

Deutsch-französischer Kulturtransfer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert. Zu einem neuen interdisziplinären Forschungsprogramm des C.N.R.S. Francia 13, 1985, 502–510). The concept and model is designed to allow for a two-way receiver-focussed frame of analysis of cultural change, as an alternative to more common centre-periphery models, which regards receivers as (relatively) passive. In an intriguing adaptation, the author offers a quantifiable version of the cultural transfer model, enabling a comparative study of the selection, transmission and reception of a range of cases relevant to the study, ranging from burial customs to pottery technology and dynastic gifts. The analysis raises an intriguing perspective for the discussion of early urbanisation, albeit the application is restricted to a proof of concept without detailed integration into the main analysis of the coastal trading places.

The study concludes by returning to the conceptual point of departure to see urbanisation as a “gesamtgesellschaftlicher Prozess” (chapter 11, pp. 235–241), and reviews the implications of this perspective for the understanding of the regional trajectory, which has been charted in the previous chapters.

As the saying goes, this is not a book to be tossed aside lightly. It is a profound source of arguments, perspectives and evidence for research on early medieval (proto-) towns and exchange to get to grasp with. It also holds important implications for the archaeological study of cultural interaction in general and Slavic-Scandinavian interaction in particular. The study puts the unjustly neglected southern Baltic coastal trading places firmly back in the discussion about trends towards urbanisation in Early Medieval Northern Europe, along with Scandinavian and North Sea emporia. It brings much-needed clarity and pertinent arguments to this field of study – in addition to a greatly augmented evidential base for Menzlin, a most intriguing site. It refrains from presenting a unifying model or a specific, historical narrative for the process considered, but concludes on the methodological approach, which has been the main focus throughout the text. In the genre of archaeological “Habilitationssarbeiten”, this decision deserves no small praise.

Above all, this book deserved credit for the effort to pursue comparative research based on detailed, quantitative evidence, and to do so on an erudite and critically researched basis. Early medieval urban sites are equally rich and riddled contexts. To expel the riddles, the richness must be properly invested. This investigation makes a fine start.

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ULRICH BACK / THOMAS HÖLTKEN / DOROTHEA HOCHKIRCHEN (eds), *Der Alte Dom zu Köln. Befunde und Funde zur vorgotischen Kathedrale*. With contributions by K. H. Wedepohl, A. Kronz, R. Stinnesbeck, C. M. M. Bayer, V. Holtmeyer-Wild and conclusion by G. Hauser. Studien zum Kölner Dom Volume 12. Verlag Kölner Dom, Cologne 2012. € 129.00. ISBN 978-3-922442-77-6. VIII and 660 pages, with numerous figures and plates, 1 DVD.

In 1946, shortly after the Second World War and in a time of great needs and uncertainties, one of the most long-lasting and ambitious excavation projects in Germany started: beneath the floors of one of Europe’s largest Gothic cathedrals its predecessors were sought, notably the “Alte Dom”, an episcopal church attested by written sources of the 9th century. The first head of excavation, Otto Doppelfeld, was able to open large floor sections within the church damaged by war and thus

unserviceable at the time. Later excavations continued underground after the modern floor had been restored, precluding any disturbance of churchgoers for decades, and came to an end in 1997 and 2012 respectively. The works were conducted under the aegis of four excavation directors and witnessed all major changes in excavation and documentation techniques developed during the last sixty years. Its results were partly published in interim excavation reports and subject of intensive discussions from 1948 onwards. All of these circumstances clearly illustrate that the undertaking of a final publication of all excavation results from the Kölner Dom could never be an easy one.

The present volume is the third of a series of four projected books. Already in 2002, Sebastian RISTOW presented a work on early churches (*Die frühen Kirchen unter dem Kölner Dom. Befunde und Funde vom 4. Jahrhundert bis zur Bauzeit des Alten Domes. Studien zum Kölner Dom 9* [Cologne 2002]) taking the Late Antique and Merovingian building phases into view, followed by the volume by Ulrich BACK and Thomas HÖLTKEN dealing with the current cathedral (*Die Baugeschichte des Kölner Domes nach archäologischen Quellen. Befunde und Funde aus der gotischen Bauzeit. Studien zum Kölner Dom 10* [Cologne 2008]) and hopefully a future volume on the buildings of the Roman period. Chronologically, the present volume stands between the two already published ones, but only Ristow's work plays a crucial role in understanding the building process that led to the erection of the "Alte Dom" and in particular its dating. In a manner of speaking, this publication marks the completion of a search that began more than half a century ago.

