

FERDINAND HEIMERL, Das römische *Beda* / Bitburg. Kaiserzeitlicher *vicus*, spätantike Befestigung und Bestattungen. 2 volumes (text and catalogue). Beihefte zur Trierer Zeitschrift, volume 39. Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden 2021. € 78.00. ISBN 978-3-95490-511-9 (Hardcover). € 78.00. ISBN 978-3-7520-0523-3 (E-book). doi: <https://doi.org/10.29091/9783752005233>. 480 pages with 535 colour illustrations and 916 b/w figures, 99 inserts and 60 plates.

Ferdinand Heimerl's monograph on the Roman settlement *Beda* (located at modern-day Bitburg, Germany) is the result of a PhD thesis submitted to the *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München* in 2019. It is worth noting that the study focusses on the late Roman fortification ("Spätantike Befestigung", pp. 61–129) while the civilian settlement of the Imperial age ("*Vicus Beda*", pp. 19–59) and especially the late Roman burials ("Spätantike Bestattungen", pp. 130–137) are discussed in less detail by F. Heimerl. Considering the vast amount of data analysed on the fortification, this limitation is very reasonable and even indispensable. Methodology, research questions, objectives and transformation processes are only briefly touched on in the introduction (pp. 9–11), which also presents the site's topography, geology and climatic conditions as well as a short historical outline. The following chapters discuss the history of research (pp. 12–17) and the areas referred to throughout this publication (pp. 17 f.). For easier reference, the important plans giving an overview of these areas (p. 17 fig. 9; 18 fig. 10) should probably have been provided on a separate insert.

Heimerl first presents the Imperial period settlement (pp. 19–59) of which especially residential / industrial buildings, furnaces and pits have been unearthed so far. Fortunately, written sources document both status (*vicus*) and name (*Beda*) of this settlement. Due to the small scale of the archaeological excavations executed, the results of this analysis do not suffice to reconstruct the settlement's evolution in the first centuries AD in detail. However, the basic structure is evident: The *vicus* featured a single row of strip-houses with backyards, which seems to have stretched over at least 800 m along the important road from *Augusta Treverorum* / Trier to *Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium* / Cologne (p. 19 fig. 11; 50 f.).

Of particular interest are the remains of a rectangular building ("Gebäude Q") with a 16 m long, 1.5 m wide limestone-faced wall with a mortar core (pp. 30; 51 f.). The building might have been square as suggested in the plans (esp. p. 19 fig. 11) although the extent to the west is unknown. Neither towers nor inner structures or surrounding ditches have been excavated. An analysis of the mortar samples (cat. 487–489) might provide new insights regarding the building's chronology. Heimerl challenges the idea that a building inscription dedicated by the *iuniores vici* in AD 245 and found 200 m north of building Q can be reliably linked to these remains. Regarding the inscription, works published in French should be considered as well (cf. with further references M.-Th. RAEPSAET-CHARLIER, *Institutions et fastes de la province romaine de Gaule Belgique. D'Auguste à l'empire gaulois* [27 av. n. è.–260 d. n. è.]. *Études Arch.* 17 [Brussels 2021] 70; 107; 117). Heimerl interprets building Q as a *burgus*, which is likely but not the only possibility (e.g. granary / storage?), as stated by the author himself. The same applies to the supposed dating of this construction to the Gallic Empire period; the given archaeological evidence only documents that building Q was already in place before the construction of the late Roman curtain wall P-Q.

Heimerl proceeds to discuss several types of finds, starting with 183 coins dated earlier than AD 294. Roman Imperial age coins found in Bitburg are almost exclusively of a Gallic Empire date; Celtic, Roman Republican and Augustean coins are scarce (n = 6; 3%). The spatial distribution reflects inter alia the intensity of archaeological excavations and the standards and methods applied. The plan (p. 31 fig. 16) would be even more instructive if it included the coins' chronology.

The antiquarian study of small finds features very useful synopses (p. 34 fig. 18; p. 36 fig. 19). The same applies to the list of pottery finds giving an overview of the types found in Bitburg and

their chronology (pp. 39–45 tab. 1). Unfortunately, this list is not arranged according to chronology, and it takes some time to gather all pottery of a specific period. Due to the small number of (published) archaeological remains from the Julio-Claudian era, we cannot thoroughly evaluate the settlement's beginnings as of today. Heimerl assumes that Roman *Beda* developed in the wake of the infrastructure construction work carried out under M. Vipsanius Agrippa, which linked modern-day Trier and Cologne. Considering the site's setting along this important road, this seems plausible. However, there is little archaeological evidence to support this hypothesis. The earliest incineration tomb dates from the Claudian era. Heimerl does not synoptically discuss the early Imperial age objects: finds certainly from the late 1st century BC or the first half of the 1st century AD (seven coins, one fibula, one Aco beaker and one jug Gose 361) are scarce and do not unambiguously prove a start of settlement activities before Claudius' reign.

