

Funde im Material des Gebietes, die sich der Rezensent im Moment nur schwer erklären kann, mag auch das Fehlen entsprechender Titel im Literaturverzeichnis erklären.

Die vorliegende Arbeit führt uns wieder ein Dilemma der Archäologie vor Augen, auf das man nicht genug hinweisen kann. Es gab und gibt viele Ausgrabungen, die dem Stand der Dokumentationstechnik und den Möglichkeiten, daraus Erkenntnisse zu gewinnen, nicht standhalten und man wird selbstkritisch fragen müssen: Gilt dies nicht in einigen Jahrzehnten generell für unsere heutige Arbeitsweise und unsere Standards? Kann es richtig sein, Jahr für Jahr die Denkmalsubstanz auszugraben, die Funde ins Magazin zu legen und die Dokumentation zu archivieren und zu wissen, wie wenig man damit nach Jahrzehnten bei einer Auswertung anfangen kann? Vor allem, wenn man den rasanten Anstieg der Möglichkeiten bei den Auswertungstechniken in den letzten Jahren bedenkt.

Trotz einzelner Kritikpunkte muss man zusammenfassend konstatieren: András Márton hat eine immense Materialsammlung zusammengetragen und eine beeindruckende Arbeit vorgelegt. Diese Materialsammlung wird unverzichtbar bei zukünftigen Forschungen zum Thema römische Bestattungen in den pannonischen Provinzen sein und als wichtige Referenz für andere geographische Räume des Imperiums dienen.

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KATHARINA MOHNIKE, Das jünger-kaiser- bis völkerwanderungszeitliche Gräberfeld von Uelzen-Veerßen. Materialhefte zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte Niedersachsens Band 55. Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, Rahden / Westf. 2019. € 64.80. ISBN 978-3-89646-847-5. 683 pages with 127 figures, 4 tables, 4 lists, 199 plates and 1 supplement.

The first impression: it is a heavy book, written by Katharina Mohnike about the late Roman to Migration Period cemetery of Veerßen, in the urban district of Uelzen (Lower Saxony, DE). This book is based on her PhD thesis, which she finished in the winter of 2012/13. Her academic supervisor was Jan Bemann at Bonn University. Publishing this work took over six years.

The series' editor Henning Haßmann states that the book is more than its title says. Based on the core study on the burial ground of Veerßen, the extended work is a regional, comparative, and chronological study concerning the late Roman to Migration Period graves of the Ilmenau river region (pp. 7; 11; p. 20 fig. 2). The bibliography shows that the latest text additions were carried out in the year 2016.

The content is divided into three main parts: text (225 pages including 101 figures and 4 tables), catalogue (244 pages including 26 figures, bibliography, and lists), and plates (200 pages). The text begins with topographical information and the state of research and continues with information about the excavations and the quality of documentation, as well as the two main features of the site – cremations and inhumations. In chapter 2 (pp. 33–159) analysis of the grave inventories is dominated by typological and chronological studies on ceramic vessels (94 pages), which is then followed up by a comprehensive analysis (chapter 3, pp. 159–205) on ceramic vessels with glass inlays (window urns). Chapter 4 (pp. 205–232) is, again, a study on cremations (especially “Buckelgräber”) and inhumations, focusing on the Ilmenau-region and Lower Saxony. In the last chapter 5

(pp. 232–235), a short summary is given which includes critical thoughts concerning chronological results, burial customs, cultural clusters, and settlement history.

The state of research in the Ilmenau-region is characterised by the publication of basic research data by Ole Harck in the 1970s and more recent studies by Dagmar B. GAEDTKE-ECKARDT (*Hügelgräber des 4. Jahrhunderts nach Chr. aus Bad Bevensen. Die Urnenfriedhöfe in Niedersachsen 16* [Oldenburg 2001]) and K. MOHNIKE herself (*Das spätkaiser- bis völkerwanderungszeitliche Brandgräberfeld von Lüneburg-Oedeme, Stadt Lüneburg. Bonner Beitr. Vor- u. Frühgesch. Arch. 9* [Bonn 2008]), which is why the state of research cannot be described as deficient (“mangelhaft”, p. 11). However, there is indeed a lack of research on the studies of settlements (pp. 23–24 with fig. 3), with the publication of the important Rullstorf settlement only having just begun.