The archaeological features and findings from the "Alte Dom" together with their analysis are presented on 660 pages supplemented by a DVD containing pictures, plans and catalogues. A digital supplement always presents the chance of saving many additional pages that would in this case have enlarged the book by c. 500 pages, and a risk of losing important information due to data loss; the chosen data formats will hopefully outlast the next decade. As an additional measure, the DVD content is provided online as well.

The volume starts with its main feature: Ulrich Back in his contribution outlines the archaeological structures related to the "Alte Dom" (pp. 9–91), starting with a brief summary and discussion of its predecessors; the evolution of the cathedral is briefly mentioned and discussed in great extent in the footnotes – from two simple buildings, a Late Antique "Hauskirche" (house-church) in the west and a small oratorio in the east, via a Merovingian episcopal church encompassing three high-status burials in the first half of the 6th century to a "groupe episcopal". The same method of presentation is used throughout the text, which leads to the fact that the footnotes contain far more text than the actual article, leaving the text barely readable. Back rightly discards Willy Weyres' schema of seven building periods and denies Ristow's reconstruction of a large 'monolithic' church measuring 27.5 to 95 m as a forerunner of the "Alte Dom" in favour of a smaller church in the east and profane buildings in the west (further discussed by Sebastian RISTOW, *Forschungsstand und Forschungsstandpunkte zu den Anfängen der christlichen Religion im Rheinland. Rhein. Vierteljahrsbl.* 77, 2013, 1–24, here: 10–12). Back's two preliminary main assumptions concerning the existence of a Late Antique house-church and a place-continuity for the episcopal church ranging from the very beginning to modern times have to be challenged: domestic architecture beneath a later church cannot automatically be interpreted in this way, as long as such a building is only attested by one single known example from Dura Europos. Indeed, the surrounding Late Antique architecture in Cologne shows that in the 2nd half of the 4th century new living quarters were erected in the north-eastern corner of the city without traces of any public buildings. Where Maternus – the first bishop of Cologne attested by contemporary written sources – and his not very well documented successors resided, is still unknown. After spending nearly half of his pages on possible forerunner churches Back describes the physical appearance of the "Alte

Dom” based on archaeological features. In his final section, he already tackles the most controversial question concerning this building: its dating. Citing his fellow authors from the following chapters Back thinks it was erected around AD 800.

The archaeological material holds a crucial position in the debate on the dating of the “Alte Dom”. In his contribution Thomas Höltgen (pp. 93–132) mainly presents ceramics and glass findings from Carolingian and later times. Based on comparisons with materials from the recent Heu- markt excavation and other locations in the Rhineland, Höltgen dates the 83 stratified sherds connected to the “Alte Dom” predominantly to the first half of the 9th century. Dorothea Hoch- kirchen subsequently (pp. 133–198) presents a chronological overview of Carolingian architecture and stone working with a focus on slotted tools and their traces. Most comparisons refer to build- ings erected around AD 800, especially from Aachen. Karl Hans Wedepohl’s and Andreas Kronz’s (pp. 199–204) contribution deals with the chemical composition of window glass from the “Alte Dom”. According to their results, most samples belong to the soda-chalk technique, which was typical for Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, but was eventually abandoned in Carolingian times.

In a short interim summary, Ruth Stinnesbeck (pp. 205–212) recapitulates the results of the previous chapters. Based on the dating of the ceramics and stone working traces she reaches the conclusion, that the “Alte Dom” was built under bishop Hildebald around AD 800. The following contribution by Clemens M. M. Bayer (pp. 213–229) on the written sources related to the “Alte Dom” is the only one in this volume to oppose this view: he examines two dedication inscriptions for altar covering panels related to in Alkuin’s *Carmina* 107,2 and 107,3. Until recently, both inscriptions were viewed as the most significant testimonies for a building date under the reign of Charlemagne and both stand in stark contrast to the notices of a consecration of the cathedral in AD 870 or 873. Previous scholars held the view that one panel belonged to an altar dedicated to St. Peter, donated by Charlemagne and realised by Hildebald, and the other to an altar for Mary and St. Medard. The existence of two main altars in the east and the west of the cathedral was therefore believed to be testified by a written source. Bayer, however, can demonstrate that *Carmina* 107,2 refer to three different dedication inscriptions, two related to the Petrus altar and one to the main portal, while *Carmina* 107,3 does not concern an altar of a church in Cologne at all. According to the author, the notice of a damage of the cathedral by fire in 857 led to the building of a new church consecrated in 873, which must relate to the “Alte Dom”. Bayer’s conclusions are contrasted with the archaeological record, and he thus claims that he does not write a building history but rather tries to connect different written sources that were previously believed to contra- dict each other.

