



BRAUNSCHWEIGISCHES  
LANDESMUSEUM

## 70. Internationales Sachsensymposium 2019

Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Archäologie der Sachsen  
und ihrer Nachbarvölker in Nordwesteuropa –IvoE

### New Narratives for the First Millennium?

Alte und neue Perspektiven der archäologischen Forschung zum 1. Jahrtausend



Widukind of Corvey († after 973 AD) writing his *Res Gestae Saxonicae*  
(© Kelvin Wilson, Ridderkerk)

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Braunschweiger Dom, Burgplatz

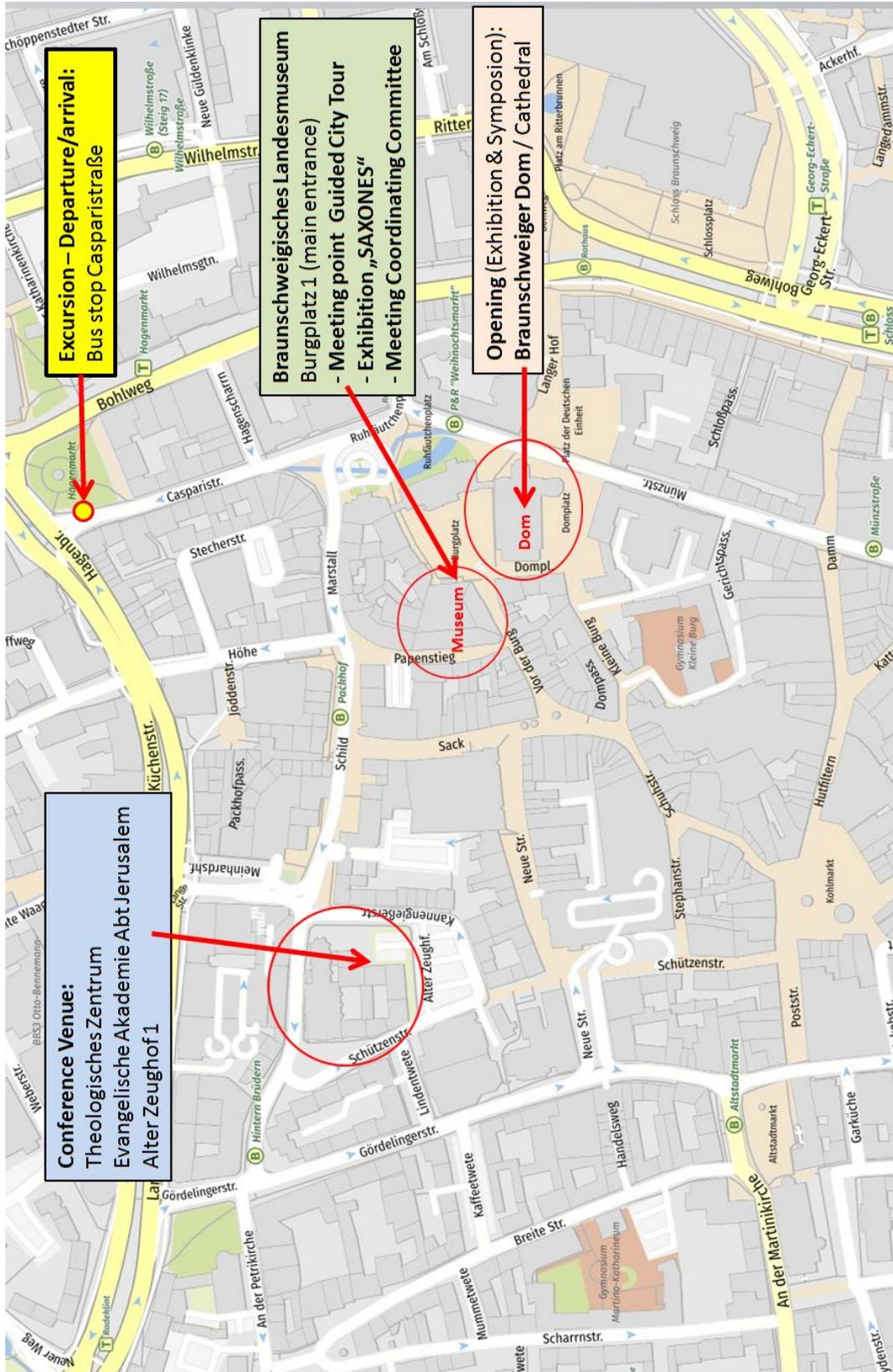


Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum, Burgplatz



## 70. Internationales Sachsensymposion

### Locations





## 70. Internationales Sachsensymposium Programm

### Samstag, 21. September 2019

- 14:00                      Stadtführung / guided city tour (75 min.)
- Meeting point:  
Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum (main entrance)  
Burgplatz 1, 38100 Braunschweig
- 17:00                      **Opening / Festliche Eröffnung** der Niedersächsischen Landesausstellung  
„SAXONES – Das erste Jahrtausend in Niedersachsen“ und des  
70. Internationalen Sachsensymposiums im **Braunschweiger Dom** (Burgplatz)

### Sonntag, 22. September 2019

#### **Conference Venue/Veranstaltungsort:**

Theologisches Zentrum / Evangelische Akademie Abt Jerusalem  
Alter Zeughof 1  
38100 Braunschweig

#### **09:00-10:15 Registration**

- 10:15                      Welcome: Heike Pöppelmann und Torun Zachrisson

#### **Lectures: SAXONES - A new narrative I** (Chair: Heike Pöppelmann)

- 10:30                      Babette Ludowici, "What's in a name?" - Eine neue Geschichte der alten  