The most important guideline for the author was Babette LUDOWICI’s study on “Frühgeschichtliche Grabfunde zwischen Harz und Aller. Die Entwicklung der Bestattungssitten im südöstlichen Niedersachsen von der jüngeren römischen Kaiserzeit bis zur Karolingerzeit. Materialh. Ur- u. Frühgesch. Niedersachsen 35 (Rahden / Westf. 2005)”. There are also other regions to compare with, for example, figure 4 (p. 27) visualises “selected” studies on surrounding regions, but recent studies of the nearby situated Altmark are missing. Furthermore, the reader should keep in mind that LUDOWICI (2005) only deals with grave finds, whereas others deal with grave and settlement finds.

The burial ground of Veerßen is situated on an east-slope above the Stederau brook (p. 33 fig. 5; p. 40 fig. 11; p. 41 fig. 12). Since it was not fully excavated, the expanse of the burial site remains unknown. The reason for excavating this heritage was a ring road that was to be constructed. Although finds of “various periods” (p. 36) were known of in this area, the relevant authorities saw no necessity to act. Stadtarchäologie Uelzen even called it an “unknown” site (F. MAHLER, *Das Gräberfeld im Veerßer Wald bei Uelzen. Ausgrabungen im Bereich der künftigen Ortsumgehung Uelzen. Heimatkalender für Stadt und Kreis Uelzen 1998*, 125–134; here 125). That is why in the year 1995, the excavations began only after volunteers found archaeological objects at the construction zone. Until 2001, a total of 1023 graves were excavated. There are only 110 cremations with an anthropological examination (p. 38). While Mohnike points out the modern excavation techniques (pp. 11; 219), various facts cast doubt on this statement; there are no descriptions of the features (“Befundbeschreibungen”), there are only a few documented profile-ditches and only 320 photographs, and there is no original document recording the boundary of the excavation field (pp. 275–276). Two percent of the ceramic vessels were missing after the excavation (p. 45), and a lot of finds, especially metal finds, were lost. Additionally, a great deal of grave-coordinates was missing, and for some of the graves, the find context is stated as unknown.

Figure 11 on p. 40 illustrates graves with different distances between them, as well as clusters of graves, but there is no site plan for locating the grave numbers. A site plan is needed not only for understanding conclusions, but also for the simple documentary purpose of this monograph, and its absence is a big drawback.

Within the excavation field, 19 circular ditches were found (pp. 36; 42; 205–213; p. 38 fig. 9; p. 206 fig. 98). These incomplete circles with diameters between 3,5 m and 7,0 m are not only typical for the Ilmenau-region (p. 205), but also for the “ostniedersächsische Buckelgräbergruppe” (p. 42). An illustrating distribution map is provided by MOHNIKE (*Die Buckelgräber der jüngeren römischen Kaiser- und Völkerwanderungszeit in Ostniedersachsen. In: B. Ludowici / H. Pöppelmann, Das Miteinander, Nebeneinander und Gegeneinander von Kulturen: Zur Archäologie und Geschichte wechselseitiger Beziehungen im 1. Jahrtausend n. Chr. Neue Stud. Sachsenforsch. 2* [Stuttgart 2011] 68–79; here p. 68 fig. 1). It was finally determined by the author that there is no burial ground with a chronological succession of “Buckelgräber” and mount-less graves (p. 207).

