

Florian SCHIMMER, Amphoren aus Cambodunum/Kempton. Ein Beitrag zur Handelsgeschichte der römischen Provinz Raetia. Münchner Beiträge zur provinziäl-römischen Archäologie 1, Cambodunumforschungen 7. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag 2009, 384 S., 137 s/w-Fotos, 18 Schaubilder, 6 Karten

This is a publication of the diagnostic (mainly fragments of) transport amphorae excavated over the past 120 years and more in the Raetian *civitas*-settlement of Cambodunum, present-day Kempton.¹ Florian Schimmer has established a corpus of 2104 examples of these, to which 68 in part previously published amphorae from the “Gräberfeld auf der Keckwiese” and the “Kleine Thermen” are added (pp. 16-17 and 23).² Few of the finds come from independently dated contexts (pp. 23-24), but the study demonstrates how much information about the trade patterns of Raetia can be derived from a meticulous study of such material.

Schimmer presents the evidence and discusses its implications in four chapter-like sections of unequal length, each subdivided in up to three levels, largely adhering to the structure established by Stéphanie Martin-Kilcher in her fundamental publication of the amphorae from Augst.³ The first chapter (pp. 13-21), “Einleitung”, deals with the source value of amphorae for the ancient economy and the state of amphora research north of the Alps and in Raetia, and goes on to provide a useful overview of the topography, research history and development of Cambodunum.

The second part (pp. 23-25), “Zielsetzung”, is devoted to a discussion of the source material, the procedures used by the author for its classification and presentation, and the role played by scientific clay analyses in establishing the geographical provenance of the amphorae in question. The chapter title is slightly puzzling, since the author does not in it explicitly define the aim of his study, which seems to be taken as a given.

The third section (pp. 27-69), “Antiquarische Analyse”, deals with the amphora types represented at the site, listed in accordance to their presumed contents: olive oil (Dressel 20 and 23, 6B and *Anfore con collo ad imbuto*/Typ Porto Recanati), wine (Dressel 1, 6A, 2-4/5, Camulodunum 184 and variants, Dres-

¹ The corpus mainly comprises fragments of rims (RS), handles (HE) and/or bases (BS); of body sherds only the inscribed ones have been included, as well as those of types not represented otherwise in the material (p. 23).

² Table 4 (p. 74) only enumerates 2018 finds from the “Siedlungsgrabungen”; the discrepancy is explained by the fact that hardly any body sherds are included in the latter count.

³ Martin-Kilcher (1987); *eadem* (1994a-b).

sel 43, Dressel 28 *Var.*, as well as Gauloise 2/3 and 4 amphorae from Southern Gaul), fish sauces from the Iberian Peninsula (Dressel 12, 9 and 8, Vindonissa 586/Pompeji VII, Pélichet 46, Augst 30), from Gaul (Dressel 10 similis and 9 similis, Augst 17, Augst 33/34?), and from Northern Italy and the Adriatic area (Anforette nord-italiche/ Aquincum 78), whole olives (Haltern 70 and Verulamium 1908, Haltern 70 similis, Augst 21, Schörgendorfer 558), alun (Richborough 527), and other kinds of contents (Dressel 21-22, Camulodunum 189, and Kapitän II), as well as amphorae of uncertain form and “Zweihenkelkrüge”. This chapter is – as indeed is the whole volume – economically written and user-friendly, even if reading would have been facilitated had the discussions of the individual types been accompanied by a reference to the relevant catalogue numbers and plates (e.g. for the type Dressel 8 (p. 53) a reference to cat. nos. 1415-1420 pl. 46). Schimmer’s treatment of the individual amphora types is well-informed and to the point, and updated to 2007, as reflected by the comprehensive bibliography (pp. 115-136). Considering the enormous literature on the subject, it is not surprising that one searches in vain for a few references – in particular to literature dealing with amphorae of the Eastern Mediterranean.⁴

In the fourth chapter (pp. 71-105), “Auswertung”, Schimmer evaluates his results, comparing the pattern of amphorae from Cambodunum with those of Augst and Mainz, which have previously been the subject of admirable publications by Martin-Kilcher and Ulrike Ehmig.⁵ The format of the three publications is similar, which enables Schimmer to make a detailed comparison between the foodstuff traded in amphorae from the three sites: mainly olive oil, wine, fish sauces, and whole olives (p. 77 Fig. 7 and *passim*). It turns out the overall picture is much the same everywhere. Olive oil (mainly imported from Spain in Dressel 20 amphorae) is the most popular import at all three sites, followed by wine, fish sauces and whole olives (p. 75 Fig. 6 and *passim*). There are, however, also certain differences: imports from Northern Italy, the Adriatic and the Eastern Mediterranean are more in evidence at Cambodunum than at the two other sites, which is plausibly explained by the site’s geographical location. The general picture drawn up by the author is convincing enough, but it should be noted that it rests in part on identifications of the prime contents of some of the amphorae in question, which need to be subjected to new investigations in the future. For example, Schimmer agrees with the near-*communis opinio* in regarding alun as the contents of Richborough 527 amphorae, but this (admittedly attractive) hypothesis has neither been verified by scientific

⁴ E.g. Whitbread (1995), and the web site established by the University of Southampton in 2005: “Roman amphorae: a digital resource”, <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/resources.html?amphora2005>.

