

tion of location (Possendorf / Weimar), date (1st century BC) or where it is kept (in the Museum of Pre- and Ancient History of Thuringia in Weimar).

I have also found the occasionally misleading titles of subchapters irritating: they often say little, are sometimes poorly related to the ensuing text, and in a few cases the titles are almost identical. In my opinion, a third level of headings should have been employed. Some sections appear in the wrong place, others are superfluous, at least to my mind – for example “Godly relationships” (“Götterbeziehungen”) on p. 63 which deals with parentage between Old Norse gods, or “The role of women in Germania” (“Die Rolle der Frau in Germanien”) on pp. 107–109, a complement to “Female deities” (“Weibliche Gottheiten”). The brevity of the book meant that the author had to be selective and inevitably some aspects were left out. It would be inappropriate to blame the author for this, even though I do not always follow the reasons behind his choices.

The shortcomings listed here are hardly relevant and do not lessen my favourable opinion of the work. A. Rubel rises to the challenge of writing a book that is a concise overview of the religions of the Germanic peoples while including all the relevant specialist disciplines – from its tangible beginnings to the end of the Migration period and the dawn of the Middle Ages; he achieves this in a succinct and engaging manner, introducing the subject to a wide readership without much previous knowledge. I warmly recommend this volume to non-specialists and students, but also as an entry into the material to colleagues who wish to familiarise themselves with the topic.

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DANIEL DÜBNER, Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung und Struktur der frühgeschichtlichen Siedlung Flögeln im Elbe-Weser-Dreieck. Studien zur Landschafts- und Siedlungsgeschichte im südlichen Nordseegebiet volume 6. Marie Leidorf, Rahden / Westf. 2015. € 49.80. ISBN 978-3-86757-336-8. 212 pages, 147 illustrations, 10 tables, 1 appendix.

Research on the settlements of the Roman Imperial period and the Migration Period has received fresh and important new impetus in recent years from various university theses – some of them not yet completed. A successfully published doctoral thesis (Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2014) on the settlement of Flögeln has now become available. The excavations carried out at Flögeln between 1971 and 1985 are without doubt the best-known archaeological investigations of any settlement in northern Germany from the first centuries AD. Apart from those at Loxstedt (RGA² 18 [2001] 629–633 s. v. Loxstedt [W. H. ZIMMERMANN]) and Groß Meckelsen (W.-D. TEMPEL, Eine Dorfsiedlung der römischen Kaiserzeit und Völkerwanderungszeit bei Groß Meckelsen, Ldkr. Rotenburg [Wümme]. In: M. Fansa / F. Both / H. Haßmann (Hrsg.), Archäologie – Land – Niedersachsen. 25 Jahre Denkmalschutzgesetz – 400 000 Jahre Geschichte. Begleitschrift zur Ausstellung. Arch. Mitt. Nordwestdeutschland, Beiheft 42 [Oldenburg 2005] 429–435), they are also the most extensive. Although it was not possible to excavate the entire site, the numerous excavation campaigns uncovered almost all the core area of the settlement complex, and many of the peripheral features were also recorded. Because it offers such a representative picture and, not least, because

publication activity began so early, Flögeln has represented, for some decades now, the typical northern German geest settlement.

The work of Daniel Dübner follows on from the ground-breaking study by W. Haio ZIMMERMANN, who published all the buildings of the settlement in a comprehensive work published in 1992 (*Die Siedlungen des 1. bis 6. Jahrhunderts nach Christus von Flögeln-Eekhöltjen, Niedersachsen. Die Bauformen und ihre Funktionen. Probleme Küstenforsch. südl. Nordseegebiet 19* [Hildesheim 1992]). D. Dübner's study, however, is concerned with structures and developmental processes. He looks at both the individual homesteads and the settlement as a whole, with the aim of producing a detailed reconstruction of the settlement sequence. Since this could not be done without a review of the architectural features, a critical appraisal of Zimmermann's interpretations was necessary. D. Dübner is able to confirm these, almost without exception, thus corroborating the high credibility of most of the interpretations that Zimmermann put forward. Where D. Dübner disagrees, this is clearly discussed, so that in every case it is possible to compare the different readings of the feature in question in the two publications.

