

CONFIDENTIAL

ADVISORY REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

8 April 2024

ANONYMISED VERSION

Drafted by an investigating committee whose members are:

- Dr. Yvonne Erkens LL.M. (chair)
- Prof. Tea Mellema-Kranenburg
- Prof. Maghiel van Crevel

This document is a translation of the original Dutch advisory report and is for information purposes only. In the event of any discrepancy, the original Dutch document is binding.

This advisory report was prompted by:

Reports of unacceptable behaviour and violation of academic integrity in the Faculty of Archaeology of Leiden University.

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1 WHAT THIS IS ABOUT

This advice was prompted by concerns about the behaviour of two academics and about an environment that enables and facilitates this behaviour. A broad framework is needed to do justice to these concerns and to understand this behaviour and its context. The committee defines this framework as **how people interact in a university environment**.

This is a high-pressure environment. The academic profession is internationally competitive, and resources and positions are scarce. Many academics are driven and ambitious. Collaboration with others is essential but does not come naturally. There are steep **power differences and dependencies**, formal and informal, with major consequences for people's careers and lives.

These power differences and dependencies can be exacerbated by excessive attention to a narrowly defined form of productivity, as if the product itself exists without the people who create it. Thus, individual academics who bring in a lot of **external research funding** can be put on a pedestal, even though writing grant applications is just one part of their work.

Conversely, the **organisational culture** often receives too little attention in the university environment. Those who are formally responsible for the well-being of others in the university, for example as research leaders, do not always receive proper guidance and are not always called to account and corrected if things are at risk of going wrong. Without such guidance, accountability and correction, unacceptable behaviour is more likely to occur.

Unacceptable behaviour harms people and reduces the quality of the work they do. Those who encounter such behaviour and ask for help are not always truly heard or helped, and asking for help can even result in further harm. Unacceptable behaviour is seldom attributable only to the perpetrators, because the role of the environment is crucial. It is a problem for all those involved: victims, bystanders, perpetrators and the organisation.

The way people interact in a university environment stands in the service of **good academic practice**. One of the conditions for this is academic integrity. In recent decades it has become evident that social safety is just as much a condition for good academic practice, and that social safety and academic integrity are closely interwoven. These insights are articulated and substantiated in *Social Safety in Dutch Academia: From Paper to Practice*, a report by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW) (2022, see Literature List).

There is also *Niets gezien, niets gehoord en niets gedaan: de zoekgemaakte verantwoordelijkheid* [Saw nothing, heard nothing, did nothing: responsibility misplaced], a report by the Investigating Committee on Conduct and Culture in Broadcasting (2024, *idem*). The similarities with the KNAW report stand out, and *Niets gezien* further develops a sensible definition of unacceptable behaviour in a professional environment, and specifically of **transgressive** behaviour.

In placing its investigation in the broader context mentioned above, the committee has benefited from these two reports and from the consultation of **experts**. In this foreword and throughout this advisory report, the committee draws on these reports and consultations, in particular for reaching a judgement and offering reflection on the matter at hand, and for motivating its recommendations to the Executive Board.

2 SUMMARY

Investigation

In September 2023 the Executive Board of Leiden University appointed a committee that it charged with investigating alleged unacceptable behaviour, alleged violation of academic integrity and alleged fraud by two staff members of the Faculty of Archaeology. The present document is the committee's advisory report on the matter to the Executive Board.

Findings

- **Unacceptable behaviour:** the committee considers it plausible that the staff members in question displayed unacceptable and frequently transgressive behaviour over a long period of time, and thereby inhibited and harmed others.
- **Academic integrity:** the committee considers it plausible that the staff members in question violated academic integrity in two instances and that they pushed and possibly crossed the boundaries of what is permissible in other instances.
- **Fraud:** the committee has no indication that the staff members in question have committed fraud.
- **Criminal offences:** in two instances, the committee considers it possible that the behaviour of the staff members in question could qualify as criminal offences. Further investigation would be needed to determine this. In the light of the documentation available to the committee and the date of the behaviour in question, the committee does not believe that further investigation would be beneficial.
- **Nota bene:** the committee draws attention to the role of the environment that has permitted and facilitated the behaviour of the staff members in question, and believes that it would not be right to focus only on these two staff members.

Recommendations

The committee recommends that the Executive Board work towards:

- **Healing** for all those involved who are affiliated with the Faculty of Archaeology, including the two staff members in question.
- **Improving the organisational culture** in the Faculty of Archaeology, in dialogue with representatives from the other Faculties.
- **Improving the system for correcting behaviour**, at Faculty and University level: this is about the system of confidential counsellors and about alertness, responsiveness and willingness to follow up on the part of the relevant administrators.

3 THE INVESTIGATION BRIEF

3.1 PREVIOUS HISTORY

Towards the end of 2022, the Dean of the Faculty of Archaeology of Leiden University received three oral reports of alleged unacceptable behaviour by a staff member who will be referred to here as "Person A," professor of [-----] in the Faculty. The reports were made by a staff member, a guest staff member and a former student. In January 2023, the Dean received a further three oral reports of alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A, from two other staff members and a student. The two staff members indicated that they were speaking on behalf of a group of at least ten individuals.

The Dean informed the Executive Board of the University of these reports. The Executive Board asked the Dean to bring them to the attention of the Legal Affairs department. At the request of the Legal Affairs department, the Dean also provided information about earlier signals of alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A, which had reached him since 2018.

In consultation with Legal Affairs, the Faculty Board set up an orientation team consisting of the Dean, the Executive Director, a senior Human Resources policy officer and an external social safety expert. The team was tasked with talking with those who felt the need for this, and was instructed not to conduct any investigation themselves but to listen to the accounts of those involved and to record these in broad strokes. Legal Affairs indicated that the Dean could actively look for potential notifiers [Dutch *melder*, one who formally asks for attention to be given to a matter of concern; the present document uses *notifier* to distinguish *melders* from the committee's other informants]. The Dean then informed the two staff members who had said they were speaking on behalf of a group of people that potential notifiers could contact him.

A number of individuals contacted the Dean by mail or telephone to offer reports on the matter, and were invited to individual meetings with the orientation team. These meetings took place from March to May 2023. Confidential written minutes were made of the meetings. One meeting took place between only the Dean and one notifier, in August. The minutes of the meetings were submitted to Legal Affairs in anonymised form.

The conversations related not only to the behaviour of Person A, but also to the behaviour of a staff member, referred to here as "Person B," who had worked with Person A for a long time. Person B was previously affiliated with the Faculty as senior university lecturer of [-----], and is presently a guest staff member at the Faculty.

To be able to initiate an investigation and give Person A and Person B the opportunity to respond to the reports, the Dean, acting on the advice of Legal Affairs, asked the notifiers to surrender their anonymity and to draft and submit written statements in their own name. With a view to the possible consequences among other things, the notifiers gave this their consideration. In a meeting, Legal Affairs sketched out to them how a possible investigation would proceed, and in September 2023 twelve notifiers submitted individual statements in their own name to Legal Affairs. Some of these used the minutes of their meeting with the orientation team for this purpose.

The Dean then informed the Executive Board, requesting that an investigation be undertaken. On 28 September, the Executive Board appointed a committee to this end, issued an investigation brief, and shared with the committee the twelve statements submitted by the notifiers in their own name.

On 10 October, the Dean shared the statements with Person A and Person B. On 12 October, the Executive Board forwarded to the committee statements by five new notifiers. On 18 October, a further notifier made themselves known. This person did not draft a written statement but indicated they were prepared to make an oral statement to the committee. On 12 and 16 October, the Executive Board forwarded addenda to two of the statements from the first set of twelve to the committee. On 25 October, the committee received a statement from a further notifier. With the agreement of the new notifiers and the authors of the addenda, on 3 and 7 November the committee shared the new statements and the addenda with Person A and Person B.

3.2 THE COMMITTEE

The notifier statements moved the Executive Board to appoint an investigating committee on 28 September 2023, with the following instruction:

“On the basis of the twelve statements received, the Executive Board instructs you, as the Investigating Committee, to carry out an investigation into alleged unacceptable behaviour towards present and former staff and students at the Faculty of Archaeology, alleged violation of academic integrity and alleged fraud by [Person A], and, once this investigation has been completed, to provide the Executive Board with advice. In the event that further statements should arrive during the course of the investigation, whether these can be included in the investigation will be at the discretion of the Investigating Committee.

The Executive Board also tasks the Investigating Committee with informing the Board about any information relating to possible criminal offences committed by [Person A] that comes to the attention of the Investigating Committee during the investigation.

The reports that are known to the Executive Board also relate to [Person B]. The circumstance that the accusations made against [Person A] and [Person B] are so entwined with one another that they cannot be considered and judged separately means that these accusations must be investigated in conjunction with one another. The Investigating Committee’s brief therefore extends to the accusations directed at [Person B], who was also employed by the Faculty of Archaeology in the period to which the accusations relate. Also at the present moment, [Person B] is still affiliated with the Faculty, as a guest researcher. An active contribution by [Person B] to the investigation by the Investigating Committee is therefore desirable, but is not a necessary condition for the investigation into the reports relating to [Person A].”

The committee has the following members:

- Dr. Yvonne Erkens LL.M. (chair), current chair of the Leiden University and Leiden University Medical Center Academic Integrity Committee, and former chair of the Leiden University Complaints Committee for Unacceptable Behaviour
- Em. Prof. Tea Mellema-Kranenburg, current chair of the Leiden University Complaints Committee for Unacceptable Behaviour
- Prof. Maghiel van Crevel, member of the Leiden University and Leiden University Medical Center Academic Integrity Committee.

The committee is supported by:

- Francisca Coladarci LL.M., Legal Affairs department
- Willem de Wit LL.M., Legal Affairs department.

3.3 REGULATIONS

The Executive Board instructed the committee to apply the definitions of unacceptable behaviour and violation of academic integrity as set out in the Leiden University *Regulations on Complaints Relating to Unacceptable Behaviour* [*Klachtregeling ongewenst gedrag*] (2022, see Literature List) and the Leiden University & Leiden University Medical Centre *Regulations on Complaints Relating to Academic Integrity* [*Klachtregeling wetenschappelijke integriteit*] (2019, *idem*). The latter use the expression “infringement” as well as “violation”; this advisory report will use “violation” throughout.

The Executive Board has determined that the working method of the investigation is subject to article 6, article 8, paragraphs 6 up to and including paragraph 9, and article 11 of the *Regulations on Complaints Relating to Academic Integrity*, and that the Investigating Committee itself can decide in cases not provided for in the *Regulations*.

4 THE INVESTIGATION

4.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Person A and Person B have worked together within the Faculty of Archaeology since the late 1980s and are a married couple. Both have been affiliated with the Faculty [-----] as staff members since the early 1990s [-----]. Since the autumn of 2019 both have also been affiliated with [-----], via secondment. Person A and Person B have conducted frequent fieldwork in [-----] and have supervised large numbers of bachelor's and master's students, PhD candidates and postdocs, and other staff members. Fieldwork campaigns usually last from several weeks to several months.

Person A became a lecturer in 1990, senior lecturer in 2002 and professor in 2007. Over the past decades she has been awarded a series of national and European research funding, including [-----]. She has won various prizes, including [-----]; and [-----]. Person A was Dean of the Faculty of Archaeology from 2013 to 2018 and has held administrative posts in various bodies outside the University, including [-----].

Person B became a lecturer in 1992 and senior lecturer in 2008. [-----] Person B acquired [-----] research funding [-----].

With their many years of collaboration, Person A and Person B have played a prominent and influential role in the local and international field of the archaeology of [-----]. Needless to say, the committee in no way pronounces on the quality of their academic work.

4.2 WORKING METHOD

Confidentiality

The committee has worked under confidentiality and has asked all those with whom it has communicated to treat all aspects of this investigation confidentially.

Those involved

Besides the notifiers and Person A and Person B, the committee considers those involved [*de betrokkenen*] to include the following: anyone who can provide information relevant to the investigation based on their own observations. During an information meeting and subsequently in a written notice to the notifiers and to Person A and Person B, the committee indicated that all were free to bring other persons involved to the committee's attention or to ask these persons to contact the committee. The decision on whether or not to hear these persons rested with the committee.

Informants

The committee has taken note of the views of 37 informants whose statements are directly relevant for the investigation. These include:

- **Nineteen notifiers** who submitted statements in their own name regarding alleged unacceptable behaviour and alleged violation of academic integrity by Person A and/or Person B.
- **Person A and Person B.** With regard to the views of Person A and Person B, the committee also mentions here:

- **Two persons** who are familiar with the notifier statements, apparently via Person A and Person B, and who have responded to these in writing, with reactions that are relevant to the investigation. These reactions were sent to the committee by Person A and Person B.
 - The reactions of these two persons were included in a set of documents written by 39 individuals that was sent to the committee by Person A and Person B at the end of November and in early December 2023 [-----]. In February and March 2024, Person A and Person B sent a further forty statements to the committee. Fourteen of these are also included in the first set; six are new statements by persons of whom the first set also includes a statement; twenty are by other persons. This makes a total of 59 persons who have written such a statement.
 - These documents can be considered as counter-statements for substantiating the views of Person A and Person B; they vary as regards their nature, perspective and length. The authors include fellow researchers in the Netherlands and abroad, representatives of local communities in [-----], PhD candidates, postdocs, heritage professionals (NGOs, museums), psychologists and friends of Person A and Person B.
 - The committee has determined that these documents have little or no direct relevance to the investigation brief, apart from the reactions of the two persons mentioned above. It appears from other counter-statements that their authors are also familiar with the notifier statements and/or with the process of which these are a part. It is not clear to the committee whether this applies to the authors of all counter-statements, how this information found its way to the persons involved, how much of it did so, in what form and in what context.
- **Eleven other colleagues** (excluding the Dean of Archaeology; see below). Seven of these persons were mentioned by one or more notifiers, in a notifier statement (2) and/or in response to questions from the committee (7), and were subsequently approached by the committee. The committee approached the other four on its own initiative.
- **Three (former) administrators** at department, Faculty and University level. One is the Dean of Archaeology, who brought the issue to the attention of the Executive Board. The committee approached the other two on its own initiative.

