

um, wie Verf.in an einer Stelle selbst sagt, die „Bandbreite der Möglichkeiten“ (S. 148) aufzeigen. Diese Spur wird für das zu untersuchte Phänomen ‚Mehrfachbestattung‘ jedoch nicht weiter verfolgt.

D-04109 Leipzig
Ritterstr. 14
E-Mail: ulrich.veit@uni-leipzig.de

Ulrich Veit
Universität Leipzig
Historisches Seminar
Professur für Ur- und Frühgeschichte

ALISA SCHEIBNER, Der Hund in der mitteleuropäischen Eisenzeit. Wirtschaftliche, rituelle und soziale Aspekte. Berliner Archäologische Forschungen Band 12. Marie Leidorf, Rahden / Westf. 2013. € 54.80. ISBN 978-3-89646-522-1, ISSN 1611-355. 189 pages, 23 tables, 22 maps, 28 plates.

In her study on “Dogs in the Central European Iron Age”, Alisa Scheibner methodically collects and examines evidence of dog keeping in the Iron Age under economic, ritual and social aspects. The slightly revised, easy-to-read book was submitted as MA thesis at the Freie Universität Berlin in 2010 and received the Rudolf Virchow Award (Förderpreis) of the Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte. It is an interdisciplinary study in archaeology and archaeozoology, reflecting the state of research in 2010.

In addition to the textual part, the 189-page work contains a catalogue, 28 plates with diagrams and photographs, 22 maps and 23 tables. The text itself is divided into six chapters, starting with an introduction presenting the author’s approach to the topic. Following this, Scheibner discusses zooarchaeological aspects of dogs, starting with a critical assessment of the archaeological and literary sources. She then goes on to examine different aspects of dog keeping in the pre-Roman Iron Age and concludes with an evaluation of the presented evidence.

The catalogue is structured systematically, which makes it easy to locate sites and assemblages, and provides all necessary details on the individual find complexes. Many of these details are easy to compare as they relate to absolute values. Some inaccuracies regarding the less schematic details such as interpretations of features and finds are no doubt owed to the literary source material. For example, some finds of dog skeletons are described as complete or nearly complete although the expected number of bones in an intact skeleton is not reached (e. g. catalogue nos. 84, 94).

Next are a bibliography and a comprehensive list of abbreviations, followed by a plate section including drawings not only of finds but also of archaeological features, as well as site plans and schematic illustrations of the skeletal elements of dogs found in said features. Two additional plates exemplify skeletal elements with cut marks and pathologies; however, the methods by which those cut marks have been verified as such are not explained.

22 maps illustrate the distribution of the features listed in the catalogue as well as related finds occurring throughout the study area. In order to get a better overview of the entire study area, a comprehensive map of all sites would have been desirable.

Following the maps is an appendix of tables listing the finds of animal bones at the sites researched, measured data of said animal bones, and also inorganic dog-related finds such as figurines and depictions of dogs on brooches. Animal species are sorted by provenance and individually regrouped according to zoological taxonomy. Details of finds are given in a systematic order, and cross references make it easy to find the corresponding illustrations in the plates.

These tables provide the basis for the statistical evaluation of the materials as discussed in the text, which at the outset explores the keeping of animals in the pre-Roman Iron Age in general. In the second chapter, Scheibner elaborates on the occurrence of dog finds, supporting her points with the aid of percentage shares of her taxonomic groups. She then goes on to discuss phenotypes of dogs as well as the age structure of Iron Age individuals, covering a wide range of aspects from pathologies to bite marks on dog bones. The next section explores interesting aspects regarding the role of dogs as working animals and assistants to man from an archaeological point of view, thereby offering the reader a wide range of possible interpretations. However, the author refers to canophagy as the primary utilisation, which she substantiates with examples of cut marks on dog bones. Based on relevant literature, Scheibner endeavours to present this challenging field of expertise in such a way that it becomes accessible to inexpert readers. She supports her conclusion that dogs have “not rarely” been eaten by statistics, and also adds evidence for the use of dog skins. Here, too, the author strives to correlate the skeleton finds and the positions of cut marks with basic anatomical knowledge in such a way that the reader can understand their particular origins and the processes involved.

In the third chapter, Scheibner discusses dog deposits in great detail and from various angles, always with a critical eye towards the body of source material. In this chapter, evidence of and motives for the deposits are thoroughly and systematically examined and compared site by site. The author walks the fine line between profane and ritual deposits very well, which is not an easy thing to do from an archaeological point of view. Finds of dog skeletons in the context of sacrificial sites and graves are also discussed in great detail.

The fourth chapter deals with depictions of dogs in Iron Age art. The author gives detailed descriptions of finds classified according to category, from figural artefacts like brooches and figurines through to two-dimensional images, going far beyond the limits of her study area so that the reader can see those objects in a greater context.

Lastly, Scheibner examines written sources on dogs, tracing an arc from the relationship between humans and dogs to canines in myths and religions. Since no indigenous written sources exist for the study area and time period in question, the author draws upon those of ancient Mediterranean cultures to look into different aspects of dog keeping in these societies in detail.

In her comparative evaluation, Scheibner discusses the current state of research from different angles, treating topics from phenotype through to the functional use of dogs in everyday life as well as for sacrificial purposes in different contexts and settings.

Alisa Scheibner's study *Der Hund in der mitteleuropäischen Eisenzeit* (Dogs in the Central European Iron Age) provides a comprehensive introduction to a complicated and multifaceted subject, giving the reader a broad spectrum of information on the role and use of dogs in the pre-Roman Iron Age.

D-24837 Schleswig
E-Mail: info@terra-mare.net

Jörg Ewersen
Flattenberg 54

D-45968 Gladbeck

Birte Klapp
Wielandstr. 95