

Marcus Egg, Alessandro Naso, and Robert Rollinger (editors), **Waffenweihungen in Archäologie und Geschichte**. Akten der internationalen Tagung am Institut für Archäologien der Leopold-Franzens-Universität, Innsbruck, 6.–8. März 2013, RGZM-Tagungen, volume 28. Publisher of the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Mayence 2016. VIII and 200 pages with 114 black and white illustrations.

In late 2012 the exhibition ›Waffen für die Götter. Krieger, Trophäen, Heiligtümer‹ opened in the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck. It was complemented by a conference, ›Waffen für die Götter. Waffenweihungen in Archäologie und Geschichte‹, which resulted in the volume reviewed here. The organisers aimed at presenting various methods of offering weapons in sanctuaries from the Middle East to Central Europe. The location of the exhibition and conference was not accidental, for it is in the Alps that various examples of weapons deposited in sanctuaries during the Bronze and Iron Ages were discovered.

The initial articles in the volume are devoted to the Middle East. Martin Lang in his source study presents a translation and a commentary on a Sumerian text from the cuneiform tablet no. 4184 from the Yale Babylonian Collection. The text is about the lustration of the weapons of a king and his army. Although some data concerning the chronology and details of the ceremony are missing, the author compares these inscriptions to the royal inscriptions from the third millennium B.C. and on that basis assumes that this was a ritual purification of weapons after a military campaign.

The article by Stefano de Martino and Elena Devecchi is of a more general character. It discusses the importance of weapons in the sanctuaries of the Hittite world. However, the presentation of the written, iconographic, and archaeological sources is not followed by an attempt at a synthesis, and the few interpretations are rather shallow; e.g., the authors assume that the sacrificial destruction of the weapons was performed to prevent their being used against the Hittites, but do not offer any arguments for that claim. Another serious drawback is the lack of illustrations presenting the iconographic and archaeological sources.

Much better illustrations, albeit only photographs which do not represent the subject matter in full (there are no cross-sections of the artefacts) can be found in the next article written by Altan Çilingiroğlu, which discuss-

es the weapon deposits in the Urartian fortress in Ayanis. They were deposited in a temple and dedicated to the deity of Haldi. Even though the weapons are functionally and morphologically diverse, no satisfactory typological analysis is presented, and as a result there is no discussion of whether the weapons were produced locally or were trophies. Some aspects of this cult have been reproduced (libations, cult of fertility, and fire and weapon offerings) based upon, for example, the inscriptions dedicated to the deity; however it seems possible to discuss the dynamics of the cult in the relatively short period when the temple was used (from its construction in 673/672 B.C. until its destruction in an earthquake in 650 B.C.).

The main part of the book deals with the Bronze Age, and one of the most interesting contributions is that by Christoph Huth. It presents a synthesis of knowledge about the weapon deposits, distinguishing their contexts, i.e. water (in rivers, lakes, marshes, and wells) and land deposits, their compositions, condition (intact, mechanical or fire destruction), their dating, and reflections on the meaning of these differences. Huth rightly considers outdated retrogressive interpretations, which arbitrarily project assumptions from later to earlier periods. The most important part of the essay is an attempt at distinguishing sacrificial offerings (*Opfergaben*) from gifts to the deities (*Weihgaben*). The former are the intentionally damaged artefacts, which could not be re-used, and the latter, fully functional weapons. War trophies were considered a special phenomenon, as they consist of weapons won in a battle and often destroyed later (this group of weapons, also known from the Iron Age, comprises the deposits in Great Britain dated to the Late Bronze Age). The depictions of warriors impressed on metal sheets or representations in small figurines deposited in the Paleo-Venetian temples in the Late Bronze Age and in the Iron Age are likewise discussed. As embodiments of the donors, they were probably meant to intend a relationship with the deity. The terrain plays an important part in the analysis; e.g., the Alpine passes on which weapons were discovered are considered as liminal zones. For that reason it is justified to regard the usually undamaged weapons found there as analogous to those deposited in water; rock chasms may be regarded in the same way. And the so-called hoards, which are often composed of non-functional (e.g. oversized pieces such as very large parts of attire and vessels) or simulacra (e.g., swords of the Plougrescant-Ommerschans type with blunt edges and without hilt) are presented in a very interesting way. They were symbols of affluence comparable to gold weapons in hoards and burials from the Early Bronze Age. Also the multiple depictions of weapons and ornaments on the statue-menhirs (connected with an ancestor cult?) from the Copper Age are of crucial importance to understanding the hoards from the Early Bronze Age. Although it is often difficult to provide an archaeological interpretation of the deposits, the reflections presented in the article are certainly likely to inspire debate and increase the chances of understanding the phenomenon. The author is fully aware of the limitations