Material

The committee has taken note of the views of the informants by means of **written and oral statements**. Twenty-one persons made statements both in writing and orally, seven in writing only and eight only orally. The written notifier statements vary in length, from one to ten A4 pages with single line spacing. The oral statements were made partly in person and partly in a secure online environment; the committee offered those involved the opportunity to talk about issues that they believed to be important, and committee members themselves asked questions about the matter at hand and its context. These meetings varied in length from between 30 and 45 minutes to over two hours. The committee spoke with some informants more than once. Audio recordings were made of these meetings, exclusively for the purpose of written reports made by

and for the committee. These recordings will be destroyed once the committee has concluded its work.

In addition to the statements, the committee has taken note of **correspondence submitted subsequently** by informants (written during the investigation) and **documentation** (items from an earlier date). Most of this information was provided to the committee by the informants after a general request made by the committee. In a number of cases, the committee itself asked for further information, on specific topics or otherwise.

The committee requested **administrative documentation** from the Faculty of Archaeology and the Executive Board.

A fair hearing

Although this is not a complaints procedure, the committee has made every effort to adhere to the principle of **a fair hearing** [*hoor en wederhoor*] within the given context. This context can be characterised as follows.

On the one hand the notifiers are largely in a precarious position. Complaining in their own name about alleged behaviour by Person A and Person B makes them vulnerable, due to the prominence and influence of both Persons among other things. The committee remarks that several notifiers (and other colleagues) expressed in written and oral statements and correspondence the fear that their statements would have adverse consequences for them; and that the committee considered this fear understandable, both *per se* and on the grounds of certain elements of its vision of the matter at hand as this has taken shape in the course of the investigation. The committee also felt obliged to protect the notifiers where possible while respecting the principle of a fair hearing.

On the other hand it is important for Person A and Person B to know what has been stated about their behaviour, because they would otherwise be less able to tell their side of the story. Hence, as mentioned, all written notifier statements were made available to Person A and Person B, with the permission of the notifiers.

During a meeting with Person A and Person B, the committee also showed them transcripts of key passages from a number of items in the correspondence and documentation submitted by notifiers and other colleagues, after obtaining permission from the informants in question. These were documents that the committee considered would probably weigh heavily in its judgement.

The committee only showed Person A and Person B the passages in question and did not make the statements otherwise available to them, because the committee learned that Person A and Person B had apparently not treated the notifier statements with confidentiality but shared them with third parties; and because various notifiers indicated this on their own initiative, pointing to messages from the international field of archaeology.

A bigger picture and a broad framework

The committee did not set itself the goal of verifying all the claims by all the informants. This would be an impossible task because the investigation extended to hundreds of pages of text and dozens of hours of meetings [with informants], and because hard evidence for the claims is limited. The latter point flows partly from **the nature of the matter at hand**: to a significant degree, the case concerns alleged unacceptable behaviour in the form of oral communications and other interactions of which there is no documentation, and a considerable proportion of the alleged events took place in the

(distant) past. Where documentation is in fact available, the committee checked the statements against this.

In anonymised form, the committee separately put the matter at hand to two **experts**, both psychologists but with different specialisations. These experts exchanged ideas with the committee and recommended specialist literature. Consultation of the experts mainly focused on the **social dynamics** surrounding unacceptable behaviour and the **reliability** of notifier statements. On the latter point, one of the two experts drafted a written exposition in general terms, tailored to the matter at hand.

Moreover, from the many individual statements the committee worked towards developing a **bigger picture** to make it possible to pose further questions, identify potential informants and contextualise and understand the matter at hand.

The importance of the personal experiences of all individuals involved – the notifiers, Person A, Person B, other colleagues and administrators – is beyond dispute. At the same time, the committee stresses again that it positions its advice in the **broad framework** of how people interact in a university environment.

Work schedule

The Investigating Committee met for the first time on 13 October 2023. The committee subsequently met on a weekly basis until early in April 2024.

The committee invited the notifiers and Person A and Person B to an information meeting on 27 October. Only the lawyer representing Person A and Person B and the lawyers representing a group of the notifiers were present at this meeting. Via the lawyers, the committee asked all those involved to treat all aspects of the investigation as confidential, offered an oral explanation of the principles for its intended work method and answered questions. On 7 November the committee shared these principles in writing with the notifiers and with Person A and Person B.

On 13, 20 and 27 November and on 4 and 11 December the committee had separate meetings with seventeen of the notifiers (it considered meetings with two of the notifiers as unnecessary). On 11 December, the committee spoke with the Dean of Archaeology; in the subsequent months it had a number of follow-up meetings with the Dean, in one case together with another informant. On 18 December it had separate meetings with Person A and Person B. The committee also approached ten other potentially involved persons and found them prepared to speak to the committee. These meetings took place on 27 November, 9 and 15 January and 5 February. On 11 March, the committee spoke again with Person A and Person B, this time together. On 18 March, the committee had a final meeting with the Dean.

The committee has endeavoured to act with proper care but also with promptness. If it took some considerable time to arrive at this advisory note, this is because the matter at hand is both large and complex, proper care necessitated meetings with a large number of informants and the committee members carried out this task alongside their regular duties.

4.3 THE RESPECTIVE PARTIES AND THEIR PERSPECTIVES

Information is given below about four categories of informants to the committee, followed for each by a sketch of their perspective on the matter, as follows:

- The notifiers
- Person A and Person B
- Other colleagues
- Administrators

To reduce the possibility of individuals being identified, the committee avoids the use of personal names. Instead, it presents the views of individual notifiers and other colleagues in conjunction where possible, in relation to themes it discerns in the investigation material. For the same reason, foreign-language quotes have been translated into Dutch.

Unacceptable behaviour and transgressive behaviour

The notions of “unacceptable behaviour” [*ongewenst gedrag*] and “transgressive behaviour” [*grensoverschrijdend gedrag*] are sometimes used interchangeably, in the media and in other settings. “Unacceptable behaviour” comprises more than “transgressive behaviour” (all transgressive behaviour is unacceptable, but not all unacceptable behaviour is transgressive). “Transgressive” offers an angle on the unacceptable behaviour that prioritises the experience of the victims and the impact on the victims and their environment.

The committee sometimes speaks of transgressive behaviour because informants use this notion, or because the committee believes that this notion is useful for typifying specific behaviour described by the informants. To illustrate the latter point, the committee draws on *Niets gezien*, the report on public broadcasting. This offers three anchorage points for classifying behaviour as transgressive:

- If the behaviour is described as such in law;
- If the behaviour endangers the central task and mission of the institution and the goal of its work;
- If the consequences for the person and environment are such that they inhibit staff in their performance and in achieving their work objectives.

The committee considers the third point to be particularly important. On this issue, the authors of *Niets gezien* refer not only to their own research but also to social-scientific specialist literature. In *Niets gezien*, the description of the three anchorage points is accompanied by this comment, which the committee believes touches the heart of the matter at hand:

- “Transgressive behaviour inhibits a person’s performance, it undermines people’s ability to work well together, to perform well and to feel part of the organisation” (p12).

Description, not qualification

The process of reading, sorting, selecting and summarising the information available to the committee clearly involves analytical and interpretive moments. In this paragraph, however, the committee undertakes to describe the perspectives of the respective parties, not to qualify them in any sense.

4.3.1 The notifiers

Nine of the notifiers are women, ten are men. All worked directly with Person A and/or Person B, during different periods between 1990 and 2023: seventeen in the context of research and teaching (as a student, PhD candidate, postdoc or regular staff member), one as a fellow administrator and one as [-----]. The list below follows the chronology of their work with Person A and/or Person B. One notifier has only worked incidentally with Person A (as [-----]). For others, the length of the periods during which there was substantial professional contact varies from three to 25 years, with an average of eight to nine years. The dates below are approximations.

By "working with," the committee also means "studying under." By "staff members," the committee also means PhD candidates and postdocs.

In relation to fieldwork, some notifiers specify where and when the alleged events took place. They mention 25 to 30 fieldwork campaigns at a dozen places in [-----]. Other notifiers also draw on experiences during fieldwork, but without specifying the campaigns.

All notifiers state that they have personally experienced behaviour by Person A and/or Person B of which the committee observes that such behaviour qualifies as unacceptable behaviour and/or violation of academic integrity. A majority also state that they have witnessed such behaviour when it was experienced by others.

List of notifiers

- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
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- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]

The notifiers on unacceptable behaviour: the general picture

The **general picture** sketched by the notifier statements is as follows.

- Over a period of 25–30 years, Person A and Person B have through **abuse of power** and **manipulation** displayed behaviour that has led to a profound **lack of social safety** in the [-----] research group. Patterns can be discerned in this behaviour, core notions being bullying and intimidation, and in a wider sense the overstepping of personal and professional boundaries. This behaviour has had a broader resonance within the Faculty of Archaeology, particularly during Person A's term as Dean, from 2013 to 2018.
- Person A and Person B operate as **a team** in the local and international field of [-----], with Person A as the driving force. The above-mentioned behaviour is largely attributable to Person A. The role played by Person B is often that of an accomplice or facilitator; or that of a closely involved colleague who could intervene but fails to do so.
- Person A and Person B are responsible for their own behaviour, but that behaviour has to a significant degree been made possible and at times encouraged by the **environment**. The culture in the Faculty is unhealthy; at Faculty and University level there is a detrimental social dynamic of glorification of the individual in relation to the acquisition of external research funding; reporting problems to confidential counsellors is pointless and even risky; and administrators at Faculty and University level are not sufficiently alert to and responsive to problem signs when these emerge.
- The behaviour of Person A and Person B has led to a **culture of fear** in the group around them; to the **normalising** of unacceptable behaviour in the eyes of students and young researchers; and to **demoralisation and cynicism** about the scientific establishment on the part of staff members in varying positions who have experienced this behaviour themselves or have observed others being subjected to it.
- Person A and Person B have regularly **used** those who were dependent on them rather than respecting their autonomy, promoting their interests and showing concern for their development. In doing so, they have regularly disregarded their responsibility as senior academics, supervisors and (in the case of Person A) administrator, and have inhibited and harmed others in their well-being and professional development.

According to the notifiers, a key issue is that Person A and Person B have insufficiently respected personal and professional **boundaries** in their dealings with others, and have in some respects run the group around them as a (dysfunctional) family, by improperly making professional relationships personal and emotional. This manifests itself in such traits as excessive control, favouring and disadvantaging individuals (with unpredictable shifts in mood and attitude and manipulative use of reward and punishment), enjoinder to silence on any problems, enforcing loyalty, retaliation against "traitors" (for example, people who accept academic positions elsewhere) and breaches of privacy.

Several notifiers claim that the **psychological impact** of the behaviour of Person A and Person B has been profound. More closely involved notifiers describe this impact as traumatic, in some cases up to the present day. In some ten cases, informants speak of a burn-out, at least partly as a consequence of the behaviour of Person A and Person B. Nine notifiers say this about themselves, one says it about a (tenth) colleague.

Several notifiers state that they feel they have been **thwarted**, as a result of obstruction to their own work or excessive demands regarding duties outside their own. For example: they have been unable to (properly) complete their projects, they have been unable to pursue their preferred career, they have achieved less than would have been possible in a healthy working environment, they have seen their networks being damaged or they have failed others to whom they feel obliged.

Several notifiers state that the behaviour of Person A and Person B has resulted in (permanent) **harm**, at work and in the private realm. This takes the form of sadness, regret, shame, frustration, the normalisation of being subjected to transgressive behaviour and vulnerability and distrust. One notifier, who works in commercial archaeology, indicates that they have suffered material damage.

Several notifiers state that they know of many other (former) students and staff members of the Faculty of Archaeology who have been harmed by the behaviour of Person A and Person B. The notifiers believe that these staff members have not, and will not, report their experience out of **fear of retaliation**, given their experiences with Person A and Person B, the international network of both individuals and the status and power of Person A in the discipline.

Several notifiers mention as the **motivation** for their statements the desire for injustice and personal suffering to be recognised, but also the desire to help prevent the behaviour of Person A and Person B from continuing with new victims.

According to the notifiers, that they have **only recently reported** their experiences, even though a considerable proportion of the events took place in the past, is due to a combination of factors.

- Firstly, at the time they had no confidence in the willingness and ability of confidential counsellors and administrators to take action, insofar as they were familiar with the possible routes to approaching them; and they were afraid that speaking up about their complaints, formally or otherwise, would have negative consequences for themselves.
- Secondly, those who used to be professionally dependent on Person A and/or Person B (this is the vast majority) are now no longer so.
- Thirdly, the University's administrators seem more responsive to problem signs now than in previous years, and more prepared to act on them. A number of notifiers say that they infer this in part from a complaints procedure [-----] that was covered extensively in the news.

The notifiers on unacceptable behaviour: the specifics

The Leiden University *Regulations on Complaints Relating to Unacceptable Behaviour* distinguishes **four types of unacceptable behaviour**: intimidation/bullying, sexual intimidation, aggression and violence, and discrimination. Intimidation and bullying in a narrower sense are mentioned below as separate categories, as is (pregnancy) discrimination. The summary below also includes other behaviour that can qualify as intimidation or bullying, and classifies this under such key concepts as undermining, control and exploitation.

