Herbert A. Cahn und Annemarie Kaufmann-Heinimann (Hrsg.), Der spätrömische Silberschatz von Kaiseraugst. Mit Beiträgen von E. Alföldi-Rosenbaum, F. Baratte, H. A. Cahn, J. Ewald, E. Foltz, V. von Gonzenbach, M. J. Hughes, Ch. Jungck, A. Kaufmann-Heinimann, J. Lang, M. Martin, St. Martin-Kilcher, W. A. Oddy, Chr. Raub, K. Schefold, H. Wrede. Basler Beiträge zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte, Band 9. Habegger Verlag, Derendingen 1984. Textband mit 452 Seiten und 162 Abbildungen; Tafelband mit 236 Tafeln.

On 27th December, 1961, a building-site inside the south-west corner of the fortress of Kaiseraugst was being levelled by machine. Willy Füchter, the driver, found that at one point he had gone 30–50 centimetres below the specified level, and so he brought some soil from a nearby dump to make up the deficiency. These last shovelfuls of the day disturbed from its hiding place one of the largest and most important hoards of late-Roman silver ever to be found. In the 55 days to 20th February, 1962, there came to light 68 silver objects and 186 silver coins and medallions, about 36.7 kg of silver. The objects included forty eating implements and toilet utensils, eleven cups and bowls, eleven dishes, a candelabrum, a statuette, the fragment of a plate, and three ingots.

Principally through the initiative and energy of Professor Rudolf Laur-Belart the discovery was recorded and the treasure was almost all saved. The detailed investigation of the statements and events and the weather conditions, and the traces of the objects, one on the other, showed that probably two pieces, perhaps four, are missing, but not more. The consequence is that the discovery is the best recorded of almost all important silver treasures of the fourth century. The Esquiline Treasure was found by accident in 1793. An essay on the treasure, written within a year of the discovery, discussed in detail only those vessels thought to be of major importance, and the first inventory of the pieces was not published until 1930 (K. J. SHELTON, The Esquiline Treasure [1981] 11). The Mildenhall Treasure was found about 1942, and the official inquiry was not set in train until 1946 (K. S. PAINTER, The Mildenhall Treasure [1977] 11). This sets in context the discovery at Kaiseraugst and the achievement of the investigation in establishing what was unearthed and where it was hidden.

Cleaning, conservation and photography proceeded with great speed, and in April, 1963, scarcely a year after the treasure had been found, it was placed on exhibition in a newly-built Treasury in the Römermuseum at Augst. Preliminary publication was equally swift: an article in 1962, the first edition of a booklet in 1963, both by Laur-Belart, and an 'inventory' article by Ruth Steiger and Herbert Cahn in 1964.

In 1984 there appeared a pair of volumes which not only published the Kaiseraugst Treasure, important in its own right, but established new standards of study and made the silver plate an important category of evidence for the archaeology and history of the period. It stands beside only a small number of outstanding publications of the late-Roman treasures of silver and gold plate of the fourth and fifth centuries AD. The two oldest are A. ODOBESCO'S monumental work, now a century old, on the find from Pietroasa in Romania (Le trésor de Pietroasa [1889–1900]), supplemented by R. HARHOIU, The Treasure from Pietroasa, Romania. BAR Suppl. Ser. 24 [1977]), and Curle's publication in 1923 of the Hacksilber from Traprain Law, in Scotland (A. O. CURLE, the Treasure of Traprain [1923]). It was not until after the Second World War that these were followed by volumes on the treasures from Groß Bodungen by Grünhagen in 1954, from the Esquiline Hill in Rome by Shelton in 1981, and from Thetford by Johns and Potter in 1983, and on the Parabiagio Plate by Musso, also in 1983 (W. GRÜNHAGEN, Der Schatzfund von Groß Bodungen. Röm.-Germ. Forsch. 21 [1954]; SHELTON, *op. cit.;* C. M. JOHNS and T. POTTER, The Thetford Treasure [1983]; L. MUSSO, Manifattura suntuaria e committenza pagana nella Roma del IV secolo. Indagine sulla Lanx di Parabiago [1983]).

The importance of the treasure derives not only from the quality and quantity of the plate itself but also from the quality of the publication. This quality could not have been achieved if the changes and apparent misfortunes of the project had not allowed the right team to come together and ideas to mature. Indeed, by 1984 more than twenty years had elapsed since the discovery of the treasure, at the end of 1961 and the beginning of 1962; but the treasure had been known in all essentials through publications by R. LAUR-BELART, Der spätröm. Silberschatz von Kaiseraugst, Aaargau [1963]), H. U. INSTINSKY (Abhandl. Mainz 5, 1971, 141–156) and Cahn, as well as through exhibitions and their catalogues in Paris (1963), Cologne (1967), London (1977), New York (1978) and Trier (1984). Definitive publication of the treasure was planned and begun by R. Laur-Belart (objects) and H. A. Cahn (coins); but Laur-Belart's death in May, 1972, set the whole project back. In the aftermath of this event the Stiftung Pro Augusta Raurica and the Verwaltungskommission of the Römerhaus und Museum Augst decided on a new strategy. Herbert Cahn was charged with the editorship of a monograph to be written by a team of scholars. Completion of the manuscript was planned for the end of 1975, and publication of the monograph for 1976.

Fortunately the publication target was not achieved, for within such a time-scale nobody could have succeeded in producing the two near-perfect volumes which appeared in 1984 under the joint editorial signatures of Herbert Cahn and Annemarie Kaufmann-Heinimann. They fulfil totally the task of setting out the facts in every detail, of reviewing critically all previous publications, and of setting out and evaluating all the available comparative material. After a description of the circumstances of the discovery there follows an excellent catalogue, in which every entry systematically includes all the technical data, a minutely detailed description, and an excellent discussion of typology, style and iconography. There are also masterly pioneering studies of manufacturing techniques, of stamps and weights and inscriptions, and of the shapes and functions of the vessels.

The publication begins with a history of the discovery and the cleaning and restoration by JÜRG EWALD, who personally participated in the discovery and must take credit for an investigation of which a professional detective would be proud. After a brief account of the historical situation in the years AD 337 to 357 by HERBERT CAHN, the catalogue fills the main body of the text volume (pp. 55–359), consisting of a series of studies by different authors. It begins with studies, not of the figured dishes which have made the hoard famous, but of less spectacular objects such as spoons (nos. 1–35), wine-strainers (nos. 36–7), tooth-picks, and earpicks (nos. 38–40), all by MAX MARTIN, and of the wash-bowl (no. 41) and the candelabrum (no. 42), these by FRANÇOIS BARATTE. The table-vessels follow. First, STEFANIE MARTIN-KILCHER presents the cups (nos. 43–6), the small rimmed bowls (nos. 47–51), the fish-dishes (nos. 53–4), and the undecorated plates (nos. 56–9). Then comes the decorated plate. FRANÇOIS BARATTE presents the bowl with a six-pointed star (no. 52), the small nielloed dish (no. 55), the Euticius Dish (no. 60), and the Ariadne Dish (no. 61). ELISABETH ALFÖLDI-ROSENBAUM, VICTORINE VON GONZENBACH, and CHRISTOPH JUNGCK are responsible for the two largest and most elaborate dishes, the Sea-City Dish (no. 62) and the Achilles Dish (no. 63). These are major studies, that on the Achilles Dish, for example, being 90 pages long. Besides undertaking the mammoth task of editing the volumes, ANNEMARIE KAUFMANN-HEINIMANN was responsible for the silver statuette of Venus (no. 64), while HERBERT CAHN published the fragment of stamped plate (no. 65), the ingots (nos. 66–8), and the coins and medals (no. 69–186 items). The final part of the book consists of special studies: on the method of production and the scientific examination (two contrasting papers, one by ERNST FOLTZ of the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Mainz, and the other by JANET LANG, M. J. HUGHES and W. A. ODDY, of the British Museum); on the stamps, weight indications and inscriptions (MAX MARTIN); on the shapes and function of the table silver (STEFANIE MARTIN-KILCHER); on the function and ownership of the treasure (HENNING WREDE and HERBERT CAHN); and on the cultural setting of the treasure in late antiquity (KARL SCHEFOLD).