The sheer number of features to be processed was formidable: around 31 000 had to be recorded in a database. This enormous quantity of information meant that a pragmatic approach was required if the relative-chronological findings were to be integrated within the overall context. For his analysis of the relationships between features, D. Dübner relies on the "Tempo" software developed by Danish archaeologists Klaus und Mads Kähler Holst. As far as I know, this is the first time the method has been used in the German-speaking world, but even in Danish publications there are only a few examples of its use. It was developed for the excavations carried out at the settlement of Nørre Snede (middle Jutland); however, the results have only been published for one section of the settlement, in the context of a fairly short paper.

The main publication on Nørre Snede – published before "Tempo" was put into use – provides reconstructions of the settlement sequence in time-slices of 100 years (T. E. HANSEN, *Die eisenzeitliche Siedlung bei Nørre Snede, Mitteljütland – Vorläufiger Bericht. Acta Arch. 58, 1987, 171–200*). And this is precisely where the strength of D. Dübner's work lies; he is able to break down the settlement sequence into generational periods of around 30 years. The snapshots which this produces give the impression of a constantly changing settlement. New construction took place basically once in every generation – a pattern which can be demonstrated, I believe, at many other sites. No longhouse ever lasts for 100 years! The method adopted by D. Dübner allows the history of individual production units to be traced in much more detail. The extremely important implications for socio-archaeological questions, in particular (changes in the size and structure of homesteads, their subdivisions and amalgamations), are something which must be stressed; this new level of insight is the great contribution of the present work.

In total, D. Dübner is able to distinguish 17 settlement phases between the 1st and 6th centuries AD. It was not possible, however, to analyse the later phases of the settlement (5th/6th century) using "Tempo" because there were too few overlapping features in these more thinly-settled peripheral areas. The relative-chronological sequences cannot therefore always be clearly determined here. D. Dübner relies on analysing the possible structural relationships between the various feature categories (longhouses, outbuildings) and on chronological indications derived from finds. In every case, his deductions are clearly explained. Throughout the publication, statements concerning these later settlement phases, XIII–XVII, are printed in italics in order to indicate clearly to the reader that they involve a degree of uncertainty. Once again, D. Dübner demonstrates his concern for transparency by visually flagging this inferior reliability in comparison with Phases I–XII.

For his discussion of the settlement sequence, D. Dübner divides up the entire settlement area into smaller sections, before discussing the context of each feature. There is good reason for doing so, since it would have been difficult for the reader to keep track of larger spatial units. Because the author constantly refers to the neighbouring areas, however, there is no difficulty in making the requisite connections with the previous and subsequent sections.

Every step in the reconstruction of both the chronological sequence and the structural relationships within production units can be clearly followed, thanks not least to the copious illustrations accompanying every section – with the result that there is no need to laboriously consult the appended general plan. Another positive feature of the methodological approach is the fact that D. Dübner manages to make optimal use of the sources without overloading the reference apparatus (amongst other things, the individual observations regarding overlaps are clearly categorised according to their importance).

No errors were detected by the reviewer, even on closely cross-checking the features in the different area sections against their contextualisation within the area as a whole. Daniel Dübner has worked very accurately. The high level of precision discernible in the evaluation of the sources can be traced back, not least, to the use of the “Tempo” software. As a result, one can agree wholeheartedly with D. Dübner that the use of “Tempo” for analysing excavations covering large areas with many overlapping features is to be highly recommended.

However, the approach is not completely free of methodological problems. For example, even after what is a convincing evaluation of the situation at Flögeln overall, there still remains the question of the (few) discrepancies in relative chronology which emerged in the “Tempo” analysis and could not be resolved. Unfortunately, D. Dübner has not explained how these should be dealt with and what consequences would arise from taking an alternative perspective – which would have been particularly desirable since longhouses, i. e. the central component of the homestead, are among the features affected. He has chosen the option with the fewest inconsistencies – a sensible approach, certainly, but he could have taken one area as an example and provided a more detailed discussion of two alternative ‘solutions’. Generally, however, there is no reason to doubt the plausibility of his reconstruction of the settlement sequence.