The notifier statements mention **specific behaviour** by Person A and Person B for which the committee observes that such behaviour qualifies as unacceptable and frequently as transgressive. The statements claim that this behaviour occurred on campus, during archaeological fieldwork and during local and international academic gatherings. Where it relates only to fieldwork, this is indicated in the summary below.

The summary is **not an exhaustive enumeration**, but the committee believes that these categories (which overlap in some cases) do justice to important aspects of the statements. Most categories are mentioned by notifiers from different academic generations.

The committee does not indicate each time whether the notifier statements ascribe the behaviour in question to Person A or to Person B. The majority of the statements mention Person A as the **initiator** and Person B as an **accessory or facilitator**.

- **Bullying**

- Mainly denigration and humiliation. The statements contain many examples of this, including lambasting and deriding work (such as fieldwork or research presentations), one to one and in the presence of others; laughing at people and mocking them (for instance, mocking obesity); publicly casting doubt on the qualities of staff members (for example, saying someone is "useless").
- Unequal treatment of staff members / students and manipulating relations between staff/students: favouring and disadvantaging individuals, sometimes leading to their exclusion (conspicuously ignoring them, "blacklisting" them) and, according to some notifiers, with elements of sexism, *in casu* disadvantaging women; playing off staff members / students against one another.

- **Intimidation**

- For example, raising the voice, shouting and outbursts of anger; blunt and coarse comments on draft versions of dissertations, use of aggressive language in emails; a threatening, incorrect accusation of plagiarism (during a meeting, not through a formal complaint); requests by Person A to staff members to share a bedroom or a double bed with Person A, during conferences and fieldwork (given the power relations, such a request amounted to an instruction).
 - During archaeological fieldwork it is common practice to share rooms and beds. What matters here is the role of power relations in the process that determines who will share a room or bed with whom.
- Power games relating to study and career opportunities: for example, the threat of harming a person's career or rejection for a Research Master's programme. In the context of power games, notifiers also mention empty promises of jobs.
- Various notifiers refer to a permanently intimidating atmosphere.

- **Pregnancy discrimination**

- For example, the threat of harm to one's career; describing pregnancy as inhibiting work; exclusion of a pregnant researcher and her partner (conspicuously ignoring them).
- In relation to the above: inadequate consideration of staff members' pregnancy and related health issues, for example concerning the entitlement to leave or the availability of suitable food during fieldwork.

- **Undermining, obstruction and thwarting**
 - For example, discouraging or prohibiting training with another research leader, along with an appeal to loyalty towards Person A and Person B; denying access to equipment; denying access to data; discouraging and possibly sabotaging a career move; denying support and collaboration to someone who accepts an appointment elsewhere, and forbidding staff members to be in contact with the person concerned; damaging relations between staff members and between staff members and others.
 - Slander was an important element in this behaviour.
- **Far-reaching and manipulative control**
 - For example, frequent checks on whether people are at their desks (on campus); strict regulation of visits to the toilet during fieldwork; questioning one staff member about another staff member; phone calls from Person B to one staff member to check what another person is doing during fieldwork, where Person B prevents the first person from allowing the second person to take the phone call directly.
- **Exploitation of others from a position of power**
 - For example, having others take on teaching and thesis supervision that remains listed under the name of Person A or Person B; disproportionate reliance on others and disproportionate use of their ideas in the writing of grant applications and journal articles by Person A and Person B; unjustified claims to co-authorship; pushing for the citation of Person A and Person B's publications; asking extra work of a staff member in a precarious position, who can hardly refuse.
 - Here, the committee mentions this behaviour as an illustration of alleged unacceptable behaviour. Certain elements of this behaviour also qualify as violations of academic integrity, and will be addressed as such below.
- **Exposure of staff/students to danger** (fieldwork)
 - For example, dangerous driving, including under the influence of alcohol and with escalating, almost physical conflicts between Person A and Person B; inadequate attention to the protection of young women against harassment; pressurising staff members / students to drink alcohol and to participate in the local nightlife.
- **Exposure of staff/students to needlessly inadequate and at times irresponsibly inadequate conditions** (fieldwork)
 - For example, insufficient food, insufficient (clean) water, poor sleeping facilities; excessive workloads.
- **Drawing others into the private life of Person A and Person B**
 - For example, flaming rows and mutual denigration between Person A and Person B, in the presence or absence of the other person, including verbal abuse and some physical confrontation; and Person A instructing staff members to calm down Person B, in a drunken and unmanageable state, and to bring him safely back to the fieldwork accommodation.

The notifiers on violation of academic integrity

The notifier statements mention behaviour by Person A and Person B of which the committee observes that such behaviour qualifies as violation of academic integrity, on campus and during fieldwork, in the categories below among others. The summary is **not an exhaustive enumeration**, but the committee believes it does justice to important aspects of the statements.

- **Violent extraction and purloinment of human remains without a permit**
 - A number of notifiers state that they recall from their time as PhD candidates examples of questionable treatment of human remains by Person B and Person A.
 - Three notifiers made written and oral statements regarding an alleged event during fieldwork in 2009 [-----]. Two state that they witnessed this event, and one states that they heard about this the same day and, to substantiate this, presented documentation that dates from the day after the alleged event. In summary, the notifiers state the following:
 - Person A and Person B had for a long time wanted to sample human dental remains in a local depot. The local authority [-----] continually refused permission for this.
 - On [-----] 2009, Person A and Person B went to the depot to take samples, accompanied by two of the three notifiers. [The local authority] was not aware of their intention to take samples and had not issued a permit for this. Person A engaged [the local authority] in conversation to keep him occupied; they were not or no longer within viewing or hearing distance of the space where the remains were located. Inside that space, Person B instructed the two notifiers to remove the dental remains. The two notifiers were shocked and refused on the grounds of ethical objections related to the absence of a permit, and left the space. From outside the depot it was possible to see how Person B extracted the dental remains himself. He did this using tongs, a hammer and a screwdriver, in a violent manner and disregarding generally accepted ethical and technical rules in the field of archaeology. Person A and Person B then took the dental remains away with them, still without the knowledge of the local authority. This was illegal and amounted to theft.
 - The committee raises the alleged behaviour of Person B and the alleged facilitation of this behaviour by Person A as possible violation of academic integrity, but notes that such acts also qualify as unacceptable and transgressive behaviour, given the alleged attempt to make the two PhD candidates complicit. According to the statements of all three PhD candidates, they experienced this episode and the aftermath (including an enjoinder to silence and the accompanying threats) as intimidating.

- A fourth notifier states the following. In 2006, notifier [-----] was instructed by Person B via Person A [-----] to remove human teeth and molars from a depot during a forthcoming trip to [-----] and bring them back to the Netherlands. [-----] Person B explained that the notifier, who themselves had no experience of working with human remains, should pull out the teeth from the skulls with pliers or a multi-tool (Leatherman). However, [at the location] the local authority indicated that no agreements had been made for this and that without a permit there could be no question of sampling and collection of human remains [-----]. The notifier experienced this as “a very painful and embarrassing situation” and describes the episode as “shocking” because Person B and Person A evidently saw no ethical objections.
- **Malpractice in handling access to data**
- Several notifiers from different academic generations state that Person A and Person B engaged in malpractice in handling access to data: granting access, denying or withdrawing access, demanding access, monopolising access.
 - One notifier states that Person A wanted to publish on data generated by the notifier before the notifier themselves had done this, and discouraged the notifier from publishing on this data themselves. Another notifier states that, contrary to previous agreements, Person A denied the notifier access to a data set and they unexpectedly had to generate data themselves, which contributed to the process of a “dream [position]” turning into a “nightmare.” A third notifier states along similar lines that Person B unexpectedly withdrew access to data needed for the notifier’s research, following a conflict. A fourth states that Person A asked for access to their data in order to add the data to a large database, that she did this so forcefully that the notifier did not dare to refuse, and that the notifier themselves was not given access to this database.

The notifier statements also mention behaviour by Person A and Person B of which the committee observes that such behaviour pushes the boundaries of what is permissible in terms of academic integrity:

- **Issues relating to authorship**
- Several notifiers from different academic generations make the following statements on issues relating to authorship.
 - In particular Person A but also Person B regularly claimed co-authorship of publications to which they had not made any substantial contribution or that the staff member in question wanted to publish independently. For publications to which they did contribute, they sometimes claimed a higher position in the sequence of authors than their contribution justified. In most cases, Person A was able to enforce the attribution of authorship or the higher position in the sequence of authors (for herself or for Person B) by dint of her position of power; in some cases notifiers were able to withstand such interventions.
 - One notifier states they were forced to add Person A as co-author of all publications arising from the [-----] project, even when she had not made any substantial contribution, and provides a number of examples in subsequent correspondence; another notifier paints

the same picture. The first notifier adds that the project manager passed this rule on to staff members on behalf of all research leaders (one of whom was Person A), and that the notifier experiences this as a general, detrimental phenomenon [-----].

- Another notifier states that Person A forced the addition of two co-authors to an article the notifier had written with Person A, “for political reasons,” these being a local archaeologist and Person B; the notifier consequently ended up as the fourth of four authors rather than the second of two authors.
- Conversely, other notifiers state that Person A and Person B did not always give staff members the recognition they deserved for supporting research, such as developing a database, writing fieldwork reports, formatting publications and analysing skeletal material.
 - One notifier states the following: when Person B indicated that he was going to publish together with another researcher on skeletal material that had been primarily analysed by the notifier, the notifier claimed co-authorship, after consulting colleagues; Person B rejected this claim and exploded in anger. Another notifier states they were not named in a list of staff members in the [-----] project, in spite of having made important contributions.

- **Citation pushing**

- Several notifiers from different academic generations state that Person A and Person B systematically urged staff members and students to cite publications by Person A and Person B in their own publications. Four notifiers state that this behaviour was structural. Two indicate that this is a grey area because the question of the relevance of specific specialist literature for new publications is not always easy to answer.
- One of the above-mentioned four notifiers, a fifth notifier and a sixth notifier state that feedback by Person A on their written work barely touched on the content of the work and mainly consisted of adding references to publications by Person A or Person B themselves: this concerns draft versions of an article for a specialist journal (fourth notifier), of a dissertation (fifth notifier) and of material for a presentation (sixth notifier). Subsequent documentation from the fifth notifier shows that at a later stage in the notifier’s career, Person A reacted to the draft version of an article by suggesting the addition of references to two of Person A’s own publications, also noting that there was probably new work on this subject by others.

- **Re-use of own work**

- One notifier speaks from their role as editor of academic publications, as follows.
 - In 2008, after an article by Person A, [-----], Person B and [-----] was accepted by an English-language specialist journal of which the notifier was editor, the notifier discovered that the same article was to appear elsewhere in a Spanish-language version. This contravened the copyright agreement that Person A *et al* had signed. The notifier found themselves compelled to ask Person A *et al* to withdraw one of the two publications. They chose to let the English-language publication go through.
 - In 2010 the notifier was the editor of conference proceedings that included a chapter by Person A. Around a year later, the notifier discovered that another article on a comparable subject contained passages that were literally the same as passages in the conference proceedings. Further inspection showed copy-and-pasting from one article into the other.

4.3.2 Person A and Person B

The summary below is **not an exhaustive enumeration** of the oral and written reactions by Person A and Person B to the (written) notifier statements and the additional material the committee showed them, but the committee believes it does justice to important aspects of their perspective. In their reactions, Person A and Person B address the big picture and the individual notifier statements, and offer additional information.

Person A and Person B on the notifier statements

The core of the reactions by Person A and Person B is that they **do not recognise themselves** in the image of their behaviour that emerges from the statements and strongly **reject** that image. The committee will hence speak of their "defence" hereafter.

Person A and Person B feel **shock**, astonishment, sadness and pain at the image of their behaviour that emerges from the notifier statements. It affects them deeply.

They experience the situation as **confronting and threatening**. There are three reasons for this:

- The statements come largely from people with whom they have had long and intensive working relationships, to whose training and professional development they have contributed, and in whom they have placed their trust.
- It seems to them that this is an orchestrated and directed action not only by the notifiers but also by the Board of the Faculty of Archaeology, in particular the Dean. Various notifiers seem to have become disconnected from their former relationship with Person A and Person B, and to have been drawn in by the Board.
- This action is made the more venomous by political activism (an explanation follows below).

Important **substantive** elements of the defence by Person A and Person B are:

- **Surprise**, because they do not recall any problems being raised (for example, formal complaints, or signs of burn-out among staff members), and they regard

their way of working as teamwork in which power relations carry little weight. Person A cannot explain why people should be afraid of her. Moreover, besides the Faculty and University confidential counsellors, it was precisely because of the scope of the [-----] project that the latter also provided a safety net that reflected the team's composition, in case people had concerns or experienced problems: people knew who they could turn to.

- **Denial** of the alleged unacceptable behaviour and the alleged violations of academic integrity. This applies for many of the points raised in the notifier statements. Person A and Person B stress that they have always taken good care of their staff/students and that the safety and well-being of staff/students are paramount; and that they have always complied with the general rules of academia and the rules specific to archaeology.
- **Having no recollection** of the alleged events. This also applies for many of the points raised in the notifier statements.
- Recognition of the coordinates of particular events, but an accompanying claim by Person A and Person B that these events have been taken **out of context** and represented in a manner that amounts to **distortion** (for example, the alleged lack of a permit to remove dental remnants from skeletons).
- Recognition of the coordinates of particular events, but an accompanying claim by Person A and Person B that the perspective of the notifier(s) is **skewed or incorrect** (for example, on the question of what can reasonably be expected of fieldwork in economically poor regions, as regards social and cultural dynamics, accommodation and food, etc.).
- **Bouncing back** accusations (for example, the suggestion that Person B's outbursts of anger were not only caused by [health complaints], but also by taunting behaviour on the part of staff members).
- The suggestion that disappointing results (such as not completing a dissertation) are **the responsibility of the notifier** (for example, due to unsuitability for PhD research under time pressure, or difficulty with writing), or can be explained by **setbacks** (for example, "pregnancy brain").
- The claim that, if seemingly denigrating or otherwise inappropriate comments really did occur, these were **not meant seriously**, but were jokes or bravado.
- The claim that, in spite of the alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A and Person B, notifiers nonetheless **performed well** and **benefitted** from their support and supervision (for example, in co-writing grant applications that offered the notifier the prospect of a position).
- The claim that the notifiers are only a **small group** out of the hundreds of students and dozens of staff members with whom Person A and Person B have worked, in almost all cases to mutual satisfaction.
- The claim that it was a different era and that, influenced by the **spirit of the current age** among other things, matters are being magnified after the event: looking at issues in the past through the lens of the present.