If these studies had been published separately, all would have excited admiration, comment and discussion in their own right. The coordination and combination of them in a single publication makes the whole of major importance. Not all the insights and perceptive conclusions can be summarized here. The reader is referred to the volumes themselves in order to appreciate this compilation of mini-masterpieces! What follows instead is an attempt to highlight some of the problems raised by the Kaiseraugst volumes, few of which had been considered in depth before 1984, and the study of which has been permanently affected by this work. Problems discussed are the date of the Treasure's deposition, its ownership, the composition and nature of such hoards, and questions of production and supply of plate.

Date Of Deposition

From the beginning Laur-Belart was convinced, as his journal shows (p. 34), that the treasure belonged to the Emperor Julian himself, who in 361 set out from Augst against the Emperor Constantius (Amm. 21, 8, 1): 'Donnerstag, den 1. März (1962) . . . Beim Studium von Bidez' Biographie des Kaisers Julian finde ich, daß dessen Mutter Basilina (!) vor der Geburt träumte, sie komme mit Achilles nieder. Bald nach der Geburt stirbt sie. Julian bewahrte ihr eine rührende Anhänglichkeit. Er wurde vom Eunuchen Mardonios sorgfältig erzogen, vor allem offenbarte er ihm die Schönheiten der homerischen Dichtung. Unsere Platte ist eine genaue Illustration zur Jugend des Kaisers. Ich bin überzeugt, daß wir das Tafelgeschirr des Kaisers Julian gefunden haben, das 361 n. Chr. vorsorglich vergraben wurde, als er von Augst gegen Constantius II. ziehen wollte. Eine herrliche Entdeckung!'

A more precise assessment of the date comes from Cahn's study of the coins and ingots (pp. 324–59). Of the 186 coins 164 are denarii, and the others are 17 medallions, each weighing 4 denarii, and 5 medallions, each weighing 1 ½ denarii. Chronologically most come from the period of the Dyarchy (AD 340–49), while geographically most come from mints in the west, owing to a preponderance of coins from Trier. The following table summarizes that published by Cahn (p. 348):

	Tetrarchy 294–305	Period of Constantine 329–37	the three sons of Constantine 337–40	Dyarchy 340–49
Antioch		1		
Nicomedia		1		
Constantinopolis		2	2	
Thessalonica		4	5	11
Siscia		1	15	14
Aquileia				8
Ticinum	3			
Roma	1		2	
Arelate				6
Lugdunum		1		
Treveri	7		40	62
Total	11	10	64	101

The latest coins in the hoard are examples of the last issues of Constans, AD 349 to January AD 350. They must be considered together with the coin-like stamps on the three silver ingots, which show Magnentius full face and carry the inscription IM CAE MAGNENTIVS AVG. The inscription belongs more or less exclusively to Magnentius' first issues at Trier (P. Bastien, Le monnayage de Magnence. Num. Romaine 1, 1964). These, too, belong to the beginning of AD 350, for Magnentius was declared emperor on 18th January, AD 350, and the ingots are likely to have been made and distributed for his accession, and so, in the light of the ingots and coins together, any event after January, AD 350, might in theory have been an occasion for the burial of the hoard.

There are nevertheless limits to the range of events, particularly because the condition of the latest coins is very fresh, and the absence of the later issues of Magnentius surely places the deposit within his reign, not later, that is, than AD 353. Laur-Belart's speculation that the hoard can be connected with the presence of Julian at Augst in AD 361 is thus too remote from the dates of the coins and ingots to be acceptable. Even a connection with Julian's earlier visits to Augst in AD 355/56 is too late. Instinsky therefore considers that the raids across the frontier by the Alemanni in AD 351–54 are a likely occasion (*op. cit.* 18–156). These caused considerable trouble and disorder in the Kaiseraugst area, of which evidence is to be found in hoards buried in the fortress (Cahn, p. 406). In 1837 a hoard of 4000 coins was found by the south wall of the fortress. Another hoard found in 1888 contained at least 454 coins and ended not before the first half of AD 351. In 1965 a hoard of 151 mint-fresh majorinae were found in excavations in the church of Kaiseraugst. These belonged to an issue of the mint of Lyon, also of AD 351. Cahn points out, however, that these hoards are also evidence that the coinage of Magnentius was reaching the area in ever-increasing volume. In the Kaiseraugst Treasure the latest issues were both the last issues of Constans, AD 349 to January AD 350, and also the ingots probably distributed by Magnentius in January, AD 350, and so the Treasure was probably not deposited because of the Alemannic raids, for like the other coin-hoards of the area it would certainly have accumulated some of the later issues of Magnentius, which were available by May, AD 350. Cahn therefore suggests that the Treasure was deposited in the early part or the summer of AD 350. It might be prudent, however, to admit that more time could have elapsed between the issue of Magnentius' coins and their arrival and burial at Kaiseraugst. They would, nevertheless, with great probability have been present in any hoard closed later than the earliest part of AD 351. The date of the deposition of the treasure can therefore be ascribed with confidence to the period spanning AD 350 and the opening months of AD 351.

No other hoard of late-Roman silver plate can be dated with this degree of precision, and Cahn's deductions from the coin- and ingot-evidence make the Kaiseraugst Treasure of unique importance for the fourth and fifth centuries. The precise dating makes especially important the objects in the catalogue section whether studied singly or in groups. The Kaiseraugst Treasure is the first major hoard to be well dated among the treasures which range from the later third to the early fifth centuries, and it forms a significant point of reference for those hoards, whether the Seuso Treasure or those from Chaourse, Mildenhall, the Esquiline, Canterbury or Traprain Law.

Ownership

One of the key questions to be faced for the Kaiseraugst Treasure is that of ownership. What sort of person was he? Can he be identified as a historical personality? These questions and some possible answers are brought together by Wrede and Cahn in their joint chapter towards the end of the book (pp. 405–9). Three possible approaches are to consider the significance of the mass of the metal, the nature of individual objects in the hoard, and the inscriptions.

The mass or value of the metal in the Treasure will not reveal the identity of the owner or owners; but it will show the size of his fortune and thus help to locate the level of society to which he may belong. Some sort of answer to this question may be gained from evidence incorporated in the Historia Augusta. In that document's biography (SHA, Vita Claudii XVII) of the emperor Claudius Gothicus (AD 269–70) there is quoted a letter from Gallienus (AD 253–68) to Claudius, who was worried about his declining standard of living. Gallienus, to put this right, sent to Claudius a present of fine clothes and plate in gold and silver, of which the gold amounted to twelve pounds (4 kg.) and the silver to 118 pounds (39 kg.).

Problems inherent in the Historia Augusta, of course, are that its purpose and authorship are not clear or known, that it purports to be a chronicle of the emperors in the third century, but is not reliable, and that its date of composition is held by some to be the later part of the fourth century and by others to be the earlier part of the fifth century. None of these problems, however, need inhibit use of its contents in the context of this discussion, for, whatever its authorship, purpose and date, it will have been intended to be convincing in its details of wealth for its fourth-century or early-fifth century audience, and so it has a bearing on assessments of late-Roman hoards which were in use at precisely the same period.