of the archaeological method and draws his conclusions in a balanced way. He concludes convincingly that in the Early Bronze Age the deposits expressing gratitude were predominant, which was manifested by the sizes and number of the deposited artefacts, whereas in the Late Bronze Age the gifts deposited in the liminal places were the most numerous. The author also notes a continuation of many religious rites and takes into account a wide range of analogies in various parts of Europe.

Philippe Della Casa and Ariane Ballmer focus on a similar subject, however limiting their interest to the Alpine region in the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. Besides water and land deposits, they also analyse the weapons from sepulchral sites and those which include burnt offerings (*Brandopferplätze*). In this article the contexts are investigated in detail, including attempts at establishing whether the weapons were deposited intentionally or were simply lost. The 'hoards' of weapons from the La Tène Period are considered, following Marcus Egg, as secondary deposits, and the weapons had initially been exhibited in temples, as in ancient Greece, or on posts, and only afterwards were placed in the soil. The weapons found in burials are considered representative of social status, and the *Brandopferplätze* (best described for the site of Wartau Ochsenberg) with weapons of considerable value (helmets, e.g.), often very badly damaged, are interpreted as offerings made by the elites in the Late Bronze and Iron Age. Another interesting point is the idea of the grave understood as a window to the other world, open for a short time to give the deceased a message to carry. Such windows to the beyond were assumed in the terrain, too, as liminal zones, that is, as entrances to ravines, passes, chasms, water, and marshes. Such areas were considered natural places of contact with the numinosum, and this is where the deposits were laid, carriers to convey information. The situation of burnt offering sites is more complicated since non-military artefacts were deposited together with weapons; the authors allow for the possibility that divination was practiced in these places. The article is summed up with a clear, but slightly oversimplified block diagram which takes into account the supposed character of contacts with beings in the beyond, the authors of the information (the elites), the addressees of the message (deities, ghosts, heroes, ancestors), ways and places of contacting them, and a clear response to the elite. The ideas presented in the article are complementary to those formulated by Christoph Huth.

An important chapter of the volume is the study on the Middle Bronze Age weapon deposit from Piller (northern Tyrol). Its author, Gerhard Tomedi, analyses a group of artefacts tightly packed in a ceramic vessel deposited in a rock crevice. The careful analysis permits many detailed conclusions. The deposit comprised weapons and parts of attire dated to a period of time spanning slightly more than two centuries. Some of them belonged to the elites (women and men), but there were also axes and spearheads used by warriors of second rank, as well as farming implements (axes, sick-

les), unprocessed pieces of bronze (Gusskuchen), and sickles of premonetary use. The weapons were destroyed in a systematic way, after having been heated in order to remove the dendritic structure of the metal. The destruction was performed in a single act, after which the artefacts were deposited in the crevice. A considerable part of the article is devoted to the presentation of various ideas of cultural anthropology which may be used in the analysis of the social structures in the Bronze Age. Out of many possible ideas, the author chose the concept of the so-called conical clan to interpret the finds from Piller. Such structures are characterised by endogamy, constant leadership, and hierarchical structures based on the ancestors; the founding fathers of the family were at the top of the social pyramid. According to Tomedi, the most valuable artefacts were housed in temples or structures resembling family museums before deposition. Most probably they were treated as insignia of female and male elites, pledges used in the cult of the ancestors. The interpretation presented by the author, although slightly surprising, is justified by the thorough analysis of the material.