At the same time, in their meetings and correspondence with the committee Person A and Person B indicate that they do not reject the notifier statements out of hand or in their entirety:

- They express **regret** and offer their **apologies** if their behaviour has struck those involved as unpleasant (in a few cases, they comment that a conflict was later resolved, one example being the incorrect accusation of plagiarism). They stress that they never intended to hurt anyone.

In addition, Person B invokes a **medical explanation** for certain aspects of his behaviour. He makes the following statement in this regard:

- Since 1993 he has suffered from [-----], which has been chronic since 2010. From 2016 to 2023 he took medication for this, which has these possible side-effects among others: [-----]. In March 2023 his doctor decided to stop the medication because of increased side-effects. After Person B learned of the notifier statements, his health complaints became worse, and in this context he informed the doctor in December of the behaviour that the notifiers hold against him: this includes [-----]. The doctor said these are typical side-effects of the medication.

Person A and Person B on the motives behind the notifier statements

On possible motives behind the notifier statements, Person A and Person B's statements include the following elements:

- The notifier statements are part of a directed set of actions intended to **harm** Person A (and Person B).
- On the one hand, such action originates in overlapping groups of friends whose members are among the notifiers. Their statements can be explained by **jealousy and frustration**. One thing that several notifiers have in common is that they all failed to complete something (for example, their dissertation).
- On the other hand, such action originates in the current Faculty Board of Archaeology, in particular the Dean, with the intention of making Person A a **scapegoat** for current (financial) problems in the Faculty and driven by the Dean's personal animosity towards Person A. The Board appears to actively facilitate the notifiers, if not to actually direct them.
- There is also another factor. Decolonisation of archaeology is a hot topic in international scientific and societal debate. This manifests itself through **political activism** among other things. While Person A works hard to contribute to decolonisation, she is nonetheless an easy target of such activism. There is a simple line of reasoning behind this, along these lines: Leiden University is part of the Western academy, Person A has a prominent role in Leiden archaeology, "hence" Person A is part of the problem.
 - o More specifically: [-----] is an organisation that works from the decolonisation agenda [to focus on] archaeological fieldwork in [-----] among other things. Person A was not involved in that fieldwork but a number of the notifiers were. Members of [the organisation referred to] work with some of the notifiers [in a current project].
- Person A is a very **successful academic**, and she is **a woman**. This combination can arouse fear, jealousy and obstruction in other people.

Counter-statements for substantiating the perspective of Person A and Person B

As mentioned, Person A and Person B provided the committee with counter-statements by a total of 59 persons, to substantiate their perspective. These documents paint a **very positive image** of their work and behaviour and their academic merits, not least with regard to their advancement of the interests of local communities in [-----].

Here, the committee discusses the statements made by **two persons** from this group, which are relevant to this investigation; the other documents have little or no relevance. Both persons have apparently read all the notifier statements. These persons are:

- [Name]
 - o [Former position in the Faculty of Archaeology]
- [Name]
 - o The son of Person A and Person B, who has often accompanied them on fieldwork campaigns.

In addition to the counter-statement by [the first of these two informants] that reached the committee via Person A and Person B, this informant made a statement directly to the committee **at his own request**, both in writing and orally. [He] states that he has read all the notifier statements and that he is acting as confidential counsellor to Person B. He does not, however, restrict himself to alleged issues relating to Person B, but comments also, and in particular, on alleged issues that primarily or only relate to Person A.

[His] general message is that he **does not concur with the complaints**. He further states that no discordant signals reached him [-----] about the course of events during fieldwork led by Person A and/or Person B. [He] then addresses the notifier statements. His observations mainly consist of judgements about various notifier statements, which he does not always substantiate: "I am certain that"; "[a notifier] believes, after a long period of working with [Person A] [. . .], that they can make remarks such as..."; there is "no indication whatsoever" that [another notifier] would have been left in the lurch during their illness; the complaint by [a third notifier] is "for me the complaint that is hardest to understand"; and so on. [He] makes a number of comments about what he sees as the "troubling" course of the proceedings during the previous history of the investigation (which falls outside the scope of this investigation).

[The son of Person A and Person B] addresses the notifier statements by [-----], [-----], [-----], [-----], [-----], [-----], [-----] and [-----] in separate statements. The tenor of these is consistently that [he] **does not recognise the image** painted by the notifier **or rejects this**, or that events or situations have been interpreted wrongly. He also states that several notifiers are guilty of unacceptable behaviour themselves, varying from wearing provocative clothing where this was disrespectful to local culture ([-----]) to forcing others to take part in naked swimming ([-----]) and exposing [one's] genitalia as a prank ([-----]).

4.3.3 Other colleagues

This category of informants comprises eleven persons. Eight are women and three are men. These persons were not among the notifiers, nor have they sought contact with the committee. The committee saw reason to contact these persons and explained the investigation brief to them, and they were prepared to contribute to the investigation. The informants are classified below in three groups.

The persons in the first group were affiliated with the Faculty of Archaeology in earlier years and worked closely with Person A and/or Person B. The committee asked them primarily about any personal experiences of unacceptable behaviour and/or violation of academic integrity by Person A and/or Person B, and in some cases focused on specific instances of such behaviour.

The second group contains just one informant, who is not and has not been affiliated with the Faculty or with Leiden University. The committee asked this person whether they could speak from their own observation to provide a statement on a specific example of alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A against one of the notifiers.

The persons in the third group are currently affiliated with the Faculty. In approaching these persons, the committee did not take into account whether they have worked with Person A and/or Person B, as the committee was primarily interested in asking them about the organisational culture within the Faculty and other context for the matter at hand. An explanation of the selection of informants in this group is given below.

The committee has not allowed the distinctions between the groups to restrict the scope of its conversations with the informants. Two persons in the first group also reflected on the organisational culture, and all persons in the third group also reflected on the behaviour of Person A and/or Person B.

Personal experience of unacceptable behaviour or violation of academic integrity by Person A and/or Person B?

The committee approached the six informants in this group because they were mentioned by one or more notifiers. In two cases this was in a written statement; in the other four cases it occurred during an oral statement, in response to specific questions from the committee. Three of the persons in this group made written statements, the other three made oral statements; two persons also provided documentation.

All six informants in this group are women. At various times between 1998 and 2019, all worked closely with Person A and/or Person B within the Faculty of Archaeology [-----]. All now work elsewhere, two in academia and four in adjacent fields.

The informants in this group are, in alphabetical order:

- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]

- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]
- [Name]
 - o [Chronology and role]
 - o [Current position]

The statements of five of these six persons **confirm the image that emerges in the notifier statements** broadly and sometimes in detail, accentuating different aspects.

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As regards **unacceptable behaviour**, the informants ascribe this primarily to Person A. Regarding the behaviour of Person B, one informant states that there is little to blame him for, another that he made himself complicit in unacceptable behaviour.

Two informants indicate that the unacceptable behaviour of Person A was structural in nature, but stress that **this also held for others** in the Faculty and extended to other departments.

Descriptions of the **impact** of the behaviour of Person A vary. One informant says that a certain normalisation took place over time and they battled their way through. Another outlines (in a written statement) behaviour that strikes the committee as a grave breach of norms, but makes no further comment. A third calls the impact of the behaviour of Person A traumatic.

In differing permutations, these five persons speak of **these forms of unacceptable behaviour**:

- Creating a hostile / intimidating / unhealthy atmosphere.
- Bullying and intimidation (such as shouting, and mocking obesity).
- Favouring and disadvantaging individuals, occasionally with elements of sexism, *in casu* disadvantaging women.
- Allowing the boundaries between work and private life to blur: this was partly a consequence of fieldwork, but the blurring continued on campus. One of the informants states:
 - o "When I was in [-----] with different [-----] researchers something very inappropriate occurred: [. . .] [-----] told me that she had to sleep in [Person A's] room. I thought this was shocking and completely inappropriate for a PI and professor to ask this of a PhD candidate. [. . .] I think this was in March 2015 when a workshop was organised in [-----] with local heritage groups."
 - ([-----] is the name of the [-----] project in which Person A was one of the research leaders.)
- Pregnancy discrimination: two informants indicate that particularly Person A but also Person B showed insufficient consideration for their pregnancy, which manifested itself in insufficient willingness to adjust performance norms and to allow leave; and in the (effective) application of pressure to work during the pregnancy leave.

The statements mention the following as some of the **consequences** for the staff who encountered this behaviour:

- Personal harm, for example loss of self-confidence; as mentioned, one informant spoke of a trauma.
- Professional harm, for example forced departure from the discipline [-----].

The statements also mention that staff members **did not dare to complain**, for fear of retaliation, given Person A's behaviour and her influence in the discipline and within the Faculty, also as Dean; and because there was no confidence in the willingness and ability of confidential counsellors and administrators to take action.

Two of the five persons whose statements broadly confirm the image in the notifier statements comment that while Person A is guilty of unacceptable behaviour, **the bigger picture** is at least as important.

One of these two persons refers particularly to the **shifting of norms and values** in recent decades. Authoritarian and sexist behaviour used to be less of a subject of discussion; it was "normal," and Person A was not the only senior academic to behave in this way (nor the only woman).

The other refers specifically to the **culture** in the Faculty of Archaeology. From their statement:

- "[T]he problem was *systemic*. The rotten core of the Faculty included far more than one person [. . .] there are serious issues around governance, transparency and accountability [. . .] there was a lot of discontentment, and in spite of several complaints, the Faculty (and even the University) chose not to take action for fear of financial and/or reputational damage."

One of the above-mentioned five persons indicates that they realised afterwards that the work environment was not normal (in particular as regards the blurring of boundaries), that they knew of unpleasant experiences of colleagues, and that they understood that people might be afraid of Person A and could experience her behaviour as intimidating; but this informant stresses that over a long period of collaboration they themselves built up a **good relationship** with Person A.

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Violation of academic integrity occurred according to the statement of one of the above-mentioned five persons, who explains that Person A enforced a **co-authorship** for Person B of a publication by this informant and refused to explain what contribution Person B had made to the article in question.

The sixth informant in this group also mentioned behaviour of which the committee observes that such behaviour qualifies as violation of academic integrity. This relates to the **handling of access to data** and the recognition of the work of colleagues:

- "It happened repeatedly that my data were published by [Person A], [Person B] or members of their research group [. . .] without my knowledge or my permission. My regular working method was to share organised, unpublished data with the aim of facilitating future publications. In some instances, [Person A], [Person B] and other members of the group cited this unpublished data but in other instances my data simply appeared in publications, without acknowledgement."

The informant indicates that after making this discovery they stopped sharing data with the research group. The informant gives “a small number” of examples: there are eight of these [-----].

Witness to unacceptable behaviour by Person A and/or Person B?

As noted above, this group contains only one informant. The committee approached the informant because a notifier mentioned this person when making an oral statement, in response to a specific question from the committee. The informant is a professor at a university outside the Netherlands, is not affiliated and has not been affiliated with Leiden University, and states that they have a good understanding of the **international field** of [-----]. This informant is:

- [Name]
 - o [Position]

The committee put to the informant a specific example of alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A. The example can be defined as **undermining** a junior academic, in an international context, in the form of slander among other things.

The informant states that from their own observation they can **confirm** that this behaviour took place, and adds that this was not limited to the location and date mentioned, but was repeated in other settings, which the informant specified.

The informant contextualises this response in a **broader image** they have of certain aspects of the behaviour of Person A and Person B towards their staff members, with the category of “students” also, and possibly primarily, referring to PhD candidates:

- “I have observed a pattern in the relationships that [Person A] and [Person B] have had with a series of students and other researchers who were employed or sponsored by them in their many well-funded projects over recent decades. [. . .] [T]here is a set pattern of unreasonable constraint of the careers of these people, in an academic perspective by obstructing them in their use of data they have generated themselves and denial of their capacity to present or publish their work independently, which seriously limits their opportunities on the job market but also in an emotional sense in that they cultivate an internal work culture of complete control, excessive politicisation and unnecessary pressure. This approach, based on control and founded on intense rivalry, is strikingly illustrated when someone leaves their immediate service. There is a pattern of behaviour towards former students and employees that appears inexplicably hostile. [. . .] Over the years, I have witnessed comparable behaviour. [. . .] Almost all those [. . .] who have worked for [Person A] and [Person B] over the years have only succeeded in forging an academic career by switching to a different disciplinary focus or a different cultural region within the discipline. And, of course, many have had to leave academia altogether.”

Organisational culture in the Faculty of Archaeology, and other context?

The last four informants within the category of other colleagues were not mentioned by notifiers or others among those involved. To gain a better picture of the organisational culture, the committee has wanted to approach, on its own initiative, a number of senior academics who are currently affiliated with the Faculty.

The committee therefore went through the staff list of the Faculty and made sure that those they invited for a conversation have different specialisations and have followed different paths in terms of education and career (where and when), and aimed for gender balance: two of the informants are women and two are men. The four persons in this group have administrative experience within the Faculty in different positions, but the committee did not ask them about their work as administrators (a matter it did address for the category "Administrators," below, which includes a discussion of the Dean's perspective).