In the light of this evidence, therefore, it is relevant to note that the weight of the 39 kg. of silver plate presented by Gallienus to Claudius is approximately 1½ times that of the Mildenhall treasure (26 kg.), and considerably less than that of the Seuso Treasure (68 kg.) or of the lost Trier Treasure (115 kg.). It is, however, approximately the same as that of the Kaiseraugst Treasure (35 kg.), and one may conclude, therefore, that in the eyes of the fourth-century public the weight of silver plate of the Kaiseraugst Treasure might have been a suitable present to give to a future emperor, and that as a mass it certainly relates to the governing classes of the Roman Empire. In a world where coinage was constantly debased and devalued, the constant high quality of the silver of which plate was made (M. HUGHES ET AL. in: F. BARATTE and K. S. PAINTER, Trésors d'orfèvrerie gallo-romains [1989] 22–33) must have had the greatest influence both in persuading propertied people to preserve their capital in such a form and in giving them status when they displayed it.

The weight of silver plate and the quality of the metal are nevertheless not the only factors to be taken into account when assessing the status of the ancient owners of treasures. Note must be taken of whether the plate is decorated or relatively plain. The difference in weight, for example, between the 3rd-century Chaourse Treasure (12.5 kg.) and the 4th-century Kaiseraugst Treasure (35 kg.), is not the only factor to be taken into account. The 4th-century description (SHA, Vita Claudii XVII) of the present of plate from Gallienus to Claudius, for example, takes care to emphasize not only its weight but the rich decoration of the greater part, in contrast to vessels of less importance – and less decoration. There is a very clear distinction to be made between such decorated vessels, found in the 4th-century Mildenhall and Kaiseraugst Treasures, and the simple, more utilitarian vessels of most of the Gaulish treasures of the second half of the 3rd century, such as that from Chaourse.

Baratte has suggested persuasively that some evidence of the social status of the owners of the 3rd-century treasures can be gained from the evidence of some tombs in the Rhine valley (F. GELSDORF, Das Rhein. Landesmuseum Bonn 2/1986, 26–29; BARATTE in: Le trésor de la place Camille-Jouffray à Vienne/Isère. Gallia, suppl. 50 [1990] 219). At Rheinbach-Flerzheim, between Bonn and Cologne, for example, where the inclusion in the grave-goods of a silver cup paralleled at Chaourse, the burial was part of the cemetery of a big estate, and it thus links the owners of such silver and the owners of these big agricultural estates, who in 3rd-century Gaul also constitute the governing class of the towns. The 4th-century evidence from the same source, burials on the vast estates round Cologne, confirms a picture of rich landowners with a taste for luxury, but whose silver was more provincial than that found in the great hoards of the period (Weiden: J. Deckers and P. Noelke, Die röm. Grabkammer in Köln-Weiden [1985]; Müngersdorf: F. Fremersdorf, Der röm. Gutshof Köln-Müngersdorf [1933]). It is not possible to rank the owners of such treasures as Chaourse, Graincourt or Reims, as I once did on grounds of weight and mass, on the same social level as the owners of the treasures of Kaiseraugst and Mildenhall, which compare with Gallienus' gift to Claudius Gothicus (in: Baratte [ed.], Argenterie romaine et byzantine [1988] 105).

The individual objects constituting the Kaiseraugst Treasure support this hypothesis. Wrede and Cahn, for example, establish the high rank of the owner of the three three-pound silver ingots (Cahn, pp. 326–9; Wrede and Cahn, pp. 407–7). Cahn and Instinsky had both pointed out as early as 1971 that the ingots were an imperial donative handed out on the accession of Magnentius in AD 350 (Cahn 1971, 116; Instinsky *op. cit.* 13 f.; 151 f.). The nine pounds of silver is nine times as much as that given to an ordinary soldier on the accession of Julian in AD 360, and the recipient presumably also received nine times as many gold coins, though none were found with the treasure. Cahn points out that in AD 299 a *praepositus* of the *equites promoti* in the *legio II Traiana* received a donative on Diocletian's *dies imperii,* which was equivalent to about 1½ pounds of silver and which was double that received by the ordinary soldier. He concludes, therefore, that the Kaiseraugst ingots, nine times more than the silver given to an ordinary soldier at about that time, were a donative to an officer of considerably higher rank than the *praepositi.* There is no evidence, however, to allow one to suggest a specific rank.

How can we be sure that the ingots were still in the possession of the recipient of the donative at the time the hoard was buried? Could any other objects in the hoard also be imperial donatives, thus establishing that the owner of the hoard was a regular recipient of such presents? Wrede believes that there are (pp. 407–8): 'Immer unter der Voraussetzung, daß am ehesten an einen Offizier zu denken ist, folgt aus den balkanischen Entstehungsorten einiger Silberschalen weiter, daß diese Bestandteile des Schatzes nicht durch einen *rationalis summarum* oder einen *comes sacrarum largitionum* provinziell westlicher *thesauri* ausgehändigt wurden. Denn weite Transportwege wären wohl vermieden worden. Vielmehr hat der Besitzer diese wertvollsten Bestandteile seines Schatzes entweder direkt aus der Hand des Constans oder des Magnentius erhalten, oder er diente in Pannonien und Makedonien und erwarb sie dort, durch Ankauf oder als Teile seiner dienstlichen Zuweisungen'. Instinsky (*op. cit.* 12–150) had asserted that the find-place excluded the possibility of the owner of the Treasure being a rich landowner or a great merchant, or indeed anything other than a high-ranking soldier: 'Er (der Fundort) schließt es aus, an einen Privatmann zu denken, etwa an einen reichen Grundbesitzer oder Handelsherrn. An dieser Stelle konnte nur ein militärischer oder sonstiger staatlicher Würdenträger solcher Wertstücke zu sichern versuchen'. This is the main basis for Wrede's assertion that the owner of the Kaiseraugst Treasure had to be an officer with a regular career. The hiding of the Treasure within the fortress and the presence of the ingots does of course raise a strong possibility that the owner might have been such a high-ranking officer. Wrede beguilingly proposes a career which progresses from service as *protector* or *domesticus* in the *comitatus* of Constans to a higher post at Kaiseraugst. But the attractiveness of his ideas must not be allowed to conceal the fact that at this point little more than an unproved hypothesis is the basis for the assumption that some of the plate was probably received as largess.

Support for Wrede's viewpoint is of course to be found earlier in the volume, in the interpretation of the significance of the Achilles Dish. Von Gonzenbach (pp. 295–6) argues that the subject matter was currently part of court taste, that there was probably a pair to the surviving dish, thus doubling the weight of silver involved, that the Dish was found together with the ingots issued by Magnentius, and that the workshop of Pausylypos in Thessalonica is probably part of the organization of the *thesaurus,* the state-depository for precious metals. She points out in support that Naissus too had a *thesaurus,* and that it was at Naissus that a number of largitio-dishes for Licinius were produced, being stamped with the name of the city. Only one more step in her argument was necessary in order to suggest that the missing dish of the pair had been left in the imperial treasury when the Kaiseraugst one was given away.

Wrede follows von Gonzenbach's argument, pointing out (p. 408) that both the Achilles Dish and the Euticius Dish (no. 63) have dotted inscriptions like those on *largitio* dishes and ingots from Eni Eri, Červenbreg and Šabac, which refer in turn to places such as Sirmium and Naissus. This supports Wrede's conviction that the Kaiseraugst vessels from Naissus and Thessalonica were produced in official establishments in those cities by *barbaricarii*. The arguments, however, are undermined by Delmaire and Callu. R. DELMAIRE (Largesses sacrées et Res Privata. L'Aerarium impérial et son administration du IV^{e} au V^{e} s. [1989] 483) has shown that the role of the *barbaricarii* was to decorate arms in the western part of the Empire and textiles in the east, probably with wire and inlay, and there is no foundation for linking these craftsmen with the production of silver plate. J.-P. CALLU (in: CL. BRENOT, F. BARATTE, M. VASIČ and V. POPOVIČ, Etudes de numismatique Danubienne. Sirmium 8 [1978] 2–3, and comment recorded in BARATTE *op. cit.* [1986] 121) has suggested that the 'Naissus' inscriptions on some of Licinius' *largitio*-dishes might have been put on after the event, when the objects, manufactured at Heraclea in AD 318 and at Nicomedia and Antioch in AD 321–2, had perhaps been seized by Constantine and were being checked into the *thesauri* at Naissus and Sirmium. The argument does not prove that there was not manufacture of plate at Naissus and Thessalonica. Euticius and Pausylypos both signed the objects they made, and the place-names presumably indicate the locations of their workshops, though it would not be impossible for the place-names to indicate the two men's places of origin, rather than where they worked; but there is no justification for claiming that such workshops were official, and that the products of the workshops were therefore for official distribution as largess. In consequence Wrede's arguments and von Gonzenbach's arguments that the owner of the Kaiseraugst Treasure was a senior Roman army officer rest on the finding of the Treasure within the fortress and on the presence of officially stamped ingots in the assemblage. Such arguments are not sufficient to prove their case. Is there other evidence which can be summoned in support?