Sachsen
- 11:00                      Iris Aufderhaar, Der Zentralplatz in der Region Sievern und das Land Wursten  
von der Zeitenwende bis in das 6. Jh. n. Chr.
- 11:30                      Hauke Jöns, LALIA and the „völkerwanderungszeitliche Besiedlungslücke“ in  
Northern Germany
- 12:00                      Vera Brieske und Christoph Grünewald, Das Kreuz mit dem Kreuz –  
vorkarolingische Gegenstände mit christlicher Ornamentik in Westfalen
- 12:30 - 13:45              *Lunch*



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### Lectures: SAXONES - A new narrative II (Chair: Torun Zachrisson)

- 13:45 Daniel Nösler, Das Gold des Kaisers: Ein Goldmultiplum von der Niederelbe
- 14:15 Christina Peek und Annette Siegmüller, Fryske frijheid? Die Siedlungskammer von Dunum (Ostfriesland) im Frühmittelalter
- 14:45 Anna Flückiger, Archaeological Exhibitions and the Responsibilities of Storytelling: A Case Study on the Early Middle Ages
- 15:15 Kelvin Wilson, Behind the Past is the Present
- 15:45 - 16:15 *Coffee*
- 16:30 Rundgang durch die Ausstellung / Exhibition tour  
„SAXONES – Das erste Jahrtausend in Niedersachsen“  
(Ausstellung geöffnet bis 19:30 Uhr)

### Montag, 23. September 2019

- 08:00 - 16:30 **Exkursion** (Departure/arrival: Bus stop Casparistraße)
- 18:30 **Sitzung des Koordinierenden Ausschusses**  
im Braunschweigischen Landesmuseum,  
Burgplatz 1, 38100 Braunschweig

### Dienstag, 24. September 2019

- Venue/Veranstaltungsort:**  
Theologisches Zentrum/Evangelische Akademie Abt Jerusalem  
Alter Zeughof 1  
38100 Braunschweig
- 09:00 Report by the chairman of the Sachsensymposion,  
Claus von Carnap- Bornheim