After the detailed study of the separate areas (Chapter 3, pp. 30–153), which occupies most of the work, D. Dübner devotes himself in the evaluative chapters to the development and structure of the settlement (Chapter 4, pp. 153–175) and of the individual homesteads (Chapter 5, pp. 175–193), finally turning to the question of the settlement’s inhabitants, in other words, the social structure (Chapter 6, pp. 194–201). The evolution of a small, dispersed settlement into a compact village, whose homesteads were separated from each other by fences, can be very convincingly traced. At the end of the Roman Imperial period, this village disintegrated and large farming units were built at greater distances from one another, so that the erection of fences was obviously hardly ever necessary. There is a fascinating discussion in this context of the question of possible land ownership (pp. 165–167). D. Dübner does not see fences as evidence of ownership claims, however; “conversely, the appearance of fences around homesteads could [...] have paved the way for the development of private land ownership” (p. 167).

To close, I should like to stress again one of the points made in the overall analysis: Flögeln is still one of the largest settlements known so far – but it was obviously no more than that. As D. Dübner confirms, signs of anything approaching a ‘chieftain’s farm’ are at best rudimentary, and he thus rightly corrects some earlier interpretations. Here, too, he is at pains to be clear. This does not, however, in any way diminish the importance of Flögeln for the settlement archaeology of the Roman Imperial period and the Migration Period.

This work was highly desirable from a research point of view and fills a sensitive gap. The style is transparent, concise, and to the point and will, I hope, prove exemplary for future publications on similar themes.

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Berliner Archäologische Forschungen vol. 13. Marie Leidorf, Rahden / Westf. 2014. € 64.80.
ISBN 978-3-89646-523-8. 390 pages with 316 figures.

The present publication is based on the habilitation thesis submitted by Hans-Jörg Nüsse (surname acquired by marriage: Karlsen) to the Department of History and Cultural Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, in 2010. For publication in 2014, the text was partially revised and expanded. The comprehensive study aims to develop a regionally differentiated classification of house plans, farmsteads and settlements from the 1st century BC to the 5th century AD. The main area under study extends from North Brabant to the Danish Isles. In addition, the study includes an overview of adjacent areas in southern Sweden, central and southern Germany, Brandenburg, and Saxony. Thus, from a geographic point of view, the title of the work is rather modest, since the investigation also expands beyond the Roman border to the left of the Rhine. Due to the vast study area, only published settlements were taken into account. Furthermore, the study confines itself to the largest buildings of the farmsteads or to 'main buildings' respectively – a term used synonymously to residential building, longhouse or residential house. Outbuildings were not included. However, in some cases, such as in sites which were not completely excavated, it is not always easy to decide whether a structure should be defined as an outbuilding or a main building. In total, about 2000 house plans of more than 400 sites were evaluated.

The author wants the publication to be understood as a representation of the status quo (p. 13) and thus as a starting point for further research. Consequently, the book comes with numerous greyscale illustrations and some coloured maps, both of which have mainly been adopted from other publications. The floor plans of houses and settlements used for comparison are thus easily accessible for the reader, but some of them are difficult to decipher due to size reduction (e. g. fig. 246,1). A site directory including basic information on the house types represented at each settlement, its general dating, and the most important literature accompanies the study. Given the abundance of sites used for comparison, it is not surprising that occasional misspellings or confusions occur. For example, the site Hatzum-Boomborg consistently appears as Boomburg-Hatzum and Wangenheim sometimes is referred to as Wangendorf. However, misleading references only marginally hamper the work with its extensive study.

The interpretative part of the study includes five chapters. After some introductory explanations, the first chapter presents the criteria used for the typological classification of the evaluated house plans and their dating. The second chapter introduces the evidence in northern Germany and the Netherlands. An overview of the supraregional state of research precedes an extremely concise presentation of the research situation in northern Germany and the Netherlands, focusing