These four informants made oral statements. One of them also provided additional documentation.

These persons are the following, in alphabetical order:

- [Name]
 - o [Position]
- [Name]
 - o [Position]
- [Name]
 - o [Position]
- [Name]
 - o [Position]

The point of departure for the committee's conversations with these four informants was their image of the organisational culture, but the discussion thereof was interwoven with their image of Person A's behaviour (Person B's behaviour hardly came up, except in a comment that Person A was always "backed up" by Person B, and that interaction with Person A could result in the person concerned receiving a response from Person B). The summary below reflects this interwovenness, and is divided into discussions of three issues: an alleged lack of cohesion within the Faculty, an alleged lack of social safety and the fact that recently, within a short period of time, several people have reported on [alleged unacceptable behaviour and alleged violation of academic integrity by] Person A and Person B.

A **lack of cohesion** within the Faculty came up in the committee's conversations with two of the informants.

- According to one of these informants, [the latest three] **deanships** [-----] have left different marks on the Faculty, over a period of time characterised by rapid growth of financial resources and hence also of the number of staff members, particularly as a result of the acquisition of external research funding.
- The overriding image outlined by the informant is one of a shift **from community to fragmentation**. Besides the rapid growth of the Faculty and the negative effect of its present accommodation in the Van Steenis building, this informant also relates this to different management styles. The informant comments that [the person who was Dean from 2006 to 2013] was a committed and unifying presence (albeit at times with some "strong arm" pressure) and

someone who kept a close watch on every dossier. Person A was often absent (because of fieldwork among other things; her period as Dean coincided with the [-----] project and two other externally funded projects). She was also less engaged and less of a force for community-building within the Faculty, and (“but here I am laying it on thick”) felt less concern for the rest of the Faculty outside her own group and department.

- According to this informant, [the current Dean, in office since 2018] took over a **fragmented Faculty** where staff members (including professors) spend little time on campus and at times show too little integral engagement; the latter point is in part due to the **dynamics around research funding**, whereby, for example, the importance of teaching, and of the visibility therein of all permanent staff members, may end up receiving insufficient attention. In the view of this informant, there are professors who, (again, “laying it on thick”), regard themselves as exempt from regular duties because they have brought in research funding. This kind of behaviour may have been reinforced under the deanship of Person A, but the dynamics around research funding are also a consequence of developments in the scientific establishment as a whole. There were, then, also colleagues who were “fans” of Person A because they saw her as a powerful researcher who brought in funding.
- This informant states that [the present Dean] has committed to **restricting the power of professors** with external funding who want to go their own way. This has caused some controversy, where a number of professors have taken [him] to task for not being sufficiently transparent about financial problems in the Faculty.
- The image of fragmentation, and in particular that of professors who want to go their own way with their own research group, returns in the perception of a second informant. This person comments that the situation has **improved** in this respect under the deanship of [the present Dean].

A lack of social safety in the Faculty came up in the committee’s conversations with three of the informants. Two informants state that Person A’s conduct as Dean and as research leader / colleague, respectively, led to a lack of social safety. One informant holds that a lack of social safety only came about after Person A’s deanship. The fourth informant does not mention the notion of social safety but does describe behaviour that the committee believes conjures an image of a lack of social safety.

- As regards problems in relation to social safety, one informant connects this primarily with Person A’s conduct as **Dean**. This concerns, for example, bullying, intimidation, obstruction of career development and intolerance of any opposition. This informant also states that on several occasions during the deanship of Person A, no proper procedures were followed for appointment and promotion, and Person A’s own preferences and interests carried too much weight. [-----] On one occasion, according to the informant, Person A acted disrespectfully and excluded the informant from a conversation by turning her back on them and talking about them in the third person to others present. This informant holds that the Faculty has been doing better since the deanship of [the present Dean], one of the reasons for this being that proper procedures are now in place.
 - o To illustrate the alleged lack of proper procedures, the informant mentions [-----]. To avoid fragmentation, the committee also mentions here both Person A’s perspective on this issue and the present Dean’s perspective,

and some details from the relevant documentation. These **confirm** the image that the informant describes. As follows:

- [-----]
- As regards problems in relation to social safety, a second informant links this particularly to the behaviour of Person A as a **research leader / colleague**. This concerns, for example, obstructing, belittling, isolating and thwarting staff members; favouring and disadvantaging staff members; authoritarian and intimidating behaviour in dealings with PhD candidates and postdocs (another informant in this group mentions complaints by PhD candidates about transgressive behaviour by Person A, made during an informal meeting at the Faculty on "Abuse in academia" in 2019). According to this informant, Person A's mode of operation is one in which everything must make way for her goals, and her treatment of others who are dependent upon her is sometimes "inhuman." This informant links this behaviour to Person A's "sacrosanctity," at Faculty and University level ("short lines of communication to the Executive Board"), which was the result of her success in acquiring research funding.
- A third informant describes Person A as a **good administrator and a good colleague**, perhaps rather direct in communication, but with good intentions and a lot of expertise. According to this informant, a lack of social safety has only emerged since the end of 2018 (that is, when Person A was no longer Dean), including bullying, exclusion and sexual intimidation, and it is mainly female staff members in the Faculty who are affected by this.
- The fourth informant does not use the expression "social safety." This informant does say they have experienced **disrespectful behaviour** by Person A, towards the informant themselves (by not honouring agreements) and towards others (by "treating them with contempt"): for example, shouting at support staff, and physically excluding people from a conversation by turning her back on them. This informant also states that professors in the Faculty have sometimes indicated that they were unhappy with the occasionally authoritarian way in which Person A made decisions as Dean, and a lack of consultation among colleagues. This informant has the impression that Person A's conduct became more pronounced during her deanship, possibly as a result of the administrative power and the status she acquired from her success in bringing in research funding.

The recent date of the reports [on alleged unacceptable behaviour and alleged violation of academic integrity by Person A and Person B] (even though a considerable proportion of the alleged events occurred in the past) came up in the committee's conversations with two of the informants.

- One informant had expected complaints to be made much earlier, and mentions rumours of complaints from years ago ("more than five years ago"). This informant says that those involved maybe feel freer to speak up, without fear of repercussions, now that Person A is no longer Dean and is seconded to [-----], and those involved no longer work in her projects.
- Another informant sees as a possible explanation mainly that, in previous years, staff members in a position of dependence had little confidence in the willingness and ability of confidential counsellors and administrators to take action; and that the present Faculty Board is evidently committed to addressing this issue.

4.3.4 Administrators

This category of informants has three persons whom the committee questioned about the administrative context of the matter at hand. All three are men. These conversations related mainly to possible earlier reports of unacceptable behaviour by Person A and/or Person B and how these reports were handled. In addition, the procedure relating to the secondment of Person A to [-----] was discussed.

The informants are:

- A former department head and former Dean of Archaeology
- The present Dean of Archaeology
- A former Rector and President of the Executive Board.

In the passage below about the department head, the committee also mentions the perspective of two notifiers and that of Person A and Person B, to avoid fragmentation. In the passage about the Dean and the former Rector-President, the committee also mentions the perspective of Person A, for the same reason.

Department head

According to two notifiers, [-----] would already have received complaints about the behaviour of Person A and Person B when they were a department head in **the 1990s**, but took no action.

One of the notifiers says they remember that a fellow student complained to [the department head] **in 1995** about Person A (and probably also Person B), but without any result. [The former department head] states that they have no recollection of this.

A second notifier states that they turned to [the department head] **in 1999** with a complaint and a claim for damages, and comments: "This person really did not want to hear about this, and protected the two unconditionally." The notifier states they then brought the issue to the attention of [-----], the Dean of Archaeology at the time. This person honoured the claim for damages up to 50%, on condition that the notifier consider the issue closed (the committee has seen the relevant correspondence).

On this complaint, [the former department head] states, among other things:

- "I heard from [Person A and Person B] about a conflict with [the notifier]. I was not actively involved in the [-----] project nor in the conflict, and so cannot remember the details. I do recall that the way in which [the notifier] treated both colleagues struck me as aggressive and ambitious, given that he claimed fame and merit for himself without taking into account (showing recognition of) the education, contacts and opportunities offered to him. It was my understanding that [the former Dean] granted the financial compensation to [the notifier] mainly as a 'deal' to preserve the peace, without this implying that he thought [the notifier] was right and hence also without implying an 'admission of guilt' regarding any unacceptable behaviour, etc. I certainly did not and do not have the impression that [Person A] and [Person B] behaved reprehensibly in this conflict."

At the time, the Dean gave the following motivation for the offer of financial compensation for the notifier and an associate, in a letter dated 22 December 1999:

- "Although the Faculty is not a party in the conflict between you and [-----] in legal terms, the Board nonetheless feels concerned, given that the project in

question is a collaboration between this Faculty and [-----] and that communications with yourself were predominantly, if not entirely, maintained by employees of this Faculty. Having heard all the parties involved and carefully considered the information received, the Board believes that expectations were raised, also by the staff members of this Faculty, and that the requirements of proper care were not invariably fulfilled in regard to the way [the notifier] was involved in the project.”

Contrary to what [the former department head] claims, the letter from the Dean shows that the Faculty Board recognised that the staff members in question of the Faculty – namely Person A and Person B, as the correspondence shows – had neglected to act with proper care, and had done so to such an extent that financial compensation was warranted.

The committee has seen various documents relating to the conflict, written by and to various parties. These illustrate different views of the conflict. The committee mentions this for the sake of completeness, but has wanted to focus on the way the complaint was handled within the Faculty of Archaeology.

Current Dean and former Rector and President of the Executive Board

Statements by the Dean of Archaeology and a former Rector and President of the Executive Board concern two episodes, dating from 2017 and 2018–2019, respectively. They have different recollections of the alleged events and how these were handled.

About the **episode from 2017**:

- The Dean states that he was present in 2017 as Vice-Dean at a meeting of the Faculty Board, where Person A indicated that the Rector-President had informed her that he had received a complaint about Person A, and that the complaint referred to humiliation, intimidation, bullying and unpleasant conversations. The Dean recalls that a large part of the meeting was devoted to the question of who could be the source of the complaint and that afterwards, Person A never brought up the complaint again.
- The former Rector-President states that he has no recollection of such a complaint.
- Person A also states she has no recollection of such a complaint. She recalls from this period that the Rector-President let her know that the postdoc community of Archaeology had contacted him to make a plea for better career opportunities for postdocs.

About the **episode from 2018–2019**:

- The Dean states the following. In the months following his appointment on 1 September 2018, he received three reports on particular instances of Person A's behaviour. Briefly, the reports related to alleged disrespectful behaviour towards a colleague; an alleged questionable request by Person A to a science journalist to write a book about her research that would appear under Person A's name; and alleged transgressive behaviour towards a PhD candidate. The Dean instructed the PhD candidate to immediately stop their work for Person A, in order to remove them from her sphere of influence, but did not discuss the reports with Person A herself. He raised the reports with the Rector-President, after the Council of Deans (triggered by another matter) discussed the general need to be alert to signs of unacceptable behaviour, on 12 February 2019. The Dean wanted to raise the reports about Person A's behaviour with the Rector-

President, but scheduling problems led to the postponement of a first meeting. He indicates that the issue of Person A was discussed with the Rector-President in his annual work review in veiled terms, but that, due to the presence of a Human Resources staff member, he did not speak freely, and asked for a new meeting with the Rector-President. This took place on 3 April 2019. The three reports were discussed in that meeting.

- The former Rector-President states the following. He knows that the conversation with the Dean took place but cannot recall that the reports were discussed at that meeting. He points out that during his term as Rector-President, he often received reports from people who wanted to draw his attention to all kinds of matters.
- No minutes were made of the conversation, and because it took place five years ago it is difficult to determine its exact content.

Secondment to [-----]

Person A was seconded to [-----] from 1 September 2019, for a period of five years (the committee has seen the relevant contract). The matter at hand raises the question of whether Person A's secondment is related to the **working relationships** within the Faculty and more specifically between Person A and the present Dean. Hence, the committee believes it is important to outline the perspective of Person A and that of the present Dean.

The Dean states that Person A took her team with her to [-----], including Person B. The committee limits itself to the secondment of Person A herself, who was seconded there for the said period for 70% of work time.

Person A states the following:

- The successive Deans [-----], [-----] and Person A were committed to giving the Faculty a more international outlook. [The present Dean], who took office in 2018, has not continued this course. This **perturbed** Person A, who had the impression that the new course meant that [-----] would no longer be among the Faculty's priorities. For this reason, and in the interests of the community and to avoid a possible conflict with the Dean, Person A contacted [-----], then director of [-----], with the aim of securing a secondment there and the plan to work on the wrap-up publications for the [-----] project among other things. The Rector-President of the University was also involved in the exploration of this route.

This aspect of Person A's experience of the working relationship with the Dean relates to the administrative course of the Faculty. Other aspects are addressed below.

The Dean states the following:

- The Dean was **not involved** in the exploration of a possible secondment of Person A *et al* and played no role in this. In this matter, [-----] acted on behalf of the Faculty (and is in fact the person who signed the contract on its behalf). The Rector-President was also involved in the exploration of this route.
- In this period the Dean had differences of opinion with Person A about the strategic course, but these were professional and **not personal**, and no different from his differences of opinion on this matter with other professors.

- The contract establishes that [-----] does not contribute to the **salary costs** of Person A. The Faculty has consequently had to bear the full cost of her secondment. The 70% exemption of other duties than research for five years that this amounts to runs counter to the course of the Dean, who has focused on ensuring a fair division of teaching, research and management duties, one of the reasons being the need to prevent influential professors from buying themselves out of their teaching or having their teaching done by subordinates.