⁵ Martin-Kilcher (1987) and (1994a-b); Ehmig 2003.

analyses nor is it supported by *tituli picti*.⁶ Also, he regards wine as the prime contents of the amphora type Dressel 6A (p. 39), though he acknowledges that *dipinti* on some specimens as well as contents analyses show that this type it might (also?) have been used for fish sauces.⁷ A similar case is presented by the Dressel 28 *Var.* type (pp. 44-45). It is true that the latter types are only represented by three finds at Cambodunum, and hence have little discernable impact on the overall pattern of finds, but 54 examples of the Richborough 527 type are listed in the corpus (pp. 288-292). These instances are not quoted in order to question the author's approach but to illustrate the need for further contents analyses and new research into the secondary use of transport amphorae.⁸ Be that as it may, Schimmer goes on to widen the picture by introducing amphorae from other find spots in Raetia (pp. 87-105) as a backdrop for reconstructing the trade history of Raetia in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD – in so far as this can be done on the background of the evidence of the transport amphorae. He notes that characteristic amphorae from the 3rd and 4th century AD are hardly represented in the material, and hints cautiously at the possibility that this might be a sign of a decline in the importance of Cambodunum from the 2nd century AD onwards (pp. 83-86) – a suggestion of considerable methodological interest.

The final part of the book is devoted to summaries of the results in German, English, French and Italian (pp. 107-114), a complete list of the literature cited (pp. 115-136), a summary of the fabric groups illustrated by three colour plates in 1:1 (pp. 137-141), a catalogue of the stamps (pp. 143-161), and a catalogue accompanied by clear profile drawings of a most comprehensive selection of the examples in the catalogue (pp. 163-304). The 1:1 colour photographs of the fabrics seem rather small; it might have been useful (also?) to have had reproductions at the scale of 1:2,⁹ but the illustrations generally serve their purpose well.

In sum: Florian Schimmer's conscientious study represents the state of the art of amphora studies in the western part of the Roman Empire. It is an important contribution to our knowledge of the amphorae of Cambodunum/Kempton, and of the economy and trade of Raetia in general, and rises to the high standards set by the previous publications of the Roman amphorae from Augst/Keiseraugst and Mainz.¹⁰ The volume will not only be of interest to amphora specialists, but deserves a wide readership among all who are interested in economic history of the Roman Empire.

⁶ Cf. Borgard (2005) 159.

⁷ See now also Van Neer *et al.* (2010) 163 note 18.

⁸ Cf. Peña (2007), and Lawall/Lund (eds.) (2011).

⁹ As in Tomber/Dore (1998).

¹⁰ Martin-Kilcher (1987) and (1994a-b); Ehmig 2003. See further *eadem* 2007 and 2010.

Bibliography

Borgard, P. 2005

Les amphores à alun (I^{er} siècle avant J.-C.- IV^{er} siècle après J.-C.), in : Borgard, P., Brun, J.-P./Picon, M. (eds.), *L'alun de méditerranée*. Colloque International. Naples/Aix-en-Provence, 157-169.

Die römischen Amphoren von Mainz, *Frankfurter Archäologische Schriften* 4. Möhnesee.

Die römischen Amphoren im Umland von Mainz, *Frankfurter Archäologische Schriften* 5. Wiesbaden.

Ehmig, U. 2010

Die Amphoren. Untersuchungen zur Belieferung einer Militäranlage in augusteischer Zeit und den Grundlagen Dangstetten 4, *Forschungen und Berichte zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte in Baden-Württemberg* 117. Stuttgart.

Lawall, M./Lund, J. (eds.) 2011

Pottery in the Archaeological Record: Greece and Beyond, Gösta Enbom Monographs 1. Aarhus.

Martin-Kilcher, S. 1987

Die römischen Amphoren aus Augst und Kaiseraugst. Ein Beitrag zur römischen Handels- und Kulturgeschichte. 1: Die Südspanischen Ölamphoren (Gruppe 1), *Forsch. Augst* 7/1. Augst.

Martin-Kilcher, S. 1994a

Die römischen Amphoren aus Augst und Kaiseraugst. Ein Beitrag zur römischen Handels- und Kulturgeschichte. 2: Die Amphoren für Wein, Fischsauce, Südfrüchte (Gruppen 2-24) und Gesamtauswertung, *Forsch. Augst* 7/2. Augst.

Martin-Kilcher, S. 1994b

Die römischen Amphoren aus Augst und Kaiseraugst. Ein Beitrag zur römischen Handels- und Kulturgeschichte. 3: Archäologische und naturwissenschaftliche Tonbestimmungen, Katalog und Tafeln (Gruppen 2-24). *Forsch. Augst* 7/3. Augst.

Peña, J.T. 2007

Roman Pottery in the Archaeological Record. Cambridge.

Tomber, R./Dore, J. 1998

The National Roman Fabric. Reference Collection: a Handbook. London.

Van Neer, W./Ervynck, A./Monsieur, P. 2010

Fish bones and amphorae: evidence for the production and consumption of salted fish products outside the Mediterranean region, *JRA* 23, 161-195.

Whitbread, I.K. 1995

Greek Transport Amphorae. A Petrological and Archaeological Study, British School at Athens Fitch Laboratory Occasional Paper 4. Athens.

John Lund

Assistant Keeper

Collection of Classical and Near Eastern Antiquities

The National Museum of Denmark

Frederiksholms Kanal 12

DK – 1220 København K

E-Mail: John.Lund@natmus.dk