been a shroud. It is equally plausible that the belt was lying under the body and that the person was actually lying on top of this second textile. In that case, the fine diamond twill could still be a cloak but could also have been a mattress or other type of grave lining.

The woman in grave 77 was dressed in or covered by a garment composed of a diamond twill reaching at least to the waist. Unfortunately, the textiles associated with the belt were not adhered to the metal anymore, making it impossible to ascertain whether the garment was worn atop or beneath the belt. The leg or shoe wear worn on the lower part of the legs was covered by a 2/2 twill z/z, suggesting either a long garment or a shroud encasing the entire body.

The woman in grave 89 was dressed in a garment made of a very fine tabby woven in a spin pattern. This covered at least part of her legs and was tied at the waist with a belt. Over this garment and belt lay another garment (or shroud), made of a coarser fabric, and possibly a third garment of a fine 2/2 twill reaching at least to the waist. It is noteworthy that the quality of both the undergarments varies in these two

147. Grave 24 belongs to phase I / FAG 5-7 (565-640/50); grave 77 is dated in phase I-II / FAG 7-8 (610/20-670/80) and grave 89 is dated in phase III / FAG 9 (670/80-710).

graves. In the case of grave 24, the undergarment is much coarser than the outer garment. In grave 89, the opposite is true, containing a very fine undergarment and a coarser outer garment.

The textile finds also enable some preliminary conclusions relating to the association of types of fabrics to specific objects in the graves. Many textiles were found in association with belt parts. In practically all these cases, the textiles were either 2/2 twills or 2/2 diamond twills of varying quality. In most cases these fabrics were present on the front side of the belts. This does not necessarily mean that the garments were worn over the belt; it is also possible that they were worn beneath but partly folded over the belt. One example clearly showed a 2/2 twill worn under the belt. Grave 89 is the only grave where it can be shown that the deceased wore a garment woven in a fine tabby under the belt.

The shield boss from grave 64 was covered by a 2/2 twill z/s of medium quality (10x7 threads/cm). The shield was probably standing against the side of the grave. It is possible that the shield fell on top of the clothing, but it is also likely that the shield was completely wrapped in a separate piece of textile.

There are only a few textiles woven in tabby observed in the cemetery of Bergeijk. These fabrics are associated with a broad range of objects: a knife, a rivet (function unknown), a buckle loop (of a belt or pouch), a belt and an iron ring. In some cases, these objects may have been worn under or between the cloths, making it likely that the tabby was used as an undergarment.