5 REACHING A JUDGEMENT

5.1 PLAUSIBILITY

The committee sees its task as one of **truth-finding** [*waarheidsvinding*]. For the committee's understanding of this task, the following considerations play a role.

- The views of the notifiers and those of Person A and Person B are diametrically opposed. They are **conflicting perspectives** on the same matter. The notifiers describe the [-----] group as an unprofessional, unsafe environment that uses people and harms them, and is permeated by abuse of power. Person A and Person B describe the group as a professional environment that offers people opportunities and stimulates them, and one where power relations have little or no importance. The same contrast is visible with regard to many specific points, whether these are fieldwork circumstances or the recognition of intellectual contributions by individual staff members, Person A's behaviour as Dean or the question of whether Person B was driving while under the influence of alcohol, and so on. But, as one of the experts stresses, conflicting perspectives on the same matter can **both be authentic**. It is quite possible that the notifiers and Person A and Person B experienced the same matter very differently and have very different recollections of it. Hence, according to this expert, the committee and the various parties would do well to abandon the notion of objectivity here.
- In addition, it is often hard to determine with certainty in what respects and to what extent the statements by the different informants (notifiers, Person A and Person B, other colleagues and administrators) offer a faithful image of the **facts and circumstances** of the alleged events. As noted, hard evidence for the claims of the various informants is limited.
- The information available to the committee does offer some starting points for a measure of **verification** of certain events. It is also possible to draw on the force of argument to say something about the **credibility** of the notifier statements (hereafter, in 5.2) and about the **convincingness** of the defence by Person A and Person B (5.3). The committee will then briefly address the **administrative context** (5.4).

Taking all this into consideration, the committee believes it is in a position to make a substantiated judgement about the **plausibility** of the alleged events (5.5).

In addition to the statements by the various categories of informants, including those made during dozens of meetings, throughout this chapter the committee bases itself on its consultation of the **experts** (whom it also cites explicitly in some cases, as above) and on the reports by KNAW and the Investigating Committee on Conduct and Culture in Broadcasting, mentioned in the foreword.

5.2 THE NOTIFIER STATEMENTS

Reliability

Striking features of the notifier statements include:

- They largely relate to matters that took place in the (distant) **past**.
- Some statements **resonate** in one another, not just broadly but also because they describe the same specific events.

- The committee reiterates here that the two staff members who reported [on alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A] to the Dean of Archaeology in January 2023 said they were speaking on behalf of a larger group.
- It has become clear to the committee, particularly from the oral statements of various parties, that some of the notifiers have maintained collegial and friendly contact over many years; among the notifiers there are also two couples who indicate that they are life partners. Some notifiers have commented that the behaviour of Person A and Person B has regularly been the subject of discussion among the colleagues/friends in question. These comments evoke different images, from trauma-bonding to inside jokes and gossip.
- The committee therefore considers it likely that in some measure, some of the notifiers jointly constructed their image of the behaviour of Person A and Person B; and the committee cannot exclude the possibility that some of the statements took shape in discussions among the notifiers.

The above prompted the committee to ask one of the two experts to offer insight, in general terms, into the **reliability** of witness statements that relate to matters from a long time ago and are drafted in consultation with other witnesses. In summary, the expert paints the following picture (with reference to Wessel & Wolters 2017; see Literature List):

- **Influence of time:** the recollection of details is unreliable, but the recollection of the crux of an event is reliable.
- **Social influencing** among witnesses can take place in different ways: because someone assumes that what another person says is correct (informational), because someone does not want to contradict the other person (normative) or because someone thinks they have witnessed something while they have in fact heard about this from another person (source confusion). Generally speaking, social influencing does not reduce the validity of a statement substantially, because witnesses retain an accurate recollection of the crux of an event (not to mention that elements copied into one's own statement from someone else's can be valid). "Validity" here refers to the extent to which the statement agrees with that which took place in the past.
- **Conclusion:** witnesses can usually describe the crux of an event accurately, even after a long time and even after social influencing.

The committee has also discussed with the expert the **possibility that witnesses lie**, and the question of whether and how this can be inferred from their statements. The expert comments that the possibility of lying generally arises if there is inconsistency between the statement in question and other evidence. The committee has not encountered such inconsistencies in the notifier statements.

The committee has, however, had the opportunity to take note of **documentation** (that is, documents from an earlier date) and had **correspondence** with informants from the category of "other colleagues." This permits a certain degree of verification. These documents **confirm** the relevant elements from the notifier statements.

More about the notifier statements per se

In regard to the notifier statements *per se*, the committee has these additional considerations:

- The notifiers are in **different generations**.
- The notifier statements are largely **consistent**. This holds for the description of details of specific events; it holds for the crux of the alleged events; and it holds especially for the image of the behaviour of Person A but also for that of Person B, viewed from different perspectives. These are the perspectives of a student, a PhD candidate or postdoc, an assistant, a fellow staff member or fellow administrator in the Faculty of Archaeology, and a commercial partner or NGO partner.
- A number of the statements exude strong **emotion**, something the committee has seen confirmed during its meetings with the notifiers.

The statements by other colleagues, seen in this light

As noted, ten of the eleven statements by other colleagues **confirm** the image that emerges in the notifier statements, broadly and sometimes in detail. This holds especially for the behaviour of Person A, but also for the division of roles between Person A and Person B, and its effect on their environment. To stress the importance of the statements by other colleagues, the committee refers to its earlier explanation of the composition of this category of informants, the way the committee contacted them and the issues it discussed with them.

The above point calls to memory that another – eleventh – colleague characterises Person A as a **good administrator and a good colleague**. That the above-mentioned ten statements confirm the image that emerges in the notifier statements does not detract from the authenticity of this informant's perspective.

Credibility

In the light of the above, the committee considers the notifier statements **largely credible**.

5.3 THE DEFENCE

The committee understands that Person A and Person B feel **shock**, astonishment, sorrow and pain as a result of the notifier statements. In relation to this, the committee observes that the defence of Person A and Person B exudes strong **emotion**, in their written statements and in their meetings with the committee.

About the content of the defence

With regard to the **surprise** that Person A and Person B say they feel as a result of the notifier statements, because supposedly there were no problems and power relations in the group around Person A and Person B supposedly carried little weight, the committee remarks:

- Person A and Person B do not seem to fully realise that power relations in academia frequently take the form of steep **power differences and dependencies** that can have major consequences for careers and lives. The effect can be even stronger in relatively small communities like the Faculty of Archaeology, or a department or research group within the Faculty; or [-----]

as a sub-field within the international field of archaeology as a whole. During archaeological fieldwork, when people spend a long time continually in close proximity to one another and not only work together but live together, these power relations do not disappear, and alertness to their environment-specific effects is important.

- These power differences and dependencies can **impose silence** on those lower in the hierarchy. This can inhibit them from uttering any grievances for a long time (or forever), and it may lead them to simulate well-being and gratitude and not to protest or otherwise resist, even though they have experienced unacceptable behaviour. (This also applies in the context of annual work reviews, several of which Person A and Person B put forward to substantiate their own perspective.) Hierarchy has actual impact, and if a lower-placed person voices a protest after the fact, it is not for the higher-placed person to say the lower-placed person should have done so earlier.
- The social dynamic as outlined in the previous point can also explain why comments by those higher in the hierarchy that are not meant seriously – as Person A and Person B argue – can come across as **denigrating**, and behaviour that arises from bravado can come across as **intimidating**. If the higher-placed person is aware of this, such comments and behaviour are culpable. As noted, Person A and Person B state that they were not aware of this.
- In view of the fact that the notifiers have scarcely raised their grievances formally in previous years, the committee draws attention to another point that arose in the conversations with the experts. Namely: even long after the events in question, memories can be subject to drastic **re-interpretation**. This can happen, sometimes after a considerable time, after someone departs from an environment that normalises unacceptable behaviour (something that notifiers and other colleagues describe precisely in this way for the matter at hand); through personal development (such as life experience); or as a result of societal-environmental factors (such as #MeToo). Following re-interpretation, the memory can still lead to an awareness of trauma, without the later date detracting from the trauma's authenticity and gravity; and lead to the desire for recognition of injustice and personal suffering, and the decision to still speak up about it.

With regard to the argument that the notifiers **performed well** in spite of alleged unacceptable behaviour by Person A and Person B, the committee remarks:

- If someone performs well **in spite of** experiencing unacceptable behaviour, this does not erase the impact of that behaviour and its broader significance.

In this regard, the committee makes a further two comments. These concern the claim that the notifiers **benefitted** from the support and supervision of Person A and Person B; and the claim that the notifiers are only a **small group** among many students and staff members with whom Person A and Person B have worked, in almost all cases to mutual satisfaction. As follows:

- The investigation by the committee, and this type of investigation more broadly, by its very nature focuses on things that go wrong. This does not mean there are not, at the same time, **many things that have gone right**. The content of the counter-statements that Person A and Person B submitted seems to indicate that this is indeed the case. For the notifiers, too, a lot may indeed have gone well (at the same time as things going wrong), and in some cases this is demonstrably the case. Hence, the claim that the notifiers have also benefitted from the

support and supervision of Person A and Person B and from their affiliation with the research group is **convincing**.

- Unacceptable behaviour towards one person **cannot be compensated** by good behaviour towards another person. Unpleasant experiences of one group cannot be cancelled out by good experiences of another group, and this also holds true if the latter group is larger than the former.

With regard to the suggestion that disappointing results are **the responsibility of the notifier**, as in the example of dissertations not being completed, or that disappointing results can be explained by **setbacks**, the committee remarks:

- Disappointing results are, of course, not necessarily due to the individual's line manager or supervisor. But the image of unacceptable behaviour by Person A and Person B is consistent across the full breadth of the notifier statements and extends to the vast majority of the statements by other colleagues. To stick with the example of the dissertations: among the informants mentioned (notifiers and other colleagues), there are fifteen who carried out PhD research under Person A and/or Person B, **all of whom speak of behaviour** of which the committee observes that it qualifies as unacceptable behaviour. Twelve of them have, in fact, completed their dissertation.

With regard to the **medical explanation** Person B puts forward for certain aspects of his behaviour in the years 2016–2023, particularly [-----], the committee comments:

- First and foremost, the [-----] from which Person B has suffered since 1993 constitutes a **severe obstacle** for the exercise of his profession and must have had a considerable impact on his general well-being.
- However, according to the notifier statements, Person B sometimes also [demonstrated behaviour about which he states that his doctor describes this as typical side-effects of his medication] **in earlier years**, before he used the said medication.
- In a broader sense, the question arises of whether, in his work, Person B could have **handled the limitations** imposed on him by his health in a different manner. This question arises in the light of episodes in the notifier statements that mention his regular absence due to [health problems], where other people had to take over his duties: during fieldwork, but also in teaching. As the committee understands it, Person B opted for short periods of sick leave when the [-----] obliged him to do this, which inevitably led to emergency solutions. This is in itself understandable but the question warrants attention in view of the importance of the working relationships in the matter at hand.
 - o In this matter, Person B's supervisors could also have taken their responsibility. According to Faculty information, in the period from 1998 to 2019 these persons were [-----], [-----] and [-----], and Person A herself (2013–2015). If Person A was at one time indeed the line manager of her husband, this was ill-advised of Person A and Person B themselves and of others in the organisation who were involved in this arrangement and/or could have raised this issue.

With regard to elements in the defence that the committee has summed up as the claim that events have been **taken out of context** and **distorted**, and the claim that the notifiers have a **skewed or incorrect perspective**, the committee remarks:

- The committee **understands** this to some extent (in part because conflicting perspectives on the same material can both be authentic).
- These claims **do not detract from the credibility** of important episodes in the notifier statements, for example the episode relating to the extraction of human remains [-----] in 2009. Person A and Person B state that they did obtain a permit, after the extraction had taken place. From the documents they have provided on this matter, the committee is unable to determine whether this is in fact the case (in part because the earliest document, which the committee understands was authored by the person who had excavated the material, refers to a different site than several other documents). In any event, it is clear that no permit was in place at the time of the extraction; Person B confirmed this in so many words during a meeting with the committee.
- The said claims do **clarify**, for example, how many variables are at play in the organisation of material circumstances during fieldwork in economically poor regions (accommodation, food, etc.); and how the experience of these circumstances can fluctuate, in part under the influence of other factors, certainly over a period of decades in which there are shifts in the expectations on the part of staff members and students.

With regard to Person A's pointing out that **women** who are **successful** in academia encounter structural obstruction, and hence that this may also be the case for Person A:

- The committee **underwrites** this point.

With regard to the question of whether matters are being magnified after the event, due to the influence of the **spirit of the current age** among other things:

- The committee will return to this point in its reflection on the matter at hand (chapter 6).

Counter-statements

The two counter-statements discussed earlier that are relevant to the investigation **align with the defence** put forward by Person A and Person B. The committee reflects here on the views of the respective authors of the counter-statements, [-----] and [-----]:

- The committee's conversation with [the first author] did not produce new insights or further substantiation of his claims. The committee observes that [he] has strong opinions on the notifier statements, and that he feels solidarity with Person A and Person B as staff members of the Faculty and with person A in her capacity as Dean [-----].
- The committee understands that it is unpleasant for [the second author] to learn of complaints about his parents of the sort discussed here, and takes this into account when observing that [his] views of some of the alleged events differ significantly from the thrust of the notifier statements.

Breach of confidentiality

To have the counter-statements included in the investigation, Person A and Person B could have brought other persons involved (as defined in 4.2) to the attention of the committee or asked these persons to contact the committee. Instead, however, they shared the notifier statements with others. In doing so they **breached the confidentiality** that the committee required of all parties.