Two articles discuss Greek sanctuaries. In the first, Holger Baitinger carefully analyses the examples of foreign weapons. They were given to deities in Greek temples from the second half of the eighth century until the mid-fifth century B.C., and usually they were acquired from other Greeks in wars between the poleis. The author was able to identify several non-Greek military artefacts which, after a careful chronological-typological analysis, permitted them to be tentatively connected with concrete historical events. The author also managed to determine the chronological and territorial differences. The artefacts which dominate in the deposits are weapons from Italy and Sicily dated to the eighth or seventh century B.C., i.e., the period when the first Greek colonies were established in the western Mediterranean. Weapons were generally deposited in large supra-local sanctuaries. The analysis of the damage made to these weapons, taking into account the cultural background, permits the distinction of intentionally damaged weapons from the pieces of bronze scrap metal deposits (weapon fragments).

The second article, written by Isabelle Warin, describes the custom of offering weapons in Greek temples dedicated to female deities, especially Athena, Artemis, and Hera. The author looks for Middle Eastern sources of this custom in the cults of female deities. The presence of military equipment (including miniature weapons) explains the high status of the above-mentioned deities in the Greek pantheon, owing to which they were very suitable as patrons-protectors of the poleis.

Andrea Camilli summed up the results of the rescue excavations conducted on the beach near the Etruscan town of Populonia (today Baratti, Livorno province). The author interprets the features discovered there as an assemblage of altars concentrated around the *tropaion* and surrounded by sacrificial pits. The *tropaion* is believed to have had the form of a stone tumulus on

which a post with armour and a helmet was placed, surrounded by spears driven in the ground (more than two hundred spear butts were found). In the time when the sanctuary was used, between the turn of the seventh to the sixth century B.C. and the third century B.C., the cult changed. In the sixth century B.C. different rituals were practised there, which may suggest that the site was used by a non-Etruscan community, which buried their dead in the nearby necropolis. As a whole, the site is considered one of the earliest examples of a *tropaion* located on a tumulus, as described in the *Aeneid*. This model was later to be developed into monumental victory memorials built in the Roman times.

Marcus Egg and Paul Gleirscher analysed a sacrificial site of Förk in Carinthia. Their task was difficult because the majority of the artefacts come from amateur explorations. Later excavations and geomagnetic methods helped in the analysis. At the site, the weapons were deposited in sacrificial pits, comprising Celtic iron helmets, swords of the La Tène type, spearheads, parts of shields, and chain belts, most from Phase La Tène B2 (the third century B.C.). Their state of preservation (fire patina, no organic elements) indicates that the weapons were burnt before deposition. Careful observation of the artefacts and the vestiges preserved on them permitted the identification of at least two deposits from Phase La Tène B2. Single items from La Tène C and D suggest that the sanctuary was used also in later phases. The model typological analysis of the helmets revealed that they were not produced locally but were acquired from people of the Eastern Alpine areas. For their comparison the authors used the interpretation adopted for non-Greek weapons in Helladic temples (cf. the paper by Baitinger) and also the weapons from Scandinavian bog sites dated to the proto-historical period. It was not possible to determine the details of the sacrificial ritual except for the burning of the weapons and their deposition in pits.