The sub-chapter 4.3.2 is dedicated to the Roman Imperial age settlement in the area of the late Roman fortification (and not to the remains concurrent to the fortification as the title "Bebauung intra muros" suggests; pp. 49–51). Heimerl discusses the probable *burgus* and proceeds to sanctuaries and the theatre (p. 52f.). No remains of such public buildings have surfaced so far, but there is epigraphic and iconographic evidence. The cemeteries contemporary to the *vicus* that we know so far (p. 53f.) are all located along the southern arterial road. Heimerl also considers the surrounding region and concludes chapter 4 with an overview of the settlement's evolution in the late 3rd and early 4th centuries AD. In the small area excavated so far, there is little archaeological evidence of human activities between a maybe large-scale fire that occurred after AD 272 and the mid-4th century AD.

The main part of this volume presents the late Roman fortification's remains (pp. 61–80), the associated finds (pp. 80–99) and conclusions on various topics including the fortification's chronology, economics, reconstruction and typology (pp. 99–129). Thus, Heimerl's treatment of this structure is extensive, methodical and compelling. The 493 m long fortification enclosed an area of c. 1.73 ha and included building Q in the wall. The excavations at Bitburg unearthed parts of several ditches, but none of them can be reliably attributed to the late Roman fortification. As for the Imperial age settlement, only glimpses of the structures *intra muros* are known. Hence, Heimerl is justified in stressing that these remains do not necessarily reflect the history of the fortification, which also applies to dating its construction. Unfortunately, the overview of the fortifications' remains (p. 60 fig. 22) does not correspond 100% with the detailed plans in volume 2 for some sections (cf. especially curtain walls E–F [insert 19] and M–N [insert 48]).

Heimerl's discussion of the finds includes the numismatic evidence (336 coins dated AD 294–388/403), fibulas (four crossbow brooches Keller / Pröttel 3/4) and pottery. According to the analysis provided by Lothar Bakker, the decorated Argonne red-slipped ware is predominantly from AD 370–430, one fragment being produced in the second half of the 5th or early 6th century AD. While these 21 fragments complement the chronology of the numismatic record, which dwindles in the late 4th century AD, the number is too small for reliable comparisons to other sites. It is understandable that Heimerl discusses the rest of the pottery finds in less detail. However, readers might have benefitted from an additional illustration showing the Late Roman pottery's overall spectrum present at *Beda*.

The section on the numismatic evidence includes an instructive illustration showing the coin histograms of selected sites (p. 83 fig. 31) from AD 294 to 403, with striking similarities between Bitburg, Mainz and Trier. Of particular interest is the high percentage of coin types issued in the period AD 348–361 and their imitations at Bitburg. There are no indications of devastations under Magnentius. As only stated in the preliminary remarks (p. 31), coin types that were struck during two periods are only represented for the earlier period and not equally distributed to both periods

in the numismatic histograms. The chart showing the percentages of different coin mints would be easier to read (p. 82 fig. 29) if it did not include the coins where the mint is undeterminable (49%).

In the next sub-chapter, Heimerl discusses the fortification's chronology based on the evidence unearthed in Bitburg (pp. 99–102), comparisons to other fortifications are considered separately (pp. 116–123). Pottery and numismatic finds provide a *terminus post quem* in the middle of the 3rd century AD resp. AD 269. Heimerl argues that the spatial distribution of coins dated AD 341/348–361 indicates an intensified use in the area of the fortification. This seems plausible, although the late 4th century AD numismatic evidence, the majority of which comes from the exteriors, advise caution as this most certainly does not reflect a shift of most activities to the area *extra muros* (cf. p. 81 figs 26–27; 128). A sample of charcoal found in the fortification's mortar core (cat. 2756) dates from cal AD 25–128 (2-sigma), showing that we should treat also ¹⁴C-dates with caution and must take factors such as re-use and recycling into account. The first large-scale activities *intra muros* documented in the archaeological record are construction works in a building of unknown function dated AD 340/341 or later. Considering the small scale of the excavations carried out in this area, parallellising the construction of the fortification with these activities remains hypothetical. In contrast to the text on the back cover, an earlier erection in the late 3rd or early 4th century AD is still possible.