The Veerßen graves can be classified into 1004 urn-graves, two or three inhumation graves, and 17 concentrations of cremated remains (“Leichenbrandkonzentrationen”) (p. 39). Inhumation graves are of special interest (pp. 42–44; 220–232), since due to soil conditions in Veerßen and most other places, bones do not normally survive (p. 220). Mohnike therefore brought together all late Roman to Migration Period inhumation graves of Lower Saxony (pp. 220–223). She concludes that a greater variety of skeletal orientation and positioning existed since stage C 3 (p. 224). There is an obvious cluster of inhumation graves in the Elbe-Weser-region (p. 224 fig. 101). According to the inhumation graves of the Harz-Aller-region, it should be pronounced that they show a close connection to the north-eastern Harz foreland and Middle Germany (p. 230). This is reinforced by a recent inhumation grave discovery at Hiddestorf (D. WINGER, *Gemeinsam in den Tod. Der Krieger von Hiddestorf und seine Begleiter*. In: B. Ludowici [ed.], *Saxones. Neue Stud. Sachsenforsch.* 7 [Darmstadt 2019] 203–215). Compared with many other regions, it seems that people of the Ilmenau-region started inhumation rite with delay (p. 231), namely during the fifth century (p. 233). This result is confirmed by the inhumation grave 1456, yielding a ceramic bowl dated to the 5th/6th century (p. 43).

The most frequent finds from the graves, comprising 1086 units (p. 46), are ceramic vessels. Mohnike deals with this in chapter 2.4.1 (pp. 44–137), and again in chapter 3 (pp. 159–205). At the beginning (again on pp. 121–122), she examines the tempering and surface treatment. In both cases, it would have been better to display the numbers in diagrams. As in the Harz-Aller-region, in the Ilmenau-region, black pottery with bright, clearly visible quartz temper particles are known (p. 45.). This pottery is typical for the Migration Period (pp. 45; 53; 79 and 131).

A total of 832 ceramic vessels (p. 46) are distinguished in a detailed typology. The basic forms can be divided into 681 vessels with structured shapes (676 wide-mouthed and five narrow-mouthed vessels) and 151 vessels with unstructured shapes. There is no generally accepted typology, and Mohnike did not define her terms “structured shape” and “unstructured shape”, or “narrow mouthed”, and so on. Furthermore, when discussing the 151 unstructured vessels (pp. 83–87), she did not distinguish between opened forms (for instance, 1210.1) and those that are closed (for instance, 2290.1). Summarised in a positive way: Mohnike is looking for common features but not for differences, which then leads to similar features being subsumed under different “forms” (for instance, vessel 1739.1 on fig. 15 [p. 53] compared to vessel 1409.1 on fig. 16 [p. 55]) and many vessels of different shape in the same type (“Form”) (for example, vessels 1123.1 and 1570.1 compared to vessel 1879.1 [fig. 15 on p. 53]). She did not separate a third basic type that other authors would call a “pot” (“*Topf*”; p. 48). Additionally, her typology evens out differences in proportion and robustness (sherd thickness).

Perhaps this generalising way of typological treatment is one reason for the wide-ranging chronological results spanning between the late Roman Period and the 6th/7th, even the 8th century (pp. 49–87 *passim*, 127; 132; 135). Nevertheless, most burials are said to date to the 4th and 5th centuries (pp. 219; 232–233). Continuity between the early Roman and late Roman Period cannot be proved (pp. 26; 232).

More precise chronological results are based on studies of special decoration types (p. 49) or bottom styles of the ceramic vessels; however, definitions of types of decoration and vessel bottoms are missing (e. g., “Ährenzier” [p. 62], “Auslassungsrosetten” [p. 56], “Buckel- und Franserverzierung” [pp. 54; 76], “abgesetzter Fuß” [p. 49] or “angesetzte Standringe”). The reader is advised to consult the extensive, but displaced studies on decorations (pp. 89–121) and bottom styles (p. 89). The identification of some ornaments is doubtful (e. g., seemingly different types of stamp negatives [“Stempeleindrücke”; p. 113 fig. 46] dated to the Migration Period [p. 114], which, however, are a result from the same circular stamp.)