It is clear from many of the counter-statements (not just those that are relevant to the investigation), that their authors **are aware of the notifier statements**. Just like [-----] and [-----], [the author of a third counter-statement] is also familiar with all the notifier statements (Person A cites the fact that [this person] is her confidential counsellor as the reason for this). In addition, several counter-statements suggest that the authors of these are minimally somewhat familiar with the notifier statements.

Also, several notifiers indicated to the committee that it has come to their attention that their statements have been **shared with third parties**. The notifiers regard this as a serious breach of the rules of the investigation.

The committee takes the breach of confidentiality by Person A and Person B very seriously. The committee also observes that this breach **confirms** the image of Person A and Person B as portrayed by the notifiers, according to which Person A and Person B create a lack of safety and have insufficient concern for the interests of others.

As a result of this breach of confidentiality, a number of notifiers have **declined to give the committee permission** to share documents that are relevant to the investigation with person A and person B, for fear of traceability. These documents have inevitably contributed to the views of the committee in some measure, but they play no part in the process of reaching a judgement as this is described here.

False accusations?

The committee summarises once more the views of Person A and Person B regarding possible **motives** behind the notifier statements, as follows:

- The notifiers want to **harm** Person A and Person B, and this also holds for the current Faculty Board of Archaeology, in particular the Dean. For the notifiers, most of whom are in various groups of friends, this desire stems from jealousy and frustration. For the Board, it stems from the desire to make Person A a scapegoat for the Faculty's current (financial) problems and from the Dean's animosity towards Person A. Various notifiers seem to have become disconnected from their former relationship with Person A and Person B, and to have been drawn in by the Board. Notifiers and Board thus come together in an orchestrated, **directed action**. This is made the more venomous by political activism in which several notifiers are involved. Moreover, Person A is a very successful academic, and a woman. This combination can arouse fear, jealousy and obstruction in others.

In all, this yields an image in which the statements look like **false accusations**. The committee remarks on this point as follows.

- Of course, someone who feels jealousy of another person or frustration regarding their own situation may convert this into efforts to harm someone else. In academia this can be stimulated by the competitive nature of the profession, and such behaviour can be reinforced by group dynamics. But it is not clear that long-term friendships among several of the notifiers carry much weight. An explanation that relies on this premise works on the **assumption** that, out of

collegiality or friendship, people will undertake to harm third parties and lie extensively to this end. Similar considerations lead the committee to conclude that it is implausible that the notifiers have allowed themselves to be used by the Board or that the Board has intended to use them.

- These considerations lead directly to the following point: notifiers and other colleagues have **much to lose** by speaking out about the behaviour of Person A and Person B at all, especially if their statements are shared with Person A and Person B. Moreover, the other colleagues were approached by the institution (*in casu* the committee), not the other way around. Also, there was no obligation on them to cooperate with the investigation, certainly for those who are not affiliated with Leiden University (this is with reference to the relevant regulations) – which is the case for seven of the eleven informants in this category.
- In the light of the above points, the committee finds the image of false accusations **unconvincing**.

With regard to the alleged connection with **political activism**, the reasoning described earlier demonstrates how Person A can be an easy target for efforts aimed at decolonising the archaeology of ([-----]), quite aside from her own actual positioning on that issue. However, especially because Person A points to collaboration between notifiers and activists, it is striking that virtually nothing is said about decolonisation in the statements; and during the committee's meetings with notifiers and other colleagues the subject hardly came up.

With regard to the alleged **orchestration** of the notifier statements, Person A and Person B and a number of those who made counter-statements have remarked that this can be inferred from similarities between some of the notifier statements, especially as regards their structure, among other things. However, this can be explained by the working method of the orientation team (see "Previous history," 3.1). As regards similarities in the content of the notifier statements, these can raise suspicions of social influencing (the effect of which on the crux of the individual recollection is small); but they can equally lead to the attribution of high validity to the statements. As regards the fact that the notifier statements were submitted within a short period of time: this is a logical consequence of the working method of the Dean of Archaeology and the orientation team, who acted on the advice from the Legal Affairs department.

The committee cannot pronounce in any way on the alleged **animosity** of the Dean towards Person A. The committee does have the impression that the relationship between Person A and the current Dean (who was Vice-Dean from 2015 to 2018, during Person A's deanship) has been **uneasy** for a long time. The committee infers this from statements by Person A and the Dean, and from statements by other colleagues and administrators.

Convincingness

In the light of the above, the committee considers the defence of Person A and Person B **only very partially convincing**.

5.4 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXT

Earlier warning signs

With regard to the complaint about Person A (and possibly Person B) with which a student supposedly approached the relevant department head **in 1995**, the committee cannot make any pronouncement. The committee has seen no documentation and the former department head says they have no recollection of this.

With regard to the complaint about Person A and Person B with which a notifier says they approached the department head **in 1999**, on which documentation is in fact available, the committee remarks that the former department head first said they were not actively involved and therefore no longer knew the details, but then proceeded to pass strongly worded judgment on the notifier as erstwhile complainant. In relation to the compensation the Faculty of Archaeology awarded the complainant at that time, the committee reiterates that the former department head's understanding of this does not tally with the letter from the then Dean on this issue.

In relation to the above points, the committee notes that two other notifiers and one informant in the category of "other colleagues" describe the relationship throughout the years between the department head (who later served as Dean, and as head of another department) and Person A as **hand in glove**. One of the two notifiers also states in this context that the department head was at one time (ca. 2013) Faculty confidential counsellor for PhD candidates, and that the notifier knew "from other experiences" that "it was not an option to pour out your heart there" on the behaviour of Person A and Person B. The third informant states that in the 2010s they experienced serious obstruction by both the department head and Person A, and ascribes this to the close relationship between the two.

The committee cannot pronounce in any way on the complaint **in 2017** about unacceptable behaviour by Person A of which the Rector-President at the time supposedly informed Person A and which was supposedly discussed in the Faculty Board. The committee has seen no documentation of this, the former Rector-President says that he has no recollection of this, and this also holds for Person A.

The committee observes that there is a lack of clarity about the question of whether the three reports on the behaviour of Person A **in 2018–2019** were discussed by the present Dean of Archaeology and the Rector-President at the time. The Dean states that this happened in April 2019, the former Rector-President knows that he had a conversation at that time with the Dean but cannot recall that the reports were discussed. In the view of the committee, what is certain is that reports were made, and that these were not followed up on at Faculty or University level.

The system for correcting behaviour

It was mentioned earlier that notifiers and other colleagues indicate that staff members faced with problems had too little confidence in confidential counsellors and administrators and so did not approach them. Following the KNAW report on social safety, the committee uses the expression "the system for correcting behaviour" [*het systeem om bij te sturen*] to refer to the system of **confidential counsellors** and to **alertness, responsiveness and willingness to follow up** on the part of the relevant administrators when problem signs appear, at Faculty and University level.

The committee will discuss the system for correcting behaviour in more detail below. Here the committee uses this notion to highlight the claim by various notifiers that **there**

was nowhere for them to turn to with concerns and problems and they had no confidence in the effectiveness of the system, certainly as regards its function as a countervailing power to administrators (*in casu* Person A in her position as Dean). The staff members in question did not feel truly heard or helped by the confidential counsellors at Faculty or University level.

Overloading of Person A

The committee did not investigate how the appointment of Person A as Dean came about. The committee does, however, remark that the combination of a deanship (2013–2018) with the obligation to devote 80% of the nominal work time to a [-----] project (2013–2019), plus the duties associated with a [-----] project (2013–2018) and a [-----] project (2013–2016), strikes it as **risky** for all those involved. The committee believes that those persons at Faculty and University level who were responsible for the appointment of a Dean for this period should not have asked Person A to take all this upon herself and/or should have stopped her from doing so.

Such overloading of an individual academic is risky for the **health** of the person themselves and can be at the expense of their ability to look critically at their own performance. It is also risky for the **availability** of that person for the requisite duties and for the staff members involved, even if the person in question is known to be an exceptionally good organiser, as is true for Person A. Also, such overloading of a staff member is not beneficial for the Faculty's effective **representation** at University level. When asked about this, Person A stated to the committee that she wanted to end her deanship in 2016 but was not given this opportunity because no successor was available.

Privileges

As part of its discussion of the administrative context, the committee wishes to point out that there is also another image of Person A that contrasts with the image of being overloaded. This is the image of someone who is "sacrosanct" for the institution (to repeat the expression used by an informant and cited above), and who by dint of this position obtains considerable informal power and privileges, supported by the administrators involved. The committee observes this from statements and documentation on Person A's secondment to [-----], among other things. It is quite reasonable that, after standing down, an administrator should receive some form of **compensation** that does justice to the scope of their duties (for example, a sabbatical year), but to be permitted to spend 70% of their research time for five years at an institution [-----] that does not contribute to their salary costs strikes the committee as **extremely generous**, particularly if other staff members also accompany them to the [-----] institution. At the same time, the committee can imagine that this was considered an option, inasmuch as working relationships within the Faculty were a source of tension. It is not clear to the committee precisely what the reasoning of the various persons involved was, and why the Dean apparently did not play a meaningful role, but the context outlined here may have given the then Rector-President cause to want to oversee the exploration of this option.

5.5 FINDINGS

In the light of the above, the committee arrives at the following findings.

Unacceptable behaviour

The committee considers it **plausible** that Person A and Person B displayed unacceptable and frequently transgressive behaviour over a long period of time and thereby inhibited and harmed others.

Violation of academic integrity

The committee considers it **plausible** that Person A and Person B violated academic integrity through their actions in relation to the extraction of human remains and in relation to their handling of access to data.

- Specifically, this relates to the standards for good research practices 13, 17 and 57 (extraction of human remains) and 13, 25 and 40 (handling of access to data) as formulated in the *Netherlands Code of Conduct on Research Integrity* (see Literature List).

The committee also considers it **plausible** that Person A and Person B pushed and possibly crossed the boundaries of what is permissible in regard to claims of co-authorship, citation pushing and (in the case of Person A) the re-use of their own work.

- Specifically, this relates to the standards for good research practices 29, 30, 31 and 40 (authorship), 48 (citation pushing, albeit in the context of supervision rather than peer review) and 41 (re-use of own work) as formulated in the *Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*.

The behaviour in question dates largely from the period before the publication of the code of conduct (2018) but also conflicts with the stipulations of its predecessors since the late 1990s, if not according to the letter [of these documents] – particularly [as compared to] the detailed elaboration of the standards [in the 2018 code] – then certainly according to their spirit (see Schuyt 2019: 41–48; see Literature List).

Fraud

The committee has **no indication** that Person A or Person B are guilty of fraud.

Criminal offences

The extraction of human remains [-----] in 2009, in a violent manner and without a permit, could qualify as a criminal offence. To reach a definitive conclusion on this matter, further investigation would be needed.

- With regard to possible criminal offences, the committee is only tasked with informing the Executive Board, not with advising on attendant decisions. In the light of the documentation made available to the committee by the various parties and the date of the episode, the committee nonetheless remarks that it **does not believe further investigation would be beneficial**.

Behaviour that points to pregnancy discrimination could qualify as a criminal offence. To reach a definitive conclusion on this matter, further investigation would be needed.

- With the caveat mentioned above and in the light of the statements the committee was able to use in reaching a judgement and the date of the behaviour in question (early 2000s, early and mid-2010s), the committee remarks that it **does not believe further investigation would be beneficial.**

Nota bene: The role of the environment

The committee reiterates: the matter at hand is not just about the behaviour of two academics but equally about the role of the environment. As informants in all categories have indicated – not only Person A and Person B, but also notifiers, other colleagues and administrators – it would not be right to focus only on Person A and Person B. They are responsible for their behaviour, but that behaviour is also a product of the environment.

This applies across the full breadth of the matter at hand: unacceptable behaviour but also violation or stretching of academic integrity. To illustrate this, the committee refers to the *Co-authorship Considerations and Guidelines* of the Faculty of Archaeology (2021, see Literature List). This document starts with a reference to “a number of incidents related to issues of authorship [. . .] in recent years” that “call for an explicit set of guidelines,” a formulation that suggests such issues have the attention of many in the Faculty.

By the role of the environment the committee refers specifically to three issues that have been raised many times: the organisational culture in the Faculty of Archaeology, the dynamics surrounding external research funding and the system for correcting behaviour at Faculty and University level. Further discussion of this follows below, in the committee’s reflection on the matter at hand and in the committee’s recommendations to the Executive Board.

6 REFLECTION

6.1 WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

How is it that people can **overstep the mark** by so much? And how is it that they are apparently **not corrected**, in the first place by their immediate colleagues and the relevant administrators? How is it that, once they are in fact held accountable for their behaviour long after the fact, it is apparently no longer possible to do so in the form of a constructive, collegial conversation?

The committee's considerations focus here on the behaviour of Person A and Person B but also on their **environment**, primarily at Faculty level but also at University level.

The division of roles between Person A and Person B shows Person A as the driving force of a **team of two** at the centre of a research group. That Person A and Person B are not just colleagues but also a married couple poses challenges for all those involved. This can be to do with issues such as loyalty and transparency; the risk of conflict of interest and the couple's desire to avoid this; the sense on the part of other staff members that they are never dealing simply with one of the two, but always possibly with both; and so on. Hence, the comments below are not just about Person A but also about the team that Person A and Person B constitute together.

Ambition and responsibility

Notifiers and other colleagues (both those approached by the committee and those who submitted statements to the committee via Person A and Person B) state that Person A is a **strong academic**: driven, goal-oriented, ambitious, an efficient organiser and a good networker. She knows what is happening in the field and she thinks big. To realise her ideas she is capable of conjoining various developments and translating them into research projects; of recognising young talent and tying them to her, and of "managing" not just research but also a multitude of outreach projects, in which she pays much attention to community engagement. She works exceptionally hard.