Can the iconography be used to show that the dish was a piece of court art, and that its presence at Kaiseraugst therefore shows that it was distributed as a piece of imperial largess? Von Gonzenbach (pp. 293; 298–300) lays great stress on the connections of the Achilles myth with the Alexander theme and on its consequent importance in late antiquity for those emperors who identified with Alexander. Alexander was linked with the imperial propaganda concerning Rome's eastern policies for such emperors as Caracalla, Galerius, Constantine and Constantius II, all of whom had pretensions against the Persians. At the same time Achilles' life and education were models of late-antique gentlemanly behaviour and education. The scenes of education, von Gonzenbach concludes (p. 298–9), allow us to conclude that the Dish was commissioned for one of the princes at Constantine's court.

Von Gonzenbach quotes (p. 295) the Corbridge Lanx as a parallel silver dish carrying imperial propaganda in the form of a religious scene. The 'appearance of such a scene at such a date', showing Leto, Artemis and Athena at the temple of Apollo on Delos 'can only be explained', wrote J. M. C. TOYNBEE (Art in Britain under the Romans [1964] 307), 'as a topical *ad hoc* allusion to a specific event, namely to the sacrifice offered to Apollo on Delos by Julian the Apostate in 363, when he was *en route* for the Persian war'. Toynbee's unargued case is presumably that an object now unique in its reference to the cult on Delos in the 4th century must refer to a historical event. Such an argument, however, cannot stand, now that we have the contemporary spoons from Thetford, which uniquely refer to the cult of Faunus in Britain. The Corbridge Lanx's reference, therefore, to the cult on Delos, cannot logically be linked to Julian's visit. The account of the visit must be seen as a second and separate reference to the practice of the cult, and it cannot on its own justify the identification of the Lanx as a piece of court art. Von Gonzenbach's case is accordingly weakened by the collapse of the case for the Lanx as a parallel.

Von Gonzenbach's primary arguments about the iconography of the Achilles Dish are nevertheless very attractive. It must not be thought, however, that she uses them to prove that the Dish was a piece of court art. The commissioning of the Dish for a member of the court-circle is her premise, not her conclusion (p. 298): 'Der Umstand, daß die Kaiseraugstplatte für ein vielleicht dem Hof angehörendes Mitglied der Oberschicht in einer Kaiserresidenz geschaffen worden ist, macht es wahrscheinlich, daß die Wahl des Achillesthemas für den Bildschmuck zufällig ist'. The iconography of the Dish cannot therefore be used as a compelling reason to classify the Dish as an imperial gift.

Inscriptions occur frequently on late-Roman silver, both on the front and on the reverse of vessels. One category is carried out in punched dots on the reverse, recording mostly weights and names, and it seems probable that they are carried out by the craftsmen who made the objects (MARTIN, pp. 387–90). A few names are recorded on the front of the vessels, as part of the decoration, and these yield the only names to link treasures of late-Roman silver plate with certainty to historical personages. They do not always do so, as is demonstrated in the Seuso Treasure, where the Seuso named on the front of the Seuso Dish is unknown in the historical record; but significant names are found in two treasures, those from the Esquiline in Rome and from Carthage.

There is no doubt that the owners of the Esquiline Treasure are to be found among the members of the Turcii family. Until recently the Projecta whose name is inscribed on the rectangular casket has been identified with the 16-year-old young woman whose epitaph was written in AD 383 by Pope Damasus himself (A. Ferrua [ed.], Epigrammata Damasiana [1942] 201–5 no. 51). A main reason for the identification was that in 1793 the treasure was found not far from the church of S. Martino ai Monti, and that the epitaph-inscription had only shortly before been moved from S. Martino ai Monti to the Vatican Museum. The treasure and the epitaph seem to have been discussed together as early as 1794, and the inscription came to be closely associated with the treasure. O. M. Dalton (Catalogue of Early Christian Antiquities and Objects from the Christian East, British Museum [1901] no. 304), M. T. Tozzi (Il tesoro di Proiecta. Rivista Arch. Cristiana 8, 1932, 279) and St. Poglayen-Neuwall (Über die ursprünglichen Besitzer des spätantiken Silberfundes vom Esquilin und seine Datierung. Röm. Mitt. 45, 1930, 124) all linked the Secundus named on the casket with the Turcii named in monograms on other vessels, and they identified Projecta's husband as L. Turcius Secundus Asterius, who in AD 376 was one of the *XVviri sacris faciundis* and at some time between AD 339 and 350 was *corrector Piceni et Flaminiae* (CIL VI 1772–3). The date of 16-year-old Projecta's wedding and of the treasure was therefore calculated to be between AD 379 and her death in AD 384. Ferrua, however, rejected the connection between this man and the 16-year-old's husband, whom he identified as being called 'Primus', named in line 3 of the inscription. Shelton underlined (*op. cit.* 38–9) the necessary conclusion that the Projecta of the treasure could not be Projecta of the casket, and that therefore the tight dating of the treasure could not be maintained. She therefore proposed both a new dating for the casket, a little before AD 350, and another stemma for Projecta's family. Alan Cameron (Am. Journal Arch. 89, 1985, 135–45) subsequently disputed her arguments, and she responded (Am. Journal Arch. 89, 1985, 147–55).

The precise datings and identifications of the Esquiline Treasure remain unresolved; but whatever date and identifications are chosen, it remains a fact that the Projecta of the casket was married into the Turcii, and that this family is well-attested historically. It numbered among its members in the 4th century a consul, two prefects of the city of Rome, and the governor of one of the provinces in Italy, and in the 5th century Turcius Rufius Apronianus Asterius, who was consul in 494, the editor of a manuscript of Vergil, and the owner of great estates in Sicily (L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, Scribes and Scholars [1968] 32; 182–3). The treasure, on the evidence of inscriptions on the front of several of the objects, belonged to one of the great families of 4th-century Rome.

Among the objects which make up the treasure discovered on the hill of St. Louis at Carthage one small dish has round its centre a carefully engraved inscription: (Chi-Rho) D. D. ICRESCONI CLARENT. It has long been recognized that the inscription connects the object with the Cresconii, a great African family. Members of the family include a distinguished civil servant who in AD 390 took to Symmachus the imperial letter appointing him consul for AD 391, a *comes metallorum* in AD 396, an augur and duumvir at Timgad in the middle of the century, and several bishops such as the Catholic bishop at Cuicul after the Conference of Carthage in AD 411.