Starting from the Late Bronze Age, an important group of sacrificial deposits consisted of helmets, which were particularly important in the Celtic world. They may have symbolised the head, which is connected with decapitation practised in the Celtic, and to some extent also Germanic, milieu. The helmets found in water contexts in the Iberian Peninsula are discussed in the article by Raimon Graells i Fabregat and Alberto J. Lorrio Alvarado. The authors noted the rarity of helmets and hence the importance of water deposits for the local community. They also made an attempt at interpreting the ritual (although not in such a penetrating way as the authors of the articles discussed above) and noted the attempts at an effective elimination of the helmet from the world of the living by sinking it deep in water, and if this was not possible, by damaging the piece. Finally, they analysed the chronology and distribution of the helmet finds and found that initially (in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.) only Greek helmets were deposited in estuaries in the south-western part of the investigated area. It is not, however, clear whether the supposed sacrifices to the river deities were made by newcomers or were a result of

local beliefs (in the Greek world such offerings are almost unknown, except for the finds of Corinthian helmets in harbour waters). The later group of finds comes from the Celtic tradition and was found in Celto-Iberian land; due to the lack of river mouths, the helmets were usually deposited near springs. In that case they were destroyed so as to, as is assumed, avoid sacrilege, in case they were picked from shallow water and re-used. This interpretation, however, is not convincing in the light of the popularity of ritual weapon destruction in the Celtic world, which was practised both in land and water deposits. Finally, it should be stressed that these conclusions cannot be binding due to the scarcity of the finds.

Two articles are devoted to written sources. Wolfgang Kofler discusses epigrammatic references to weapons. The key observation is that epigrams may have imitated the inscriptions made on the sacrificed artefacts, including weapons. This literary genre became popular soon after abandoning the custom of depositing weapons in Greek temples.

The article by Gianluca Tagliamonte concerns the Roman world. The author collected ancient records about the Roman customs of burning trophy weapons. The issue is presented in many aspects, and the conclusions are convincing. As the author says, it may be assumed that the custom was practised in the middle and late Republic, until the early first century B.C. Its Etruscan roots are not certain. The weapons were collected at the battlefield or in the enemy camp and then burned, which seems to be a ritual of victory, although other symbolic aspects are also indicated, such as getting rid of the evil powers connected with the enemy weapons or their complete desecration so as to prevent their re-use (risky because of violation of taboos). It is also possible that sympathetic magic was involved: the destruction of weapons was to result in the destruction of the enemy. It should be stressed that putting the enemy weapons under taboo could not have been complete, since from about 300 B.C. the trophy weapons were often displayed in public buildings as well as in private homes, and some of them were often used in triumphs. In the time of the early Empire this custom was not completely abandoned but changed its character, reflecting rather the achieved peace rather than the ritual of war.

The only article presenting deposits from the Roman period is that by Andreas Rau. Due to the comprehensive character of the studies on southern Scandinavian bog sites, it was not possible to present the issue in its whole complexity in a short article. The author restricted his study to the analysis of the ritual destruction of military artefacts (not only weapons, as he rightly states) deposited in former lakes. He manages to describe the differences in the degrees (using graphs) but also ways of destroying weapons, dealing with the whole spectrum of custom: from the weapons deposited intact, through the ›decapitation‹ of spears (cutting the head off immediately below the socket) to intense destruction, often repeated, which required holding down the ›maltreated

artefact, and sometimes random aggression resembling *furor teutonicus* related not to the enemy himself but to the property representing him. Valuable artefacts were subjected to particularly intense destruction. Anger was also vented on horse trappings and even on the trophy horses. The author interprets the offerings of selected valuable elements of horse trappings of the defeated leader, typical of the later deposits, by analogy to the Roman *spolia optima*. It was the highly valued booty, namely the equipment of the defeated leader, which was placed on a post and then carried in a procession to the Capitol and deposited as an offering in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius. This interpretation seems to be more convincing than earlier explanations, which referred to the imprecise term of *pars pro toto*. The cases in which two deposits of the same date were found at one site are considered to be an argument for the existence of sacral zones marked out for different deities. The article concludes with the psychological, religious, and social background for the destruction and deposition of military artefacts, with references to selected anthropological conceptions. The author disagrees with the idea that the destruction was performed in a state of ecstatic, emotional fury, which is indeed not suggested by systematic damage. However, aggression may be manifested in many ways, and the reviewer cannot exclude the image of a German mad with fury persistently and rhythmically hitting the same part of the destroyed weapon. Certainly in the near future it will be possible to study this issue once again on the basis of the materials from the Danish bog site of Alken Enge, where damaged skeletal remains of warriors with very few weapons were deposited.

