

einbezogen wurde. S. Hornung kommt zu ähnlichen Ergebnissen, bietet dafür aber einen sehr viel breiteren Hintergrund, der insbesondere die wirtschaftlichen Gegebenheiten stärker in die Diskussion mit einbezieht. Zusammenfassungen in deutscher und englischer Sprache beschließen den Band.

Die Dissertation von Quentin Sueur stellt eine mustergültige Aufarbeitung des Metallgeschirrs der *Gallia Belgica* dar. Sein Blick geht weit über den Norden Frankreichs hinaus, was dem Band in manchen Teilen Handbuchcharakter verleiht. Bemerkenswert ist, dass der Autor seine handwerklich-technischen Beobachtungen z. T. mit Veränderungen im gesellschaftlich politischen Bereich verknüpfen kann. Gerade vor dem Hintergrund der kulturhistorisch breiter angelegten Arbeiten von M. Poux oder S. Hornung entsteht der Wunsch, dass das Material der an das Untersuchungsgebiet anschließenden Regionen künftig mit gleicher Gründlichkeit analysiert wird. Dies betrifft sowohl die Typologie als auch die Analyse des Fundkontextes. Vor allem der Vergleich mit dem Zentrum und dem Süden Galliens, aber auch mit dem ostkeltischen Raum verspricht auf solch einer soliden Basis noch interessante Ergebnisse.

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WERNER ZANIER, Der spätlätène- und frühkaiserzeitliche Opferplatz auf dem Döttenbichl südlich von Oberammergau. Münchener Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte volume 62. 3 volumes. Verlag C. H. Beck oHG, München 2016. € 89.00. ISBN 978-3-406-10763-4. 830 pages with 256 illustrations, 165 tables, 106 tables, and 5 inserts.

This hefty, three-volume publication (English summary pp. 575–577) provides a detailed description of older and more recent finds on a particular type of archaeological site. The German word *Opferplatz* cannot be easily translated, as these sites are less characteristic than what we call ‘sacred sites’ or ‘sanctuaries’. Nevertheless, they are considered religious sites, better defined by the results of their activity than anything else. There were deposited offerings from which the accumulation through time draws a kind of portrait. Comparable to shadow plays, most of what we can access is only the material reflection of something which was, of course, mostly made up of belief, words, and ritual.

However, this is not entirely true – there are the finds, and then there is the site with its location and materiality. The reasons with which a site was selected as a suitable candidate for an *Opferplatz* probably can say a lot about its meaning in ancient times depending on its own features, such as the relief, aspect, or accessibility, and its surroundings, for instance, on a road, or near another source, such as a river or mountain.

The region of the upper Ammer valley (Oberammergau) in southern Bavaria lies at the foot of the central Alps (pp. 19–27 “Topography and climate”). From there, several valleys give access to North Tyrol and the Inn valley, which allows east to west communication. Travellers pushing their way towards the south through the mountains may eventually reach the Brenner Pass, Bolzano, and finally find themselves in northern Italy. At the beginning of this long trip lies the Döttenbichl, which is where travellers would have needed to exit the relatively soft hills of the Oberammergau to enter the more mountainous part of the travel.

Several views, old and recent, clearly show (Figs 1–8) that at this place, the road following the river to the south enters into a very different landscape: for a traveller going south, the heavily cultivated Ammer basin of today is quickly replaced by high mountains, covered either with forests or showing massive rocky spurs. This creates an open landscape of a wild world, where only available paths would have to have been taken and followed wherever they may go. Every ancient traveller would have been conscious of the immediate change in the landscape and concerned about his or her own security. At the threshold of this daunting path sits the Döttenbichl – a low hill (c. 325 × 250 m) at the centre of the passage between the high mountains in the east and west – emerging from the flat surroundings. Travellers would need to go around it, just as the Ammer starts to gently run towards the north, in order to continue on their way towards the mountain road, and because of the environment and sudden change of landscape, it makes it a very remarkable site. This no doubt played a role in the decision to use it as an *Opferplatz*.

While gathering the ancient finds around the site and along this road between Saulgrub and Ettal (pp. 38–46), the author very luckily found a manuscript note on a cadastre plan indicating the exact find-spot of the famous Roman dagger discovered in 1901 (this plan is strangely placed on p. 268 Fig. 95). While Paul Reinecke always considered this weapon to be isolated from any context, the plan shows that it came from the east slopes of the hill lying immediately south of the Döttenbichl. This is a first hint to the spread of Roman finds on the site itself and its surroundings.