Graffito inscriptions on the reverse of vessels must also often identify owners of the vessels, and perhaps the whole treasures of which they form part. Nevertheless they are much more problematical. The Mildenhall Treasure and the Kaiseraugst Treasure are the two most important 4th-century groups concerned. The two Bacchic platters in the Mildenhall Treasure each have the Greek name Eutherios inscribed in graffito on the reverse. Following the suggestion of Skeat, I have suggested that this might identify them, and the Great Dish, as the property of the *praepositus sacri cubiculi* in Gaul with Julian between AD 355 and 361. This was no more than an attempt, however, to demonstrate that the meagre evidence is compatible with pieces of plate belonging to the topmost ranks of late-Roman society, and to show how such a treasure might have been given to Lupicinus, *magister equitum per Gallias,* and then have been buried in England. It was in no way a proof or demonstration of the hypothesis, and the attribution cannot be used as a fact in a discussion of the level at which such silver was owned.

The vessels in the Kaiseraugst Treasure have no inscriptions on their upper surfaces. On the undersides, however, they do have a number of graffiti, and Martin has studied and described these (pp. 387–90). 23 of them, he suggests, are probably marks of property, yielding six different names: Aquilinus, Euticius, Font(eius), Proc(ulus), Marcellianus, and P(ublius) Romulus. Sixteen of the 23 inscriptions are on the spoons, and only five are on other objects. The latter, with their catalogue numbers and with Martin's inscription numbers, are:

1. Sea-city Dish: Aquilini (24); Font (26)
2. Candelabrum: Eutic(i) (25); Mar/Euti (37)
3. Fish Dish: Marcelliano (27)
4. Nielloed Support: Prok (41)
5. Romulus Dish: PRomulo (42)

The problem is to know what such names on silver plate represent. In general terms they are likely to be marks of property, naming owners or perhaps their staff. When two or more names are found, there must be the possibility that successive owners are named, though the succession cannot always be determined. This cannot always be the case, for H. U. NUBER (Germania 59, 1981, 327–30) has published a 3rd-century cup from Niederbieber which uniquely carries eleven names, of which none is scratched out. It is difficult to imagine that the cup had eleven successive owners, and some of the names must be contemporary; but it is obscure in what circumstances joint ownership might be appropriate, except for a dedication. In general, however, graffito inscriptions do seem to indicate ownership of the objects marked. Baratte has drawn attention to the graffito inscriptions of names on six of the twenty objects in the Vienne Treasure (L'apport des ascriptions, in: BARATTE ET AL., Le trésor de la place Camille-Jouffray à Vienne [Isère]. Gallia, suppl. 50 [1990] 103–5). Of the four, or perhaps six, different names, one, *Dolmatius,* appears on each of the six objects and most probably indicates the final owner of the inscribed objects. We have no explanation of why such inscribed names appear on the minority of objects in every known hoard. It is evident, therefore, that the final owner of a hoard could be a person whose name is not recorded, and that it is unsafe to rely on the inscribed graffito names for identification of final ownership of a treasure.

In the Kaiseraugst Treasure, as in all others, there is no obvious reason to explain why some objects are inscribed and others are not, and there is no obvious explanation for the simultaneous presence of several graffiti on two of the larger objects, the Sea-city Dish and the candelabrum. Great caution must therefore be exercised when considering Martin's and Wrede's speculative identifications of the last owner or owners of the Treasure.

Martin interprets ROMA, an inscription found on cochlearia nos. 5 and 6, as an abbreviation for *RO(mulo)* and *MA(rcelliano),* a combination deliberately scratched by the two men as a verbal joke, referring not only to their names but also to the capital city and to Amor, reversed, perhaps on the occasion of a meal. The full name Romulus occurs only on the Romulus dish, no. 57, and Martin follows Wrede's interpretation of Romulus as being the general who fell at the battle of Mursa on 28th September, AD 351. Marcellianus occurs eleven times, not only on the Fish Dish (no. 54) and the Candelabrum (no. 42) but nine times on five cochlearia (nos. 4,18–21). Martin finds no historically known Marcellianus earlier than the son of Maximus (*praefectus praetorio,* AD 370/1), who was made *dux Valeriae* by Valentinian I. He suggests therefore that the Kaiseraugst Marcellianus could be the otherwise unknown son of Marcellinus, the *comes rerum privatarum* of the emperor Constans, who at Autun on 18th January, AD 350, raised Magnentius on his shield and was afterwards made the usurper's *magister officiorum.* Martin's enjoyment of the subject is particularly evident when he goes on to wonder whether the handwriting of the graffiti of Marcellianus' name can be identified with the graffito of the same name on wall-plaster from the South Basilica of the imperial palace at Trier, dated about AD 350. All this speculation is relatively light-hearted; but it does have the merit of pointing at the level of society to which we have seen the Kaiseraugst Treasure might on other grounds have belonged.

Wrede treats the problem with greater solemnity. He looks for leading personalities named Romulus and Marcellianus to identify in the circle of Magnentius. A Romulus, who had already served under Constans, is mentioned by Zosimus (hist. 2, 52, 2) as commander-in-chief of Magnentius' troops against Constantius II at the battle of Mursa. He died there on 28th September, AD 351. Romulus moreover had good reason to be in the region of Kaiseraugst, for he was responsible for the mobilization of forces against Constantius II, including the Rhine army and Castrum Rauracense. Wrede concludes (p. 409), 'Castrum Rauracense . . .

war . . . zu dieser Zeit das größte Legionslager der Provinz Maxima Sequanorum und bei einem Aufbruch vom Rhein nach Süden oder Osten nicht zu umgehen. Hier hat sich also der Heermeister Romulus zeitweilig aufgehalten. Als Besitzer des Schatzfundes kommt er daher in Frage'.

Wrede suggested that a high-ranking officer of the *legio I Martia,* stationed in Kaiseraugst, might also be a candidate for ownership of the Treasure. Martin had already shown that there is no convenient contemporary Marcellianus in the historical record. Wrede nevertheless continues: 'Am ehesten könnte er den Namen Marcellianus getragen haben, da dieser von den Graffiti des Schatzes am häufigsten genannt wird'. He supposed therefore that by some kind of spelling mistake Marcellianus could be identified with Marcellinus, and that the Marcellianus of the Treasure might be the Marcellinus who was Romulus' predecessor as *magister peditum* for Magnentius. It is certainly the case that Marcellinus is ideally suited by his social rank to have been the owner of the Kaiseraugst Treasure. The spelling of the name is not an insuperable problem. Spelling mistakes do occur on Roman silver. The Vienne Treasure's *Dolmatius,* for example, as Baratte has shown, is probably the same name as *Dalmatius,* which has a further variant of *Delmatius.* Wrede presumably is influenced by the ROMA inscriptions on the spoons, when he suggests finally that the Treasure was the joint property of Marcellianus/Marcellinus and Romulus: 'Stimmt unsere Hypothese, so hätten wir in dem Marcellianus der Graffiti einen weiteren hohen Offizier des Magnentius als Mitbesitzer des Silberschatzes vor uns'.

But Magnentius had in fact sent Marcellinus on a fruitless mission to Heraclea in Thrace, where he was arrested after a long journey via North Africa, Libya and Egypt, and the chronology suggests that Marcellinus could not have been present in Kaiseraugst when the Treasure was buried. Of Romulus and Marcellianus only Romulus could have been the final owner of the Kaiseraugst Treasure. Romulus too was of course of a suitable rank to have owned the Treasure; but the whole hypothesis is tenuous from many points of view. It is perfectly possible that the graffiti do include the name of the last owner; but there is no necessary reason for the name to be there at all, let alone for the owner to be identifiable in the historical record.