To conclude: the volume contains many interesting articles, among which the reviewer would like to distinguish especially those by Christoph Huth, Gerhard Tomedi, Gianluca Tagliamonte, and Andreas Rau. It certainly makes obligatory reading for the specialists studying weapons and sanctuaries in the Bronze and Iron Ages. The drawback of the volume is the overwhelming emphasis upon issues connected with the Bronze and Early Iron Age. The later deposits are analysed only by Andreas Rau, although there are numerous sacrificial sites from the pre-Roman, Roman, and Migration periods, and even the Early Middle Ages. One should mention here first of all the Scandinavian bog sites: only selected elements of the rituals were discussed in the above-mentioned article, but the issues connected with pre-Roman sacrificial sites, especially Hjortspring on the island of Als (F. Kaul in: O. Crumlin-Pedersen / A. Trakadas [eds.], *Hjortspring. A Pre-Roman Iron-Age Warship in Context. Ships and Boats of the North 5* [Roskilde 2003], 141–185), are not mentioned, nor are the roots of this phenomenon in Scandinavia going back to the Bronze Age or even the Middle Stone Age (see: F. Kaul in: L. Jørgensen / B. Storgaard / L. Gebauer Thomsen [eds.], *The Spoils of Victory. The North in the shadow of the Roman Empire* [Copenhagen 2003] 18–43).

It should also be stressed that similar sites, i.e. lakes (generally dried out today) with weapon deposits have

recently been discovered in the southern Baltic littoral: in Czaszkowo, south-eastern Poland (T. Nowakiewicz / A. Rzeszotarska-Nowakiewicz, Lake Nidajno near Czaszkowo in Masuria. A unique sacrificial site from Late Antiquity [Warsaw 2012]), and Lubanowo in north-western Poland (T. Nowakiewicz [ed.], Ancient Sacrificial Place in the Lake in Lubanowo [former Herrn-See] in West Pomerania [Warsaw 2016]), the latter still a body of water. What is more, some of the newly analysed archival materials indicate that there were more such sites (cf. B. Kontny in: W. Nowakowski (ed.), *Goci i ich sąsiedzi na Pomorzu* [Koszalin 2006] 101–118; B. Kontny in: B. Kontny (ed.), *Ubi tribus faucibus fluenta Vistulae fluminis ebibuntur. Jerzy Okulicz-Kozaryn in memoriam. Światowit Supplement Series B. Barbaricum 11* [Warsaw 2015] 307–331).

Numerous weapon deposits, especially water deposits dated from the Roman period until the Middle Ages, were also found in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (A. Bliujienė, *Arch. Baltica* 14, 2010, 136–165). One should add here the river finds recorded in various parts of Europe, e.g., the Ljubljanica river in Slovenia (P. Turk et al. [eds.], *The Ljubljanica. A river and its past* [Ljubljana 2009], specifically the papers by J. Istenić, P. Turk and A. Gaspari), or the Noteć in Poland (T. Makiewicz, *Offa* 52, 1995, 133–148).

It may be also interesting to compare the Alpine mountain sanctuaries from the Iron Age with the slightly later (sixth to first century B.C.) deposits of Hellenistic and Roman weapons from the passes in the Crimea, e.g., Gursuf (e.g., M. Novichenkova / B. Kontny in: A. Tomas [ed.], *Ad Fines Imperii Romani. Studia Thaddaeo Sarnowski septuagenario ab amicis, collegis discipulisque dedicata* [Warsaw 2015] 303–324). However, while the last-mentioned discoveries are quite recent, it is nevertheless rather surprising that the older Celtic finds are only briefly mentioned. Omitting such spectacular sacrificial sites as Ribemont-sur-Ancre, Gournay-sur-Aronde, or La Tène may be justified by the scope of the investigated territory, but the lack of reference to them should be considered as a serious lapse.