“Keilstichdekor”, which is quite frequent in Veerßen (70 vessels; see pp. 114; 134 and 117 fig. 49), as well as in the Ilmenau-region (p. 115 with note 132), is dated to the Migration Period and to the 6th century (p. 73), but Mohnike misquotes Joachim WERNER (*Die Langobarden in Pannonien. Beiträge zur Kenntnis der langobardischen Bodenfunde vor 568.* Bayer. Akad. Wiss., Phil.-Hist. Kl., Abhandl. N. F. 55 [München 1962]), who did not link “Keilstichdekor” with the Langobards (p. 114), but called it an example of “elbgermanischen Dekor”. Another terminological imprecision is the use of “twin vessels” (“Zwillingsgefäße”; pp. 66; 76; 161; 210) for vessels with great similarity, so that they seem to be made by one hand. The term “Zwillingsgefäße” is better known for coupled vessels from all prehistoric times, especially the Hallstatt Period.

The cremation of grave 958 was buried in a wheel-made vessel with a sieve bottom (p. 67 and 68 fig. 20 [unfortunately this figure is not coloured]). Aside from that one, there are seven, maybe nine, graves which delivered sherds of wheel-thrown pottery (p. 67). These sherds were interpreted as burial gifts (p. 70). The complete vessel of grave 958 belongs to “Braunschweiger Drehscheibenware”. The corresponding distribution map (p. 69 fig. 21) only considers grave finds from Lower Saxony, excluding finds from neighbouring Saxony-Anhalt (for instance: B. BERTHOLD et al., *Germanische Funde der römischen Kaiserzeit.* In: H. Meller [ed.], *Quer-Schnitt. Ausgrabungen an der B 6n 1. Benzingerode-Heimburg.* Arch. Sachsen-Anhalt, Sonderbd. 2 [Halle a. d. Saale 2005] 107–125; esp. 120). Furthermore, distinguishing between “Braunschweiger” and “Hannoversche” wheel pottery is a controversial discussion that is still going on, and unfortunately Mohnike did not examine vessels by autopsy, even the one from the Bad Bevensen burial ground (p. 68).

Deviating from her typological rules (p. 46) which are based on shapes and forms, on pp. 81–82 (with fig. 25) the author separates seven vessels dating back to the Early Roman Period. These vessels are called “Terrine” (p. 81; catalogue also), a term she previously criticised (p. 48). The exact difference between a wide-mouthed vessel and a “Terrine” remains unexplained.

The burial ground of Veerßen delivers four “Fenstergefäße” (window urns). On pages 159–205, Mohnike gives an extensive study on window urns from all over Europe dated from the 2nd to the 6th/7th century, displaying a lot of examples, and four representative distribution maps. It should be kept in mind, however, that some vessels with openings or holes (p. 203) may result from searching graves by drilling a pole in the ground (s. E. CZIESLA / J. HOGARTH, *Wildes Urnenstechen. Nachuntersuchungen auf einem bronzezeitlichen Bestattungsort bei Bergholz-Rehbrücke, Lkr. Potsdam-Mittelmark.* Arch. Berlin u. Brandenburg 2012, 2014, 44–46).

In chapter 2.4.2 (pp. 138–159), the grave inventories are presented. Diverse items and materials were found, including pottery (spindle whorl), glass (molten beads), bone / antler / ivory (combs, comb cases, rings, a disc, a stick [“*Orakelstäbchen*”]), metal (rivets, arrow heads, brooches, sheets), stone (fossil), and organic substances (resin). Items made of ivory are of special interest (pp. 151–155 – this chapter is largely identical to K. MOHNIKE, *Eborarii in Uelzen? Beobachtungen zu elfenbeinernen Objekten aus ostniedersächsischen Brandgräbern der jüngeren Römischen Kaiserzeit bis Völkerwanderungszeit.* *Nachr. Niedersachsen Urgesch.* 84, 2015, 45–58). The discussion of certain types of objects often lacks precise numbers; Mohnike rather refers to imprecise phrases such as “a few” or “a rich spectrum”. The reviewer counted 286 graves (28 % of 1023 graves) containing grave inventories apart from the cremation. That means in this case, that Veerßen – contrary to the author’s statement on pages 158 and 233 – clearly differs from Bad Bevesen (80 % – reviewers count) as well as from Oedeme (62%; p. 158).