The first numerous discoveries, made by a local worker using a metal detector, were declared to the regional archaeological service in autumn 1991. When they visited the finder some time later, the archaeologists recorded 45 metal objects, mostly coins, Roman weapons (among them another dagger), and more metal artefacts. Iron objects were surprisingly well preserved, and most of the finds were in good condition. The collection was so puzzling that fieldwork was planned on the site for the next year. Excavations took place on the Döttenbichl from 1992 to 1997, which consisted of about 20 sections and sondages on the whole hill surface as well as on the nearby southern hill and the Ambronstein, which was named after a modern monument. None of these areas ever yielded any built structures where the excavators expected them to be – no walls, wall sections, or buildings, nor at the very least some post holes or pits. However, in all the examined sectors, finds were abundant and diverse, especially various objects and coins.

After consideration on this specific situation, it was decided to keep on cooperating with metal detectorists, which had the advantage of including the finders within an official programme. Although highly debated among the archaeological community, this choice proved to be positive because it also (partly) protected the site from other unauthorised detector users. In Germany, from the mid-1980s, several archaeological sites, especially when the surface was large and the stratigraphy allowed it, were studied in the same way with the help of detectorists (pp. 78–84). Since the site showed almost no built structures, the result of this policy is an extended distribution map of all finds on the site (Döttenbichl hill and the neighbouring areas, especially around the Ambronstein to the SW).

Most of the finds consist of weapons and military equipment, with some coins and very few fragments of calcinated bones. When analysed, it was discovered that these bones belonged mostly to humans and rather few belonged to animals (p. 451, cat. pp. 1026–1034), which turned out to be a major contribution to understanding the activity on the site.

The total of the finds discovered on the three sites reaches over 1000 iron objects on the Döttenbichl, plus 200 bronze objects and individual finds of lead and silver. South of the Ambronstein, only 23 finds were made, and a further 15 presumably antique finds were discovered at the Kälberplatte. This indicates an important site on the Döttenbichl, with possible extensions, but always

with limitation immediately surrounding it. Most of the objects represent Roman weapons and military equipment, showing that the users of the offering place were predominantly, if not solely, Roman soldiers.

As far as chronology is concerned, all sites together (Döttenbichl, Ambronstein, and Kälberplatte) only gave ten coins from antiquity. They range from late Celtic to Roman mints, seven of them dating between 79 BC and the end of the 1st century BC, and three others undetermined within the early empire. A *denarius* from 19/18 BC shows no trace of usage, and the large majority of the coins could have been deposited in the Augustan period, as the scope of mints and dates is very similar to well dated Augustan sites, such as Oberaden or Kalkriese (pp. 158–168 and Pl. 1).

After coinage, the best dating category is the collection of 36 brooches (pp. 168–196, B1–36, cat. pp. 835–839, Pl. 2–5) – 13 of them bear traces of torsion that can result from ritual treatments, as Claudia NICKEL showed on the Martberg sanctuary (Martberg. Heiligtum und Oppidum der Treverer 2. Die Fibeln vom Martberg. Altfunde, Privatsammlungen, Feldfunde, Grabungen. Ber. Arch. Mittelrhein u. Mosel 18 [Koblenz 2011] 194–195). With the exception of one true Nauheim brooch (B2) dating from LT D1, most of the other types belong to the early or plain Augustan period or just before (type Isontino, “geschweifite Fibel” Almgren 18, 19, 2, Norico-pannonian brooch...), indicating, just like the coins, a maximum frequentation of the site in the late 1st century BC or the early 1st century AD. One of the iron types, described here as Döttenbichl type, is spread between south Bavaria and north Tyrol, clearly pointing to north-south contacts across the Alps (p. 186, map Fig. 78) (type to be compared, in the western Alps, with type 4a2: M. FEUGÈRE, Les fibules en Gaule méridionale: de la conquête à la fin du V^e s. ap. J.-C. Rev. Arch. Narbonnaise Suppl. 12 [Paris 1985]). Only a few types’ chronologies can extend until the middle, and rarely, the second half of the 1st century AD.

Other cloth accessories and personal ornaments (amulets, bracelets, finger rings, belt buckles) display a certain variety of types (B37–150), as do the knives, tools, and fittings, including a few agricultural tools (C1–34; D1–59).