### Lectures: Conquerors and Rulers – narrating hegemony I (Chair: Elna Siv Kristoffersen)

- 09:20 Sam Lucy, Anglo-Saxon Narratives: contesting the past in Britain, 1850-2019

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- 09:50 Chris Scull and Tom Williamson, Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia: New Narratives of Power, Polity and Territory in Early England
- 10:20 Dirk Steinforth, The early Vikings in the Irish Sea reconsidered – a preliminary report
- 10:50 – 11:15 *Coffee*

### **Lectures: Conquerors and Rulers – narrating hegemony II** (Chair: Egge Knol)

- 11:15 Dagfinn Skre, Rulership and Ruler's Sites in 3<sup>rd</sup>–10<sup>th</sup>-century Scandinavia
- 11:45 Mats Roslund, The key to Uppåckra – a domain ready for new narratives
- 12:15 -14:00 *Lunch break*

### **Lectures: Who were they? Narrating origin and identity I** (Chair: John Hines)

- 14:00 Adam Cieśliński, Zur Herkunftsfrage der Goten im südlichen Ostseeraum um die Jahrtausendwende – Mythen und Hypothesen
- 14:30 Ludwig Rübekel, Southern or Saxon? The meaning of areality and ethnicity as labels for runic inscriptions
- 15:00 Rica Annaert, Funerary practices in the transformation period between the late Roman and early medieval period in the periphery of Northern Francia
- 15:30 – 15:50 *Coffee*

### **Lectures: Who were they? Narrating origin and identity II** (Chair: Rica Annaert)

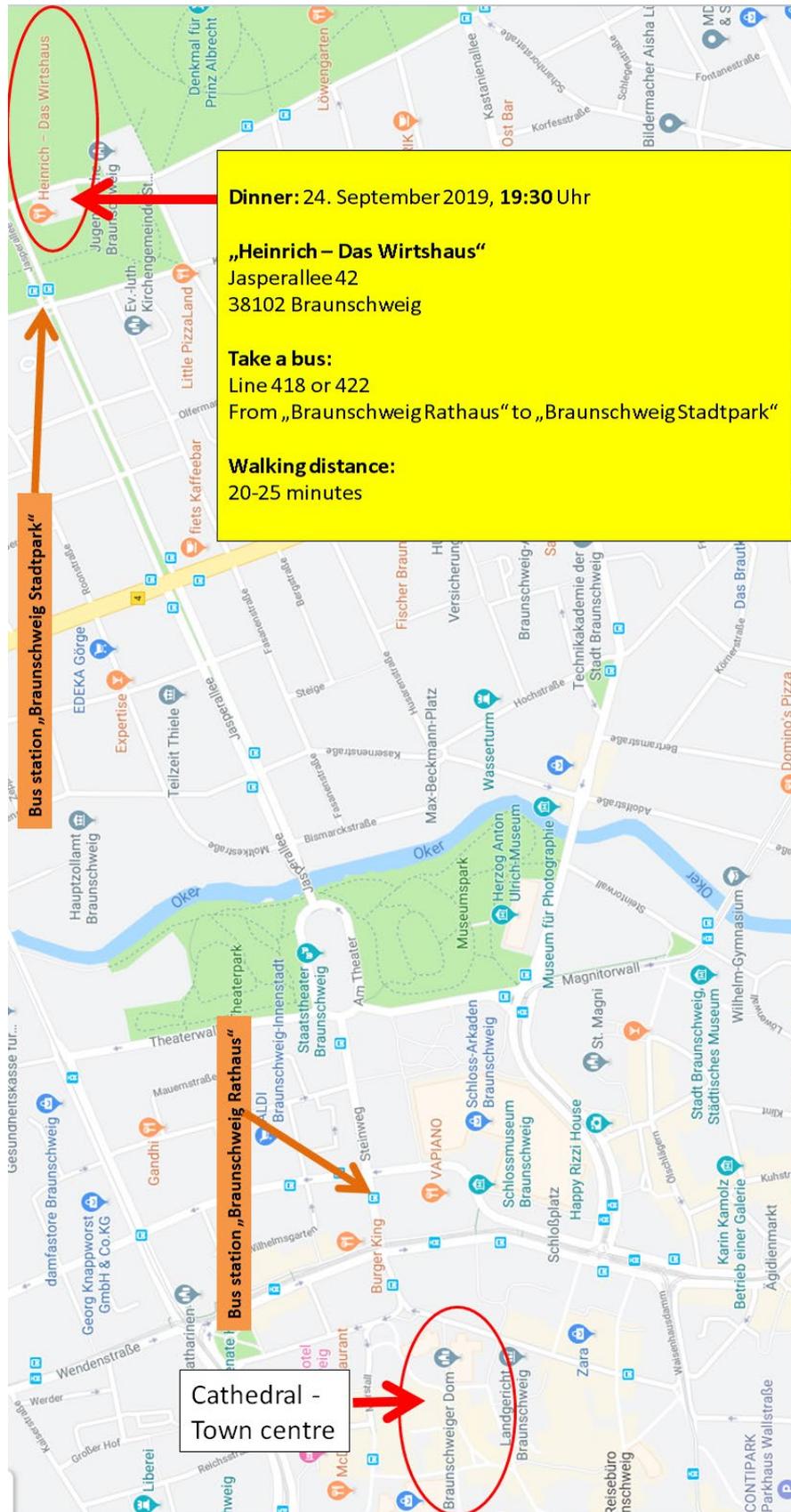
- 15:50 Bente Majchczack, A new light on the early North Frisians – Results on Early Medieval trading sites on the islands of Föhr and Sylt (Germany)
- 16:20 Martin Segschneider, The deconstruction of a narrative – or still a story to tell? Bits and pieces from looted graves on the island of Amrum
- 16:50 Martina-Johanna Brather, Brandenburg – In der Mitte und “... in the middle of nowhere...”