The first part of the volume closes with a contribution by Georg Hauser (pp. 231–250), who outlines the main features resulting from the research on the “Alte Dom” between 1946 and 2012. He gives a summary of all sources (images, texts and archaeology) and finally reflects on the ques- tion, whether layer B1108 is a building horizon for building period VII and therefore a weighty clue for an erection of the “Alte Dom” between AD 780 and 820. The second part of the volume (p. 251–629) contains a monumental catalogue of archaeological features together with figures and drawings of the archaeological material.

The present volume hopes to achieve two objectives: Firstly, to present all relevant archaeologi- cal features and materials comprehensively and secondly, to find a solution to the basic problem of the archaeological data apparently contradicting historical sources on the precise building date of the “Alte Dom”. The former has been accomplished, although documentation and catalogue are hard to use in some parts and probably slightly incomplete. The volume failed, however, on the latter objective. The basic contradiction between the different sources still exists and this has led to

the circumstance that some reviewers have been left behind in utter confusion (s. U. LOBBEDEY in *Bonner Jahrb.* 213, 2013, 503–509). Given the size and the quality of the building, most archaeological observations point toward a building date around AD 800 under the reign of Charlemagne and the same is supported by comparisons to known architecture of this time. In contrast, a consecration date of 873 is much more difficult to “prove” by archaeological analysis, since hardly any architecture from the second half of the 9th century survived. Thus, indeed the question arises whether or not church buildings of the early and the late period between 800 and 900 can be distinguished from each other? Given the present state of knowledge, this aim is currently not achievable. Yet it will certainly not have taken seven decades to consecrate a cathedral build around the year 800. Therefore, the main contradiction remains despite a weighty attempt to solve this riddle by the authors of this volume. This is neither a flaw nor a setback of this work. It simply demonstrates a basic problem every scholar of historical archaeology is confronted with: material and written sources may provide different data and different views on the same object. In this case, the question is not about “right” or “wrong” data. The main aim of historical archaeology is not to retell narratives already established by historians but to shape its own, new tale. Although it might not have been among the main objectives of the authors, the present volume successfully offers an alternative view in contrast to the testimonial of the written sources. The final question therefore is, whether this alternative view will eventually prevail in the light of new research carried out on other Carolingian churches in the future.

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ANNE WIDURA, *SpielRäume. Kulturhistorische Studien zum Brettspiel in archäologischen Kontexten.* Bochumer Forschungen zur Ur- und Frühgeschichtlichen Archäologie Band 7. Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, Rahden / Westf. 2015. € 49,80. ISBN 978-3-86757-287-3. 202 Seiten mit 64 Abbildungen.

Die Arbeit widmet sich einer seitens der Archäologie etwas vernachlässigten Fundgattung, den materiellen Überresten von Brettspielen, und sie nimmt dabei, wie schon dem Titel abzulesen ist, eine dezidiert kulturhistorische Perspektive ein. Mit ihr sollen „die interpretatorischen Verkrustungen“ (S. 14) aufgebrochen werden, wie sie sich in den bisherigen Deutungen dieser Objekte seitens der Ur- und Frühgeschichtsforschung finden, die sie entweder ignorierte oder einseitig als Indikatoren für die Existenz sozialer Eliten wertete.

Die Studie gliedert sich in sechs Abschnitte, deren erster, nach einer kurzen allgemeinen Einleitung (S. 13–15), die Forschungsgeschichte zum Thema behandelt (S. 17–22). Gemäß dem selbstgesetzten Anspruch wird dabei zwischen (im weitesten Sinne) kulturtheoretischen Annäherungen an das Phänomen „Spiel“ einerseits und altertumswissenschaftlichen andererseits unterschieden.

An die forschungsgeschichtlichen Erörterungen schließt sich eine Diskussion der systematischen kulturtheoretischen Grundlagen an, die im Folgenden als Heuristik der Untersuchung fungieren (S. 23–54). Drei Bereiche werden besprochen, die sich nach Ansicht der Verfasserin wechselseitig bedingen: Zunächst die Semiotik, insbesondere die sich mit den Namen Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce und Umberto Eco verbindenden Theorien, dann der Komplex