The neighbouring Altmark region is said to be less connected to the Ilmenau-region (p. 132). Looking at some of the connecting aspects – narrow-mouthed vessels, structured vessels, vessels with facets, window urns, sieve vessels, wheel made pottery, similar dating for the end of the burial

grounds, burial grounds with large number of graves, etc. – this statement seem to be questionable. Considering recent Altmark studies (F. GALL, *Siedlungen der Römischen Kaiser- und Völkerwanderungszeit in der westlichen Altmark, ausgehend von den Siedlungen bei Benkendorf, Chüttlitz, Klötze und Stappenbeck*. Veröff. Landesamt Denkmalpfl. u. Arch. Sachsen-Anhalt 65 [Halle a. d. Saale 2012]), it would have been possible to find “published Migration Period material” (p. 132) from the Altmark.

Coming to the final chapter, it is remarkable to note that the Saxons are not mentioned, even though the study deals with late Roman to Migration Period finds. The material seems to give no connection to the Langobards either, even though we know about the presence of this tribe in the Ilmenau-region only during the early Roman Period (p. 13). Instead, Mohnike prefers to discuss the “Ilmenau-group”, which is more characterised by differences rather than similarities (pp. 232–233). Taking these differences into consideration, the reviewer misses an explanation for the alleged homogeneous end of burial grounds all over the Ilmenau-region around the year 500 (pp. 219; 233), as well as a discussion of whether the Veerßen burial ground belonged to the Elbe circle.

Together with the monographs of GAEDTKE-ECKARDT 2001 and MOHNIKE 2008, the present work is completing the Ilmenau-region-“puzzle”. Thanks to Mohnike’s diligent, careful, and richly illustrated book, we get to know in detail the Veerßen burial ground and others like Boltersen and Lüneburg-Ochtmissen, the pottery types and ceramic chronology, the inhumation graves in Lower Saxony, window-urns all over Europe, and “Buckelgräber” between the Harz mountains and lower Elbe region. The Ilmenau region is closely connected to surrounding areas, most of all the Harz-Aller-region, even if the Ilmenau-region is said to be of minor importance (p. 235). Graves that clearly indicate an elite are missing. The most characteristic feature seems to be the 200 year-long use of the burial grounds analysed in the Ilmenau-region and the (questionable) end of use around the year 500. It is to Mohnike’s merit to have dealt with material over the years that others would have characterised as brittle and tricky. This makes this book an important study on the late Roman and Migration Period between the Harz mountains and the river Elbe – and, as the editor states, indeed an important contribution to the early history of Lower Saxony.

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PETER KOS, Das spätrömische Kastell Vermania bei Isny III. Auswertung der Fundmünzen und Studien zum Münzumsatz in Raetien im 3. und 4. Jahrhundert. Münchner Beiträge zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte Band 65. Verlag C. H. Beck, München 2019. € 38.00. ISBN 978-3-406-10766-5. 240 pages with 63 figures and 89 tables.

This important study by Peter Kos discusses the coins found at the late Roman fort *Vermania* (Isny im Allgäu, DE) during the excavations of the years 1966–70. Far more than being just a presentation and discussion of this material, the author presents both a discussion of the appropriate methods to quantify and compare coin finds and an extensive comparison of the Vermania material with coins found in Roman Raetia and beyond. Thus, this work offers both thoughtful insights in coin supply and circulation in third and fourth century Raetia and a state-of-the-art overview of the coins in their archaeological contexts on the site.

After a very brief overview of the site and the history of excavations (pp. 9–10), the author addresses the various quantitative methods to compare coin finds from various sites (pp. 11–16). A standard practice is to sort the coins into issue periods and calculate the number of coins per year