### **19:30 Conference Dinner / Festliches Abendessen**

**Venue:** „Heinrich - Das Wirtshaus“, Jasperallee 42, 38102 Braunschweig



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**Mittwoch, 25. September 2019**

**Venue/Veranstaltungsort:**

Theologisches Zentrum/Evangelische Akademie Abt Jerusalem  
Alter Zeughof 1  
38100 Braunschweig

**Lectures: Reading icons and patterns - reflections and projects (Chair: Adam Cieśliński)**

- 09:00 Michael Neiß, Between narrative and symbol – Reflections on Scandinavian Animal Art
- 09:30 Sigmund Oehrl and Michael Fergusson, Project presentation: Ancient images 2.0. A digital edition of the Gotlandic picture stones
- 10:00 Melanie Augstein, “Gewaltsam zerbrochen oder verbogen ...” – Manipulationen von Grabbeigaben als Elemente komplexen Ritualgeschehens?
- 10:30 Stuart Brookes, Sue Harrington and Sarah Semple, Revisualising Death and Data
- 11:00-11:20 *Coffee*

**Lectures: Reading icons and patterns - reflections and projects (Chair: Per Ethelberg)**

- 11:20 Katrine Balsgaard Juul and Charlotta Lindblom, Investigating new narratives of settlements in the greater Jelling area in the First Millennium
- 11:50 Johan Hoorne, Ewoud Deschepper, Nele Heynssens and Dries Tys, New narratives for rural settlements in northern Francia. The contribution of a recent large-scale excavation in early medieval Maalte (near Ghent, Belgium)
- 12:20 Ewoud Deschepper, Between Clovis and the Counts of Flanders: settlement and agriculture in the North Sea-Scheldt region
- \*
- 12:50 Joscha Gretzinger, Eveline Altena, Luka Papac, Johannes Krause, Duncan Sayer and Stephan Schiffels, The Anglo-Saxon migration and formation of the early English gene pool
- 13:15 Ende des Symposions**