But academics have a **dual responsibility**. This does not stop at their own research (whose scope the committee extends to include community engagement) but also includes educating, mentoring and supporting younger academics by setting an example, in terms of both disciplinary content and professional ethics. This applies even more if the person in question is successful and if the work of these younger academics is essential for this person, such as in group projects. The said responsibility extends beyond one's own group, first of all to one's own Faculty. It appears that when things went wrong, the responsibility for others was often overridden by Person A's **ambition**. In these instances, Person A appears to have had insufficient consideration for other people and failed to ask herself whether her ambition endangered their well-being.

That this could happen might be because Person A was not fully aware of how hierarchical the scientific establishment is, how impactful **power differences and dependencies** can be for those lower in the hierarchy, and how much power she herself had; or maybe she was in fact aware of these things but unable, over the years, to maintain and recalibrate this awareness. This may have been exacerbated by the fact that she had **too many duties** (with the deanship plus three external projects as a prime example). Unbridled ambition and a demanding schedule can distract one's attention from the well-being of staff members and from how one's own behaviour comes across to others. It is also possible that Person A's high position and her excessive workload at times **shielded** her from problem signs.

In any event, the image of Person A, and of the Person A and Person B team is one of fanatical academics who did not pay enough attention to **proper ways of interacting with others** in a university environment, and who failed to ask themselves how their behaviour might come across to others and what its impact might be.

It bears emphasis here that the dual responsibility of academics may not have been visible enough in Person A and Person B's **immediate environment**, the Faculty of Archaeology; and that more generally, this environment apparently did not set effective norms for interacting with others.

Successful women, in a misogynist environment

An important angle on the matter at hand is that of **gender** (here, too, the committee relies on its conversations with the experts and a reference to specialist literature: Faniko *et al* 2020, see Literature List). Identical behaviour by men and women is judged differently, which translates into different expectations, impulses and responses from the environment. Stereotypical male qualities that can contribute to good science and good leadership – for instance, decisiveness and assertiveness – are generally assessed more positively when displayed by men than when displayed by women, and in the latter case, they can be assessed distinctly negatively. An additional drawback is that as a result, the academic in question can associate more strongly with male colleagues and develop a less positive image of younger female colleagues, for example with regard to the latter's willingness to let their own career override everything else ("career commitment"). A possible explanation is that these women have operated in a misogynistic environment for a long time, have had to make greater sacrifices than men in comparable positions and have received less support from the organisation. They have learned from this to be extra tough and not to let themselves be swept aside.

The committee has not attempted to assess whether the behaviour of Person A qualifies as an example of such mechanisms. The committee only wishes to stress that successful women can be victims of sexism as well, and that, hence, this may have happened to Person A. Nor is the committee in a position to pronounce on how the Faculty of Archaeology compares to other Faculties within Leiden University as regards gender dynamics. The committee does recall an image of **misogyny in Dutch academia** that emerges from *Harassment in Dutch Academia*, a report by the Dutch Network of Women Professors (2019, see Literature List).

Other contextual factors

Harking back to its findings, the committee points to three other, troubling environmental factors it believes must be considered when addressing the question of what happened here. The committee has not systematically investigated these factors, but they feature frequently in the information that is available to the committee. This holds for the group around Person A but also for other sections of the Faculty of Archaeology, in different settings and at different times.

Firstly the committee mentions the **organisational culture** in the Faculty.

- Apparently, **intimate relationships** between staff members and students, staff members and PhD candidates, and PhD candidates and students have occurred with some regularity. It is not entirely clear to the committee whether the Board and the Faculty community are always aware that intimate relations in the workplace raise concerns, particularly in the case of unequal positions: about power relations, transgressive behaviour, conflict of interests, the effect on the environment, and so on.
 - o As regards intimate relationships and other issues such as alcohol use and how these relate to fieldwork, the question arises of what are internationally recognised good practices for archaeological fieldwork and how the Faculty has related to these. The current Faculty code of conduct on fieldwork strikes the committee as thorough (see Literature List), but the question that matters is what happens in practice and how this practice has developed over time.
- In addition, there have evidently been regular **conflicts** in the interactions between staff members of the Faculty, where people have not pulled their punches. Informants from all categories gave examples (paraphrased, cited and sometimes documented) that go back a long time, in some cases to about twenty years ago. The documents in question include emails with personal attacks. The committee regards this kind of correspondence as crude and aggressive, and harmful to the recipients.
- All this fits with a bigger picture of a Faculty held together by **informal relations** and **informal power** to a relatively large extent, in different respects. An example from the period [-----] relates to the offloading of teaching duties by permanent staff to PhD candidates and postdocs. According to a statement by a former Board member, this was arranged informally, without the Faculty Board having, or aspiring to, a clear view of the situation or any control over it, even though such arrangements could have major – but officially invisible – consequences for the scope of individual duties. Informal relations and informal power are inherent in every organisation (and can do good and important work), but for the committee the question arises of whether they played too big a role, to the detriment of social safety.
- In all, the committee has gained the impression from statements by informants in all categories that the culture in the Faculty was for a long time marked by a notable **“looseness,”** in various respects. It is conceivable that this “looseness” is in part a consequence of the **rapid growth** of the Faculty over recent decades in terms of financial resources and the number of (temporary) staff members, mainly drawing on external funding; but this is **not automatically an adequate explanation**. In the image of fragmentation and its possible causes that came up in the committee’s meetings with other colleagues, for instance, management style played a role as well.
- Viewed within the framework of interacting with others in a university environment, three things seem to have been lacking: a shared normative framework for **judging** behaviour, the awareness that behaviour can **change** and that the people concerned have agency and a duty to act, and the skills to turn problematic behaviour into something that **can be talked about**.

Secondly, the committee mentions the **dynamics surrounding research funding**.

- Person A's qualities have translated into her success in applying for research funding. Research funding gives the research leader opportunities, power and influence, but it comes with risks. People who are "put on a pedestal," in the words of an informant – as was the case for Person A – enter a **force field** that can distort their relations with others. In this kind of situation, it is easy to lose sight of one's own boundaries and those of others, to forget that most other people do not have project grants, and to get used to life in the fast lane; but also to be confronted with excessive demands and become overworked and over-exposed. If it is in fact the case that Person A deliberately or inadvertently put her ambition above everything else, this may have been reinforced by the **acclaim** she received from the institution for her numerous successes.
- Hence, even successful academics deserve protection, not least from themselves. This certainly holds for the success embodied by research funding, which can lead to celebrity status in academia today. Such **critical protection** can come primarily from one's close colleagues and the relevant administrators. It should not be limited to preventing the person in question from becoming overworked, but should extend to the willingness to identify other risks, to be alert to warning signs and to hold the person in question accountable. However, it is precisely their celebrity that can lead to the environment dismissing or glossing over problem signs, or failing to follow up on these so that they "fall through the cracks," as seems to have happened here. Successful academics stand to gain from an (administrative) environment that helps them keep both feet on the ground, also and especially if this requires a frank conversation.

Thirdly, the committee mentions **the system for correcting behaviour** in the Faculty and the University as a whole. As noted earlier, this refers to confidential counsellors and to alertness, responsiveness and willingness to follow up on the part of the relevant administrators when problem signs appear.

- The information available to the committee appears to indicate that this system **did not function well**. This may be one of several factors that resulted in complaints and frustrations not being voiced and consequently weighing more heavily, which may have contributed to relationships deteriorating or becoming dysfunctional. On this point, too, the committee remarks that there is no reason to think that these kinds of problems are confined to the Faculty of Archaeology.
- There appears to have been too little space to **voice concerns in confidence** and receive support. There is a disconnect between the evident extent of the problems and the notifiers' evident lack of familiarity with, and confidence in, the system of confidential counsellors and the regulations for addressing complaints. This is the more disturbing because Person A is a prominent professor who was a member of the Faculty Board for a long time (from 2007 to 2018, as Vice-Dean and as Dean). In relation to this, other colleagues mentioned that they sometimes heard about complaints but did not know whether and how these were followed up on. Besides this general picture, two notifier statements describe in detail how they sought contact with confidential counsellors but did not feel they were truly heard or helped.
- At the same time it appears that **problem signs** were **not adequately addressed** in the administrative context: in 1999, in 2017 (probably) and in 2018–2019. It does not seem unlikely, then, that there were problem signs at other times as well.

6.2 A DIFFERENT ERA?

Person A and Person B state that matters are being magnified after the event, partly influenced by the **spirit of the current age**: one can think here of the increasing attention to harmful power relations and the growing scope of notions such as that of intimidation, in academia and elsewhere. In the same vein, one of the other colleagues questions whether it is fair to assess events from long ago (in the case of this informant, from the 2000s) against present-day criteria, and comments that certain types of behaviour that now count as unacceptable were “normal” at the time.

The committee underwrites that relativising particular behaviour may be appropriate in the light of a shift in norms and values. But when it comes to the events whose contours have become visible in the matter at hand, it believes **such an argument does not warrant** dismissing these as unimportant, or as unavoidable in their time, or as normal in the academic world. Nor is the committee convinced that the events in question can qualify as normal for the field of archaeology as this was practised in earlier years (one of the notifiers compares their experience with that gained during fieldwork undertaken from a different university, in the early 2000s: the use of alcohol, for instance, was forbidden there). The committee also reiterates that the notifier statements cover a long period of time (from the early 1990s to 2022), and that this is also true for the statements by the other colleagues (roughly the 2000s and 2010s).

Academic work is profoundly **relational**. Insufficient attention to the well-being of others is harmful. The harm extends to not just the individuals in question but also the products of academic work, because groups achieve more than individuals, and individuals perform best when they feel safe. This was **no different in earlier years than it is today**.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee advises the Executive Board to adopt the broad framework outlined in the foreword of this report for implementing the committee's recommendations, and not to narrow down the picture to the behaviour of Person A and Person B.

1 Healing for all those involved

The committee recommends that the Executive Board work towards healing for all those involved who are affiliated with the Faculty of Archaeology.

The institutional abuse that appears to have occurred has left deep scars on the lives of those affected. The committee therefore believes that some form of **aftercare** is essential. The Faculty can only move on successfully if serious attention is paid to aftercare. The need for aftercare minimally applies for all those involved who are currently affiliated with the Faculty. Only if they are included in a process of **working through their experiences**, preferably together and definitely with the help of qualified professionals, can the past be given a place and can they look to the future.

Person A and Person B are part of this group. Although it is plausible that they have overstepped boundaries in various ways, their behaviour is also explained by **environmental factors** and is part of a bigger picture. There is also room in this bigger picture for their considerable merits in academic work: not in order to brush aside abuse, but in recognition of the need for aftercare for all those affiliated with the Faculty. This is so not least because, as Person A and Person B indicate, the period since the notifier statements and the attendant professional and personal consequences has been extremely difficult for them. In the light of their depiction of these things, the committee understands this.

It is not for the committee to advise on the imposition of possible sanctions against Person A and Person B, or on the form any such sanctions should take. Should the Executive Board consider imposing sanctions, however, the committee nonetheless puts forward two points for consideration, in addition to the paragraph above. Firstly, a considerable proportion of the alleged events took place in the (distant) past, and in a complaints procedure they would be regarded as time-barred. Secondly, what matters most here is healing within the Faculty of Archaeology as a **community**, and whether sanctions would contribute to this is open to debate.

2 A healthy organisational culture

The committee recommends that the Executive Board work towards improving the organisational culture in the Faculty of Archaeology and design this process in consultation with representatives of the other Faculties from the outset.

Academia is fraught with risks to social safety. Particularly this kind of environment needs a **shift from complaint-processing to prevention**. To this end, attention to the organisational culture is essential. The committee refers once more to the KNAW report on social safety, which is central to such a process and offers concrete guidelines (in a national context, since this issue is not confined to just one university).

There are many facets to organisational culture. Of these, the committee minimally wants to draw attention once again to proper ways of handling external **research funding**, in particular the need for the aforementioned critical protection of successful applicants, where it is paramount that a grant does not lead to detachment from the community but rather contributes to that community. Stimulating ambition is a good thing, as long as this happens across the full breadth of university work and not just for

acquiring grants, within an effective system of checks and balances. This is in keeping with developments in team science and with the *Recognition and Rewards* [*Erkennen en waarderen*] programme.

3 An effective system for correcting behaviour

The committee recommends that the Executive Board work towards improving the system for correcting behaviour in the Faculty of Archaeology and in the University as a whole.

As is true for improving the organisational culture, this is crucial for achieving a shift **from complaint-processing to prevention.**

For this to work effectively, **confidential counsellors** must be properly trained, well-equipped, highly visible and easily accessible. They must also have the authority to actively advance solutions, for example by inviting those involved to talk about their concerns or by raising problems in confidence within the organisation, notably with more agency and a greater duty to act than is currently the case. This requires professionalism and anchorage within the organisation. Here, "more" is not necessarily "better." There is not automatically a need to expand the system of confidential counsellors; rather, this is about an effective design of the system, where confidential counsellors work together, through short lines of communication and in full respect of confidentiality, with other bodies such as the Complaints Committee for Unacceptable Behaviour, the Academic Integrity Committee and the Committee on Whistleblowing.

Equally important are **alertness, responsiveness and willingness to follow up** on the part of the relevant administrators when problem signs appear. Among other things, the said alertness requires the ability to anticipate, in order to prevent situations where too many things converge within the remit of individual academics, with all the risks this brings. This advisory report covers a long period in which Faculty and University administrators have come and gone, but the need for alertness, responsiveness and willingness to follow up is an issue of the administrative **system**. Hence, the Executive Board might consider undertaking an administrative evaluation itself to see whether the matter at hand offers lessons for the future.

8 LITERATURE LIST

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