All of these remain a minority compared to weapons and military equipment which form, by far, the majority of the offerings. Daggers (E1–3) and spear heads (E4–19) are some of the largest objects offered on the Döttenbichl, but it should be underlined that others, not buried deeply into the soft forest soils, may have been moved or even taken away since antiquity. Yet the two categories mostly illustrated on the site – arrow heads and shoe nails – must in some way reflect the ancient reality of the most usual offerings there.

No less than 496 projectiles (E29–524), among them 19 catapult bolts (three of them stamped LEG XIX), 439 trifoliate arrow heads, and only one lead sling shot, were collected (pp. 23–40). They form an impressive and unique documentation of such weapons, generally illustrated only through loose finds and isolated discoveries on military sites. They are carefully described and discussed, including the conservation state of the objects: many of them show a twisted point, as if they had been shot at a rock face or a particularly strong object. Still, some of the torsions better relate to later deformations affecting the tang, a situation rather similar to what could be observed on the brooches (pp. 291–346).

Of the 221 items, shoe nails (E528–751) form the other best represented category on the site. The examination on reverse motifs shows only four combinations, one of them (B: cross and four dots) covering more than 60% of the whole. This relative uniformity, as well as the diameters – mostly less than 13–14 mm (only two larger) –, points to a relatively late occupation, not pre-dating the Augustan period. Shoe nails had been used for more than two centuries at this point, but their motifs and diameters change throughout time. Another interesting point lies in the

distribution of these nails. While most other categories cover the whole surface of the site (see for example the arrow heads, Fig. 115, p. 329), the shoe nails concentrate around a certain point emerging at the west of the hill. Their distribution on the rest of the site is general but ignores the southern half of the Döttenbichl (pp. 371–376). This point could be a convenient entrance to the site, as the easiest way to climb the hill is to follow the S–N path between the Ambronstein and the Döttenbichl. Therefore, the authors rightly question the signification of the shoe nails, which do occur in small quantities in many Roman graves but rarely on sanctuaries (pp. 376–384). Although no field data could document this fact, the concentration on the western sector of the Döttenbichl could indicate a place where the offerings were made (i. e. dismantled and / or burned) and then disseminated on the surface of the hill. Another possibility would be to consider all the shoe nails as loose finds reflecting the activities (western concentration) and movements (rest of the hill) of the soldiers during their stay at this place.

While volume 2 contains the various studies in categories, volume 3 is devoted to specialised contributions concerning various aspects of the sites and its finds. These are followed by the catalogue (pp. 829–1076) and plates 1–126.

All in all, this publication brings an impressive amount of data, reflections, and analysis of a complicated site to the scientific community. The general interpretation of the site (pp. 541–571) uses sources of different kinds in order to offer a synthesis of knowledge on the Döttenbichl. This archaeological site without built structures cannot be a settlement; the variety and aspects of the finds clearly point to a site of religious nature. But is it possible to specify this? Werner Zanier proposes to associate the discoveries of military objects and most of the coins with a one-off event, which would reflect the origin of the site. This event would be a Roman defeat against the *Raeti*, which occurred during the offensive of 15 BC. This thesis certainly fits with the chronology of most of the finds, which are placed in the first half of the Augustan period, as well as the variety of some weapons, both Roman and indigenous, and perhaps the presence of burned bodies. Yet it seems difficult to exclude some later use of the site, as it can eventually be linked to other troops' movements between Italy and Bavaria. Indeed, the history of the use of the site quickly declines after the change of the era, and the Döttenbichl has remained associated with the early phase of its use.

The author was able to overcome the difficulties associated with an atypical site, with highly dispersed and varied topographical data, in order to develop an original monograph that is a fine example of analysis and organisation. The book reveals a type of site that is still poorly known, but for which it will certainly become a model, while providing a substantial, renewed approach to the knowledge of northern Alpine open-air sacred sites (cf. R.-M. WEISS, *Prähistorische Brandopferplätze in Bayern*. Internat. Arch. 35 [Espelkamp 1997]). The Döttenbichl will undoubtedly change our perception of early cult practices in this vast area. Werner Zanier's contribution therefore concerns not only the history of the Roman army in the provinces but also our understanding of places of worship and the interactions between the indigenous world and Graeco-Roman practices.

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