Heimerl assumes that military builders were involved in the construction, and that the fortification might have taken 100 workers about nine months to finish. The results on the fortification's architecture formed the basis for a digital reconstruction that is part of a new archaeological tour around Bitburg, which the public can visit since 2020. Heimerl presents the data and the methodology in detail, and considers sites for comparisons when needed. The resulting digital model convincingly reconstructs the late Roman fortification, while the empty space within and surrounding this construction might convey a misleading picture, especially to non-archaeologists. In fact, very little is known about these areas in late Roman times, although some finds indicate human activities along the road. The short presentation of the developments in the environs in the 4th and 5th centuries AD (pp. 112–116) shows that villas in the surrounding regions seem to disappear in the later 4th century, only one villa is proven to be still in use in the 5th century. Of course, this is an incomplete picture and possibly distorted by the chronological difficulties that we face for these decades.

For his typological comparisons (pp. 116–123), Heimerl considers examples from the Gallic and German provinces, understandably with a strong emphasis on the fortifications at Neumagen and Jünkerath. He provides an instructive overview of late Roman fortifications on a uniform scale (p. 12 fig. 55), which surprisingly also includes a (very similar) example from modern-day Slovenia. Based on the finds, Heimerl argues that both state officials / soldiers and females were present in the late Roman fortification, and that building Q now served for storage (pp. 123–127). Finally, the author analyses the finds' chronology to reconstruct how long the fortification was in use (pp. 127–129). Archaeological evidence (esp. pottery finds) indicates that *Beda* was still inhabited and part of wider economic networks during the second half of the 5th century AD. Considering the scarcity of significant archaeological finds, future excavations will hopefully allow micromorphological studies as Heimerl points out (p. 129; cf. for example M. ASAL, *Basilia – Das spätantike Basel. Untersuchungen zur spätrömischen und frühmittelalterlichen Siedlungsgeschichte. Die Grabung Martinsgasse 6 + 8 [2004/1] und weitere Grabungen im Nordteil des Münsterhügels. Materialh. Arch. Basel 24 [Basel 2017] esp. 99–134*).

In the next chapter, Heimerl presents 13 late Roman burials (pp. 130–137), found in a necropolis already in use in the Imperial period and located 350–500 m south of the fortification. These inhumations seem to be predominantly from the 4th century AD, as far as they feature chronologically significant objects. Perhaps a future research project will allow ¹⁴C dating to evaluate the other

tombs' chronology as inhumations with little or no grave goods occur in earlier and later periods as well (cf. for example J. TRUMM et al., Einzelgräber und Skelettfunde aus *Vindonissa*: Archäologie, Anthropologie, Aufbewahrung, Jahresber. Ges. Pro Vindonissa 2019, 2020, 3–31). An anthropological examination of eight of these inhumations by Wolf-Rüdiger Teegen can be found at the end of this volume (pp. 148–174). Readers might be surprised to stumble upon this chapter after the summary, especially as the introduction does not mention this chapter (cf. p. 11). However, there is a reference in the relevant sub-chapter 6.3.2 (p. 134) which might successfully guide most readers interested in the in-depth anthropological analysis, and Heimerl's discussion includes the anthropological observations.

Heimerl dedicates his last chapter to post-Roman activities in Bitburg (pp. 137–143), which will hopefully spawn imitators. This is highly important to understand both the state of preservation of the Roman features and the importance of the Roman heritage for Bitburg's further evolution. Of course, Heimerl can discuss only selected post-Roman archaeological remains. Unfortunately, not all of the selection criteria are evident to the reader. Inhumation burials as well as stray finds show that people lived here in the 6th and 7th centuries AD. Finally, the first volume includes summaries in German, English and French (pp. 143–147) and closes with the anthropological study by W.-R. Teegen already mentioned.

The “Katalogband” includes not only the catalogue of both areas (pp. 176–199) and finds discussed (pp. 200–234, with an additional numismatic list [pp. 235–267]) but also abbreviations (p. 175), concordance tables (p. 268), an extensive bibliography (pp. 269–309), the illustration acknowledgements (p. 310 f.) as well as 99 so-called inserts with plans and photographs (“Beilagen”) and 60 plates depicting the finds and inhumations discussed (“Tafeln”). This division might need some adapting and makes it mandatory to have both volumes at hand while reading. At the same time, it is thus easier to check the numerous references to the catalogue, plates and plans in the text (59 alone on p. 28 f.!). These cross-references make the argumentation well comprehensible and traceable. The catalogue of finds as well as the inserts and the plates are organised according to the areas defined in this study (cf. p. 17 f.). This is very consistent and easy-to-use but requires a lot of thumbing through volume 2. It might have been more convenient for readers to have a combined catalogue of areas and finds. The numismatic finds list's arrangement differs from the other finds and refers first to the general context (*intra muros*, *extra muros*, without archaeological context, necropolises and hoards) and then to the coins' chronology. As the numbers of the objects in the catalogue are not formatted differently, it takes some time to identify individual finds for some layers (e. g. finds 2660–2666 on p. 231; 2691–2699 on p. 232 f.).

