**Putting family first: commemorating children in early Anglo-Saxon England**

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**Childhood in early Anglo-Saxon England has been the subject of many studies over the past two decades. Much of this research has focussed on the identity of juveniles belonging to households that favoured the inhumation rite with little consideration of their contemporaries from cremation practicing groups. However, more recent studies have redressed this balance resulting in a more rounded understanding of the representation of children and childhood in early Anglo-Saxon society. This paper will explore the commemoration of the ideal child and attitudes towards children in early Anglo-Saxon England. An examination of grave provisions, the spatial distribution of children’s burials within cemeteries and the multiple burial rite will demonstrate that, despite the significant differences between the cremation and inhumation rite, the youngest members of society were commemorated in a similar manner. Communities placed an emphasis on the care and protection of children in life and death while the lack of clear gender divisions and roles ascribed to juveniles highlights the attribution of a unique identity to these individuals. The burial evidence addressed in this paper will highlight that children formed an integral part of household units in early Anglo-Saxon England and were commemorated as such at the funeral.**