In view of these arguments the date of the burial of the Treasure cannot be refined by reference to historical events. The only certainty is that it must be within the period which the numismatists decide may be possible for the closing of the group of coins. Similarly, the reason for the burial cannot be decided by reference to historical events. All hoards were not buried for military and political reasons. Protection from theft could have been an equally strong motive to hide the silver. The Berlin papyrus of the 1st century BC or 1st century AD preserves the inventory of plate which a wealthy Roman in Egypt had packed in chests and deposited in various hands for safe-keeping (F. Drexel, Röm. Mitt. 36–37, 1921–1922, 34–57). This is just the same method of safe-keeping as that employed by Mensurius, Bishop of Carthage, in AD 308 (Optatus, On the Schism of the Donatists 1, 15–19). Before setting out for Rome he entrusted his church's gold and silver ornaments to various different seniors of the church, with an inventory in the hands of an independent third party in case of later problems. The Kaiseraugst Treasure could just as well have been buried for this sort of reason as because of precautions at the time of barbarian incursions, for example the Alemannic threat on the Rhine in AD 350, or because of Magnentius' bid for power, which came to a climax with his defeat at Mursa by Constantius II in AD 351. There is no evidence for deciding between these possibilities. But in any case the treasure keeps its key role in the dating of silver plate and in its attribution to centres of production.

Composition of hoards

The problem of what a hoard of plate represents has rarely been considered outside the analytical essays of Drexel (*op. cit.*) or A. Oxé (Bonner Jahrb. 129, 1929, 38 ff.; in: Ch. Albrecht *et al.,* Das Römerlager in Oberaden [1938] 38 ff.) which are now dated, or the work of W. Hilgers (Lateinische Gefäßnamen [1969]), which has a linguistic emphasis, rather than a study starting from the surviving objects. Is such a treasure a selection of the most valuable or most cumbersome pieces in the final owner's possession? Is it all the silver plate he owned? Is it a complete, organized service? Or is it a deposit containing the possessions of different people? It is one of the marks of the quality of the Kaiseraugst publication that it includes the only major modern study of these questions, directly or by implication, in Stefanie Martin-Kilcher's chapter, 'Römisches Tafelsilber: Form- und Funktionsfragen' (pp. 393–404; repeated and developed in her chapter in: M. Cima and H.-M. von Kaenel, Il tesoro nascosto. Le argenterie imperiali di Kaiseraugst [1987] pp. 57–63 and in Baratte and Painter, Trésors d'orfèvrerie gallo-romains [1989] pp. 15–20).

In order to investigate the composition, combination and use of the table silver, Martin-Kilcher compares the Kaiseraugst pieces with the major hoards of table plate from the whole Roman period, but excluding dedications and temple property such as the hoards from Berthouville and Wettingen. She analyses hoards from the 1st century BC to the 4th century AD, and she attempts to define the stable and changing elements in table services from the treasures of Boscoreale and the House of Menander to those of Chaourse, Mildenhall and Kaiseraugst. Her argument may be summarized as follows.

She begins with drinking vessels, including, jugs, cups, ladles, sieves, mixing-vessels and scoops. In the 1st-century hoards cups on raised feet have an important place. They are normally found in pairs, and when decorated the reliefs on each cup are usually related to each other. In the later hoards, however, cups are much rarer, and, when they do occur, take the form of bowls not set on a raised foot and without handles. The place of silver cups was probably being taken at this time by decorated glass bowls and cups, and, when silver cups and drinking-bowls do occur in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, some are direct imitations of decorated glass vessels. The lack, then, of silver drinking vessels in late-antique hoards, such as those from Kaiseraugst, Mildenhall and the Esquiline, occurs not because the hoards are in some way incomplete but because there had been a change in the drinking practices of the upper classes.

Martin-Kilcher deals next with eating and serving vessels. The analysis shows that medium-sized plates, presumably for use by individuals, occur in the earlier hoards and rarely in the later. Dishes and bowls seem to be relatively small in the earlier hoards, and larger in the later. In the earlier hoards many seem likely to be containers for sauces. Martin-Kilcher does not pursue the point; but could it be that in the later hoards bowls and dishes take the place of plates as containers for individual portions? Big serving-dishes, of course, are quite different in scale from individual plates and dishes. They seem not to occur widely before the 4th century. Baratte, however, has pointed out that we must be cautious, and that it may be our evidence of the most spectacular pieces which is deficient. He draws attention (in: CIMA and VON KAENEL *op. cit.* 22), for example, to the 3rd-century Treasure of Rhetel, which has two plates more than 40 cm. in diameter. Large vessels also occur in the earlier hoards, such as the Hildesheim Treasure; but we have no evidence as to whether they are intended for the serving of food or as trays for the carrying of other vessels to the table. Large dishes are nevertheless characteristic of the later hoards rather than of the earlier.

Martin-Kilcher mentions briefly other table vessels, some of which only occur in the earlier hoards, and others, like statuettes and candelabra, which are dealt with elsewhere in the volume. She proceeds, then, however, to a study of wash-bowls and other toilet silver, and to an assessment of their significance. Such toilet vessels were not, of course, used only at dinner. Nevertheless Martin-Kilcher makes it clear that washing, of the hands and perhaps also of the feet, was a regular part of the care of the body at dinners, further attested by the presence in the hoards of ear-scoops, combined with tooth-picks (pp. 122–32). Fashions may have varied at different times and in different places. During the third century, for example, jugs and handled saucepans, though not wash-bowls, disappear from the inventories of rich graves in the Gallic and Germanic provinces. In the late-antique finds of silver from the Mediterranean area, however, the Esquiline and Carthage Treasures both have jugs and handled saucepans, and the use of such vessels seems always to have been usual in the Mediterranean area.

In the final section of her chapter Martin-Kilcher analyses the composition of the Kaiseraugst hoard on the basis of decoration and degree of use. On these grounds the treasure is clearly not a homogeneous service. Two groups of vessels are its main components. A first group is closely related and could be part of a service produced in a single workshop. It is represented by the simple, smooth vessels, and it includes the large plate with the concentric flutings (no. 56), the smaller plate with the graffito P ROMVLO (no. 57), the four dishes and matching bowl (nos. 47–51), the rectangular fish-dish (no. 53), and the four cups (nos. 43–6). The second group includes the two plates with beaded rims (nos. 58-9), the Euticius plate (no. 60), the dish no. 52, and the small fish-dish (no. 54). Of these the big dishes (nos. 58, 59) and the fish-dish may have been made in Gaul. The wash-bowl comes from a very different group again, for it is one of the very few vessels of the Kaiseraugst find to have clearly recognizable marks of use. The richly decorated pieces – plates 62 and 63, the Ariadne tray (no. 61), the candelabrum (no. 42) and the little dish (no. 55) – all had their uses, but they were added to a core of vessels which was made in Gaul in the second quarter of the 4th century, and which was extended with vessels with the fashionably beaded rims, but of which some were made in the west and some in the east.

The basis of Martin-Kilcher's argument is that in hoards of table silver from the end of the Republic to late antiquity certain characteristic groups and changes in taste can be observed, which can be set out in a table. She suggests that the analysis and recognition of the groups depend on the shapes, and by implication the functions of the vessels, and that the importance attached to certain types of object can be recognized from the degree of decoration of a particular object and from the weight of metal employed for it. This reasoning underlies her hypothesis that the plate from Kaiseraugst is not a randomly assembled group of vessels but the major part of a silver table service, of which every part has a function.

Her theory is based on the fact that the treasures do not contain all the constituent parts of a *ministerium,* a theoretical service, and on the assumption that they are parts of such services of plate, which were dismembered before burial. The Berlin papyrus (F. DREXEL, Röm. Mitt. 36–37, 1921–1922, 34–57; A. OLIVER and J. SHELTON, Archaeology 32, 1979, 21–8) and other evidence (PAUL. sent. 3, 6, 86) shows that such services did exist with groupings of three or four vessels. Groups of three are known from the Chaourse and Reims Treasures, and groups of four from the Kaiseraugst and Mildenhall Treasures, and Martin-Kilcher emphasizes (p. 15) that such groupings are not restricted to services of silver, but are found also in funerary assemblages of pottery and of glass.

