

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

per issue period per thousand, thus taking the varying lengths of the issue periods and the total number of coins from a given site into account. Though P. Kos in the end predominantly uses this method, he clearly explains why in some cases it might be more informative to just use simple percentages or coins per year (p. 14). Furthermore, he clearly explains why it is important to study the coin profile of a site always against the backdrop of a wider region (p. 16). Only deviations from this backdrop are related to the particular site-history and have to be politically or economically explained. What he does not address however, is where to put the threshold of what still aligns to the standard pattern and what constitutes a significant deviation.

After a brief chapter on the coins from the first and second centuries, which are interpreted as residual material in the coin circulation of the late third century (pp. 17–18), Kos addresses from all possible angles the coin finds of the third century at Isny (date of issue, authority, mint, denomination; pp. 19–63). The question in how far the coin finds can shed light on the construction date of the fort takes centre stage, but is always thoughtfully embedded in wide-ranging comparisons with other sites. As the first peak in coin finds from Isny can be dated to the period 260–268 it has been suggested in the past that the fort had been founded in that period. Kos demonstrates that coins of this period kept circulating well into the late third century and that the coin profile of Isny shows a number of characteristics that make a construction date around 270–275 far more plausible (pp. 41; 48–49). Furthermore, Kos convincingly argues that in Raetia – in contrast to the Upper Rhine region – there are no indications of a drop-off in coin supply between 260 and 294 (the year of a major coin reform), which is indicative of a fully functioning defense system on the Donau-Iller limes (pp. 56–60).

The major part of the book is taken up by a full discussion of the fourth-century coins (pp. 63–117). As in the previous chapter on the third century, the coins found at Isny are compared in respect to their chronology, place of mint, coin type and issuing authority with sites in Raetia and beyond. Kos advances step by step and discusses all these aspects period by period. Slightly confusing is figure 37, which presents all coins from Isny by period, as the periods are not discrete units. Thus, he lists e. g. 28 coins from period 320–324, 13 from period 324–330, but four from period 318–337. In the presentation of the material period by period in the rest of the chapter, this plays no further part, however.

The major achievement of this chapter is that it provides a wonderful overview of the characteristics of fourth century coin circulation in Raetia and how this differs from regions further to the west and east. To highlight a few points: in the period 294–305 a number of sites in Raetia, and Isny in particular, show high ratios of coins minted in Carthage (up to forty percent), which is contrary to the standard pattern that coins are predominantly supplied by the nearest mint. Kos explains the presence of large numbers of Carthaginian coins by the movement of troops from Africa to Raetia, who took their savings with them. Both in the period 313–324 and 341–348 the political strife in the empire becomes visible in the coin circulation. In the earlier period, coins of Licinius, who controlled the East, barely add up to twenty percent of the coin pool in Raetia, but already reach forty percent in modern day Slovenia. Similarly, the sharp decline in coins minted at the Balkan mints in the period 341–348 reflects the conflict between Constantius II, who controlled the East, and Constans, who controlled the West, after the death of Constantinus II in 340, which somehow impeded the unhindered circulation of coins across the demarcation lines.

Of particular interest for the habitation history of Vermania is a Theodosian coin in an archaeological context, indicating a *terminus post quem* of 388 for the final building phase of the fort. Generally speaking, there is only a negligible proportion of coin imitations of fourth century coins among the fourth century coin pool in Raetia, which is markedly different from more western areas. Kos argues that this implies that Raetia was well supplied with fresh specie for the entire period.

A separate chapter is dedicated to the question of when coin supply to Raetia ended and how long bronze coins remained in circulation (pp. 118–128). As has often been observed, the production of bronze coins almost completely ceased in the western mints after 403 and coins from eastern mints failed to arrive in the West. Although Kos stresses that very few bronze coins postdating 403 have been found in Raetia, it is nevertheless a quite consistent phenomenon even if the numbers per site are almost insignificant to what went on before. Taken together with his analysis of the longevity of bronze coins issued in the period 388–403 in the Eastern Empire, where they often dominated well into the sixth century, it is absolutely plausible that coin circulation at Vermania, and other sites in the region, continued at least until the middle of the fifth century. Kos goes one step further though and postulates that “die raetischen Fundplätze mit einer für eine objektive Analyse ausreichenden Anzahl von Münzen der Prägeperiode 388–403 [...] alle Merkmale eines kontinuierlichen Geldzuflusses bis zur Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts zeigen” (p. 125). His main argument is the ratio of the VICTORIA AVGGG-type (minted in the western mints) versus the SALVS REI PVBLICAE-type (minted in Italy, the Balkans and further east). The latter type was produced for a few more years after the former had ended. The higher the proportion of the youngest type, the later the coin assemblage presumably is. As SALVS REI PVBLICAE was already produced from 388 onwards and Raetia generally was supplied more from the Balkan and Italy-mints than from the west, a dominance of this coin type not necessarily implies a later date for an assemblage, but above all, it does not indicate a continued *supply* of this coin type well into the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

The final chapter lists, rather than discusses, coins from chronologically relevant archaeological contexts like burnt layers and postholes (pp. 129–143). Importantly, it also lists all archaeological contexts which yielded more than one coin find, which gives a good insight in how long coins could remain in circulation (or not).

After the summaries in German and English and the bibliography, the book closes with a catalogue of all coin finds. Apart from the numismatic description, from which surprisingly the size and weight as well as the state of wear are missing, the x-, y- and z-coordinates of the find location as well as a brief statement on the archaeological context are provided.

To sum up, this is an exemplary publication of coin finds, giving both ample thought to the distribution on site and coins from archaeological context and to coin circulation in the wider region. Furthermore, we now have a solid baseline for late Roman coin circulation in Raetia and all further studies will profit from it.

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**NIKOLAS HÄCHLER / BEAT NÄF / PETER-ANDREW SCHWARZ, Mauern gegen Migration? Spät-römische Strategie, der Hochrhein-Limes und die Fortifikationen der Provinz *Maxima Sequanorum* – eine Auswertung der Quellenzeugnisse.** Verlag Schnell & Steiner GmbH, Regensburg 2020. € 45,00. ISBN 978-3-7954-3511-0. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-187452>. 382 pages avec 88 illustrations en noir et blanc et 92 en couleur.

Depuis quelques années, on assiste à un important regain de l'intérêt pour l'étude des régions frontalières du monde romain. Cause ou conséquence de ce phénomène, l'effervescence créée par les reconnaissances successives du mur d'Hadrien en 1987, du *limes* de Germanie supérieure et de