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### Abstracts

*Babette Ludowici,*

#### **“What’s in a name?” - Eine neue Geschichte der alten Sachsen**

„Sachsen“ ist heute ein Name für sehr verschiedene Gruppen. Das gilt aber auch für den Namen „Saxones“, den die schriftliche Überlieferung aus dem 1. Jahrtausend nennt. Zwischen 1800 und 1950 wurde in Deutschland ein historisches Narrativ entwickelt, dass diese „alten Sachsen“ als Angehörige eines germanischen „Volkes“ betrachtet, das als eine „überzeitlich existente Einheit“ (Mischa Meier) agiert. Die bekannte Erzählung vom „Stammesverband der Sachsen“, der in Raum und Zeit expandiert, erzählt zugleich die Geschichte Nordwestdeutschlands im 1. Jahrtausend. Archäologische Forschungen und Entdeckungen, aber auch moderne Perspektiven in der Mediävistik haben zwischenzeitlich zu grundlegend neuen Erkenntnissen über das damalige Geschehen in diesem Raum geführt. Sie stellen viele vermeintliche Gewissheiten über die „alten Sachsen“ in Frage – und erlauben den Entwurf einer neuen Erzählung.

*Iris Aufderhaar*

#### **Der Zentralplatz in der Region Sievern und das Land Wursten von der Zeitenwende bis in das 6. Jh. n. Chr.**

Zu Beginn seiner „Res gestae Saxonicae“ berichtet Widukind von Corvey, wie die Sachsen mit Booten und Schiffen in ihren späteren Einflussbereich gelangten und dort mit Hilfe einer List das Land erstritten. Als Schauplatz dieses Geschehens nannte Widukind den Ort Hadeln. Der Gegend um die heutige Ortschaft Sievern im Elbe-Weser-Dreieck wird in der archäologischen Forschung bereits seit längerer Zeit eine Sonderstellung in der Siedlungsentwicklung Nordwestdeutschland eingeräumt. Dazu trugen neben einer einzigartigen Verdichtung von Fundplätzen und drei engräumig beieinanderliegenden Befestigungsanlagen insbesondere eine Anzahl von Goldfunden bei. Diese umfassen neben fünf geösten Solidi auch insgesamt 14 völkerwanderungszeitliche Goldbrakteaten und einen Halsreif, dessen Formgebung und Verzierung südkandinavischen Funden entspricht. Die Goldfunde von Sievern wurden 1970 eingehend von Karl Hauck behandelt. Dabei legte er den ersten umfassenden Versuch einer ikonografischen und religionsgeschichtlichen Deutung der Brakteaten-

bilder vor und stellte die Sieverner Goldfunde in Beziehung zu Widukinds Handlerner Landnahme-saga. In den letzten zwei Jahrzehnten wurden die Forschungen zur Bedeutung des Raumes Sievern unter der Federführung des Niedersächsischen Institutes für historische Küstenforschung intensiviert. Im Rahmen ihres Dissertationsprojektes unterzog die Referentin die Ringwallanlagen, Deponierungen, unbefestigten Siedlungen und Gräberfelder sowie Hinweisen auf die landwirtschaftliche Nutzung im Geestbereich um Sievern und in der Marsch des Landes Wursten einer umfassenden Analyse, um die maßgeblichen Eckpunkte zur Besiedlungsgeschichte und die strukturelle Entwicklung der Region herauszuarbeiten. Dieser neue Blickwinkel auf die Region Sievern wird im Rahmen des Vortrages zusammenfassend vorgestellt werden.