Baratte (in: CIMA and VON KAENEL *op. cit.* 16–17) has raised certain objections to the premises of these arguments. He points out on the one hand that we cannot be absolutely sure that any particular hoard is the property of a single owner, and not an assemblage of valuables brought together by a group of people in time of danger, perhaps reflected in surviving groups by the names of various owners. Shelton (The Esquiline Treasure [1981] 31–5) suggests, for example, that the objects in the Esquiline Treasure belonged to various contemporary members of the same family. A second argument by Baratte is that a group of vessels of precious metals may have been brought together and hidden for the capital value of the metal. Thirdly he argues that there is nothing to show that each owner necessarily owned a complete table service, corresponding to all the functions of a formal meal. Martin's brilliant study of spoons (pp. 55–96), for example, shows that Roman spoons were regularly made in fixed numbers from fixed weights of silver. The Kaiseraugst Treasure itself, however, shows that this regularity is not necessarily mirrored in the spoons used in a particular service, for they can be present in various irregular numbers and from a variety of origins.

Fourth, Baratte argues that it cannot be proved that every table-service was homogeneously of silver. An ensemble might mix pieces of different material and value. A passage in the Historia Augusta, for example (Alex. Sev. 34, 1; 41, 4, *'cum argentum in ministerio plus ducentis libris non haberet'*), praises the Emperor Severus Alexander for never having more than two hundred pounds of silver plate on his table, and this probably implies that there were other objects on the table of a more modest nature. Further, even when a table service was all of silver, it was not necessarily homogeneous in its origins. It could be put together bit by bit, according to the wishes of the owner, his opportunities, and the money at his disposal. In the Kaiseraugst Treasure, for example, as Martin-Kilcher has pointed out, the fluted bowl (no. 41) and the bowl with the six-pointed star (no. 52) may be from the same workshop in Naissus as the Euticius Bowl (no. 60), while the Achilles Dish (no. 63) was made by a silversmith in Thessalonica. The Munich Treasure similarly contains vessels variously from Nicomedia in Bithynia, Antioch in Syria and Naissus.

Baratte is right to subject Martin-Kilcher's hypothesis to rigorous examination. He must be correct when he points out that not every treasure has to be part of a larger service of which only a part has been found. His argument is strengthened by Martin-Kilcher's comparison of groups of three and four silver vessels with parallel funerary assemblages of pottery. The evidence from Pompeii shows that large services, such as the Boscoreale Treasure and the House of the Menander Treasure existed side by side with smaller services. Martin-Kilcher, of course, had already allowed this possibility in her discussion of drinking vessels, for she notes that from the 3rd century onwards the place of silver cups may have been taken by glass vessels, an argument supported both by the absence of cups from the hoards of silver and by the presence of such glass cups in burials of the period from various provinces of the Empire. Nevertheless, Baratte's suggestion that she thinks of hoards as being incomplete services is justified (e. g. in: BARATTE and PAINTER, Trésors d'orfèvrerie gallo-romains [1989] 15. 'Parmi les trouvailles des 3e et 4e siècles, celles de Chaourse, de Vienne récemment, puis de Kaiseraugst et Mildenhall sont particulièrement significatives, même si elles nous sont parvenues incomplètes', and future presentations of the argument should take this into account. Such future presentations will surely be needed, for her methods of research are surely correct. She has formulated the hypothesis that treasures of silver plate may represent partial services of table plate, which were organized in a regular way, modified with time and changes in manners and taste. She has then subjected her hypothesis to test by analyzing the content of existing treasures and by renewing her tests when new hoards such as the Seuso Treasure appear. If her hypothesis is wrong, the evidence will eventually show it. For the moment, however, it should be used, though of course with the caution normal for any hypothesis, albeit a good one.

Production and Supply of Plate

Some of the most intriguing questions prompted by the Kaiseraugst Treasure are to do with choice. Why did the customer choose these pieces, individually and as a group? Why did the silversmiths make these pieces? Did the silversmiths make even the most elaborate pieces in advance, in the hope of a sale, or did they only make them to order? Was the ornament added simply to decorate what was most importantly a piece of valuable bullion? Or did the value of the material merely reflect the importance which the owner attached either to the ornamental themes, individually and jointly, or to the ceremonial meals in which they were used?

Two important approaches to such problems have been suggested in recent years. L. SCHNEIDER (Die Domäne als Weltbild [1983]) has attempted a comprehensive approach to the iconographic systems of late antiquity. He has surveyed mosaics, painting and silver to try to show the permanent network of relationships which exists between all images in these media, whether based on daily life as on the Cesena Dish or the Seuso Dish, or on mythology. He concludes that there is a complex correspondence between realistic scenes which represent the activities of the master (toilet-scenes, processions to the baths, as on the bath-mosaics from Piazza Armerina [A. CARANDINI ET AL., Filosofiana: La villa erculia di Piazza Armerina, 1982, pl. LV, fig. 135, Room 21] and Sidi Ghrib [A. ENNABLI, Mon. Piot 68, 1986, 42–4]) or are related to the dominant position of the potentiores (agricultural work, the hunt, bucolic scenes, nature including still life), and those mythological scenes which evoke the worlds of, for example, Bacchus, as on the Mildenhall Dish, or Venus, as on the Projecta Casket. Schneider suggests that there was a coherent system of such images providing a total system of comprehension of the world, which was understood allegorically by those who owned the basic elements underlying these representations. Hence the importance of nature, presented realistically or in symbolic form through mythological compositions under the two parts of its composition, earth and sea.

How does Schneider think that this applies to silver? We have already considered von Gonzenbach's suggestion that a second Achilles Dish must have existed as a pair to the one that survives in the Kaiseraugst Treasure. Schneider goes further and suggests that whole treasures may have been put together in accordance with the iconographical system that he proposes. By way of example he suggests (*op. cit.* 126–7) that the nine vessels of the Graincourt Treasure (BARATTE and PAINTER, Trésors d'orfèvrerie gallo-romains [1989] 138–49 nos. 87–95), buried in the second half of the 3rd century, must have contained other vessels to complete the iconographical programme: '. . . Das Silberservice von Graincourt ist offensichtlich in seinem Bestand nicht vollständig auf uns gekommen, und doch liefert schon das Erhaltene weitere Ergänzungen zu den auf der großen Schale angesprochenen Themen: auf einer weiteren Schale bezeichnenderweise Venus und, auf dem Rand eines Tellers, wilde und zahme Landtiere zwischen dionysischen Masken'. In other words, Bacchic friezes, filled with hunting scenes or animals pursuing each other, only get their full significance when they are related to processions of marine monsters. If the relationship is not found displayed on an individual object, the observer should look for the relationship and its significance across a group of pieces, and if he does not find it, he should conclude that the deposit represents only part of the service of its owner.

If Schneider were right, we should have to look for a system of design, structure and supply of silver plate which took these needs of the patron into account. The thesis rests, however, on the premises that there exist, or must have existed, services which displayed this whole systematic iconography of Nature, and that collectors of silver actually did put together such iconographical programmes in their silver services. There is in fact no evidence to support either precondition, and so we are spared the search.

The other recent approach to the problem has been formulated by Marlia Mango (Antike Welt 21, 1990, 70–88; Apollo, July, 1990, 2–13) in relation to the Seuso Treasure. She begins with the generally accepted proposition that the findplace of a hoard does not reveal the place of manufacture of the objects in a hoard, and she then goes on to divide the objects in the Seuso Treasure on stylistic criteria between western and eastern workshops, though she first attributes the styles and techniques on more objective grounds (Antike Welt *op. cit.* 71): 'Der Fundort der Silbergegenstände, die über weite Strecken verhandelt oder weitergegeben wurden, zeigt logischerweise nicht an, wo die entsprechenden Gegenstände hergestellt worden sind. Relativ wenige dieser Objekte tragen Stempel oder Signaturen, die den Namen ihres Herstellungsortes wiedergeben. Außerdem zeigt das Nebeneinander von verschiedenartig signierten Stücken in den Schatzfunden von Kaiseraugst und München, daß ein einzelnes Ensemble Stücke aus zwei oder mehr Fabrikationsorten enthalten konnte. Unter Beachtung der folgenden drei Gesichtspunkte – Konzentration gewisser Gegenstände in Fundkomplexen östlicher oder westlicher Herkunft, signierte Stücke, weiter zurückreichende Kenntnis der lokalen Herstellungstechniken – lassen sich gewisse allgemeine Schlußfolgerungen über Typen und Dekorationsstile des Silbergeschirrs im Hinblick auf deren Zuweisung zur Ost- oder Westhälfte des Römischen Reiches in der Spätantike ziehen'.