In my opinion, the plans and section drawings are this study's centrepiece, presenting in a very clear, precise and standardised way all the archaeological research on *Beda's* late Roman fortification carried out so far. Considering the huge quantity and varying quality of the underlying documentation, this is even more impressive. Thus, the following comments concern only petty details and a matter of taste: The colours are more or less realistic and standardised, which requires a lot of explanatory numbers on the plans (e. g. inserts 1; 12; 75). Some of the symbols in the legends are not ideal, not allowing to easily identify the corresponding stratigraphic unit on the plans (e. g. [2] and [14] on insert 1). The asterisk in the legends, which are arranged chronologically, is very useful, as it marks stratigraphic units containing archaeological finds (unfortunately, some readers might not find the explanation given in the other volume on p. 17). Generally, the fortification's components are addressed in the same way throughout all inserts. However, some inconsistencies from the heterogeneous data processed remain, and the batter (“Dossierung”) corresponds to (3a), (3b), (3c) or even (3e.f). Some metal and stone objects are difficult to judge based on the photographs provided on the plates, and additional drawings would be of great value (e. g. pl. 20,740; 43,1685).

Both volumes show a meticulous editorial work leaving almost no linguistic, technical, and formal errors. The huge effort put into the outstanding plans and profile drawings in volume 2 deserves a special mention. Ferdinand Heimerl's monograph is definitely of great value for the study of late Roman fortifications, making results of more than 100 years of excavations in Bitburg and a rich corpus of objects easily accessible and providing a comprehensive analysis and an important gain in knowledge. Undoubtedly, this study will be an important reference and will set standards for future publications on other sites.

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MARTIN PITTS, The Roman Object Revolution. Objectscapes and Intra-Cultural Connectivity in Northwestern Europe. Amsterdam Archaeological Studies, Band 27. University Press, Amsterdam 2019. € 138,34. ISBN 9789463728201 (Hardcover). € 116,99. ISBN 9789048543878 (E-Book). <https://doi.org/10.5117/9789463728201>. 260 Seiten, 72 Abbildungen.

Martin Pitts ist Spezialist u. a. für Römische Archäologie, antike Konsumpraktiken sowie quantitative Methoden und seit 2021 Professor am *College for Humanities* der Universität von Exeter (GB) (<https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/classics/staff/pitts/> [letzter Zugriff: 21.02.2023]). Seine Sach- und Methodenkenntnisse vereint Pitts in der hier vorgestellten Monographie mit jüngeren kulturwissenschaftlichen Konzepten zum Thema Globalisierung, um der Forschungsfrage nach kulturellem Austausch zwischen römischem Militär und Händlern und lokaler Bevölkerung in den römischen Provinzen eine neue Perspektive hinzuzufügen. Das Konzept der *objectscape*, ein von dem ethnologischen Konzept der *ethnoscapes* zur Beschreibung globalisierter Bevölkerungen abgeleiteter Neologismus, und das kulturanthropologische Konzept der *inter-artefactual domain* bilden den theoretischen Rahmen der Studie. Mit *objectscape* werden die materiellen und stilistischen Eigenschaften eines Objektrepertoires in einem bestimmten Zeitraum und geografischen Bereich bezeichnet, das explizit als in Bewegung seiend gesehen wird und sich somit von dem Konzept der Assemblage als statisches Bild abgrenzt. Der oftmals fehlende Akteur Mensch in den archäologischen Quellen macht die Konzeptualisierung der auf oder an Objekten sichtbaren Effekte von Aktionen – in diesem Fall einer hohen Mobilität von Menschen und Dingen – notwendig. Die *inter-artefactual domain*, ursprünglich als Gegenentwurf zum Abstraktum ‚Kultur‘ formuliert, bezeichnet den visuellen Stil von Artefakten, der sich durch die formalen und stilistischen Beziehungen zwischen den Artefakten selbst definieren lässt. So können Form und Stil von Objekten über ihre Substanz hinaus zu Analyse kategorien werden, so dass nach übergreifenden, eben inter-artefaktischen Relationen, Strukturen und Verbindungen im *objectscape* gesucht werden kann (S. 15).

Das Buch ist in sechs Hauptkapitel aufgeteilt. Nach einem einleitenden Kapitel (S. 1–28) werden in den vier folgenden Abschnitten in chronologischer Abfolge *objectscape*s analysiert und beschrieben (Kap. 2–5), beginnend mit späteisenzeitlichen Funden und Befunden und in flavischer Zeit endend. Nach dem zusammenfassenden Kapitel 6 folgen das Quellen- und Literaturverzeichnis, ein Appendix mit den nach Fundort aufgelisteten Datenquellen (meist Literaturangaben, manchmal online zugängliche Datenbanken) sowie eine Tabelle mit einer Konkordanz der Typenansprache für die Feinkeramik.