Mango attributes engraving and inlay techniques, especially niello, combined with genre scenes and geometric patterns, to the West, and relief-work, including repoussé, combined with mythological scenes, to the eastern half of the Empire, which, she mentions, 'früher ein Teil der hellenistischen Welt war'. She divides the objects of the treasure on this basis into six from the West and eight from the East, and then draws quite far-reaching conclusions (Apollo, July, 1990, 8): 'The diversity of taste displayed in the Sevso Treasure could be explained in terms of marriage; if Sevso had settled in the East, he might well have married into a local curial family of the Greek culture reflected in the decoration of certain objects'.

Such an analysis is of course supported by the signed vessels in the Kaiseraugst Treasure, the Euticius Dish from Latin-speaking Naissus, with geometric decoration, signed by Euticius, and the Achilles Dish, from Greek-speaking Thessalonica, with relief decoration, signed by Pausylypos. The analysis is nevertheless based on the theoretical hypothesis of an opposition between Rome and the East. It is not supported by the evidence of a wider review of the objects. The Projecta Casket, for example, is decorated in repoussé with classically derived reliefs, and yet E. Will, in: Mosaïque. Recueil d'hommages à H. Stern [1983]) and K. Shelton (The Esquiline Treasure [1981]) have advanced very persuasive reasons for attributing it to a Rome workshop. The Parabiagio Patera similarly has been attributed to Italy for strong iconographical reasons, in spite of its solid relief decoration (L. Musso, Manifattura suntuaria, *op. cit.*). Niello decoration, on the other hand, though it occurs mostly in the west, is incontrovertibly found on the India dish from the Lampsacus Treasure (A. Sorlin-Dorligny, Gazette Arch. 3, 1877, 119–22), which combines niello and gilding in its coloristic decoration. That there was an eastern taste for such niello is further supported from a later period both by the Anastasius Dish from Sutton Hoo (R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, The Sutton-Hoo Ship Burial 3 [1983] 4–45), of which the decoration must be an imitation of niello work of a century earlier, and also by a dish from the Kirov region in the Ukraine, stamped in Heraclius' reign, which has a nielloed central medaillion (E. Cruikshank Dodd, Byzantine Silver Stamps [1961] 58, no. 4; 201, no. 69). Finally, the whole idea of 'western' and 'eastern' taste is contradicted by the presence of pieces of the supposed two groups in the same hoard. The Kaiseraugst and Seuso Treasures, for example, both contain nielloed and gilded dishes (the Sea-City Dish and the Seuso Dish) as well as heavy pieces with strong relief (the two Achilles Dishes). There seems to be no reason to attribute a distinct 'western' or 'eastern' taste to the final owners of these hoards or to the craftsmen who made the individual pieces. The owners of the hoards evidently felt no hurt to their sensibilities in having the different types of decoration in the same collection.

Schneider and Mango are to be applauded for thinking so broadly and for devising hypotheses that would advance our state of knowledge if they were successful. What they have achieved, however, is to force us to recognize the limited nature of our actual state of knowledge concerning workshops and centres of production, which depends, as does so much else in the study of silver, on the Kaiseraugst Treasure and its publication. The Treasure includes three key inscriptions for the study of 4th-century workshops: on the Achilles Dish, the signature in Greek of Pausylypos of Thessalonica (von Gonzenbach, pp. 294–7); on a geometric dish, the signature in Latin of Euticius of Naissus (Baratte, p. 192); on a fragmentary dish a stamp with the inscription . . .). EXC(udit).MOC(ontiaci) (Cahn, pp. 322–3).

The stamp seems to be identical with that on a silver ingot found near Tongres in Belgium, which supplies the name LEO before EXCVDIT, and is the only certain evidence of manufacture at Mainz. The signature of Pausylypos is similarly the only certain evidence for manufacture at Thessalonica, in spite of speculation about the origin of other finds made there. The signature of Euticius, on the other hand, is supported by more evidence for manufacture at Naissus, for example an inscribed bowl in the Munich Treasure and five similar inscribed bowls found at Niš itself.

The Kaiseraugst Treasure publication also includes careful attempts to ascribe objects to production centres by stylistic analysis. Not all are successful, for it is difficult to follow E. ALFÖLDI-ROSENBAUM (p. 224) in attributing manufacture of the Sea-City Dish to Rome, any more than Salomonson's previous attribution of the same piece to Naissus (Bull. Ant. Besch. 48, 1973, 38–40). Stylistic attribution is difficult, and it is clear that not all pieces in the same style have the same origin. The Sea-City Dish, for example, is certainly closely comparable with the Cesena dish and the Seuso Dish; but there are clear stylistic differences between them, and they cannot be attributed to the same workshop. Some attempts at attribution, however, are more convincing. Baratte, for example, cautiously links (p. 205) the 'bulb' motif, in gouge technique, on the Euticius dish with the same motif, in the same technique, on the Ariadne dish, and he suggests that the Ariadne Dish may be from the same workshop – in Naissus. Even this attractive attribution is tentative and may be modified in the light of future evidence.

Caution in making workshop attributions is necessary even when there is abundant evidence, as with late-Roman spoons. Martin's study of the Kaiseraugst spoons underlines this. He points out that most of the known treasures and grave-finds of the fourth century have been made in the west, and that we know almost nothing of production of spoons in Italy, North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. In spite of the fact that it is natural to suppose that there may well have been a production centre in one of the major centres of the west, such as Trier or Rome, he hesitates to jump to conclusions based on the small number of Latin inscriptions put on by the spoon-makers. The seventeen long-handled cochlearia of the Thetford Treasure, however, were not available to Martin. Nine of the seventeen have inscriptions on the handle. The square-sectioned handles are chamfered, and it may be presumed that this chamfering was part of the primary decoration of the spoons by the maker. The chamfering begins precisely at the point where the inscriptions end, and so the inscriptions may also be regarded as primary. Of the nine inscriptions seven have a Celtic element, and the application of these inscriptions in the course of production does seem to imply manufacture of the spoons in a Celtic-speaking area, perhaps more likely to be Gaul than Britain. It is tempting to suppose that the manufacture of silver spoons was commonplace, and that they must have been made in most major centres, and even in minor centres; but evidence like that from Thetford is rare, and Martin's caution concerning the Kaiseraugst spoons, like that of Baratte for the vessels, is the only possible practice to adopt. This is the manner in which the subject must be approached. The Kaiseraugst publication has again set the standard.

Conclusion

Silver plate provides direct and significant evidence of late-Roman society. Its wide distribution in the 4th century and the high rank of its owners provide us with valuable information on the wealth, the taste and the culture of the governing classes, as well as on aspects of politics and the economy. Its historical and archaeological value, however, is non-existent unless the material is published with minute attention to the detail of description, careful review of previous publications, and thoughtful evaluation of each piece and of the whole. This publication of the Kaiseraugst Treasure has not only achieved all these aims in a finely edited and beautifully illustrated and produced pair of volumes, but it has set new standards for the publication of Roman silver and it has made the subject of major importance for the study of late-Roman history and archaeology.

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