*Hauke Jöns*

#### **LALIA and the „völkerwanderungszeitliche Besiedlungslücke“ in Northern Germany**

Behind the background of the discussion of the influence of the Late Antique Little Ice Age (LALIA) to changes of the social concepts in Scandinavia during the migration period, also the reasons for the well-known „völkerwanderungszeitliche Besiedlungslücke“ during the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 7<sup>th</sup> century in the North-German coastal areas needs a new evaluation. Especially the question if also in this area the effects of LALIA might have been so strong, that the communities left their homelands and migrated shall be discussed. Therefore, the paper will focus on the available archaeological and palaeobotanical sources that indicate not only the abandonment of settlements and graveyards in that period but also the expansion of forests to former farmland. In addition, also recently published climate models will be analysed, that indicate also climatically changes at that time for Northern Germany. In addition, the question will be discussed to which extent also news about the catastrophic effects LALIA had in other parts of the world might have influenced the activities of the North German communities.

*Vera Brieske und Christoph Grünewald*

#### **Das Kreuz mit dem Kreuz – vorkarolingische Gegenstände mit christlicher Ornamentik in Westfalen**

Der Topos, erst Karl der Große habe im Rahmen und in Folge der Sachsenkriege (772–804) die als



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heidnische Sachsen bezeichneten Menschen in Westfalen zum Christentum bekehrt, hat die archäologische Frühgeschichtsforschung in Westfalen lange bestimmt: Christliche Symbole wie zum Beispiel Kreuzdarstellungen schienen folglich vor dem Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts nicht denkbar, sodass viele als Einzelfunde geborgene Schmuckstücke mit Kreuzdarstellung mit einem entsprechenden *terminus post quem* datiert wurden.

Mithilfe einiger geschlossener Befunde, aber vor allem durch stilistische Vergleiche konnte jetzt für zahlreiche dieser Objekte mit christlichen Motiven eine Entstehung und Nutzung bereits in der Merowingerzeit nachgewiesen werden. Zumindest der westfälischen Elite war das Christentum demnach bereits seit dem 6. Jahrhundert bekannt; entsprechende Symbole konnten offen und gefahrlos gezeigt werden. Durch einen kürzlich entdeckten Befund konnte sogar nachgewiesen werden, dass in Dülmen bereits vor Beginn der Sachsenkriege Glocken für ein sakrales Gebäude gegossen wurden. Offenbar bestand hier schon spätestens in der Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts eine Kirche, die ein das Christentum akzeptierendes Umfeld voraussetzt.

Schon Missionare von den britischen Inseln wie die beiden Hwalde oder Suitbert, die um 700 in einigen Regionen Westfalens predigten, besaßen Unterstützer in den Westfalen, einflussreiche Familien, die bereits lange mit dem Christentum verbunden oder wenigstens vertraut waren. Das alte – durch die fränkische Geschichtsschreibung vermittelte – Narrativ der widerspenstigen Heiden in Westfalen, die erst von Karl dem Großen bezwungen werden konnten, beginnt sich aufzulösen; die Funde erzählen eine ganz neue Geschichte.

*Daniel Nösler*

### **Das Gold des Kaisers: Ein Goldmultiplum von der Niederelbe**

Im Umfeld prähistorischer Grabhügel bei Fredenbeck im Landkreis Stade wurde durch einen ehrenamtlichen Sondengänger ein außergewöhnlicher Fund entdeckt: ein sogenanntes Multiplum des Kaisers Constans, eine einzigartige römische Goldmünze, die 342/343 in Siscia geprägt worden ist. Multipla sind besonders kostbare und schwere Prägungen, die nur zu besonderen Anlässen herausgegeben und durch die römischen Kaiser im Rahmen feierlicher und besonderer Zeremonien an herausgehobene Persönlichkeiten überreicht wurden. Es handelte sich dabei um einen Kreis von

Personen, auf deren Loyalität der Herrscher in besonderem Maße angewiesen war: höchste Würdenträger, Kommandanten der römischen Streitkräfte und kaiserliche Leibwächter. Sie bekamen für ihre Verdienste anlässlich der Inthronisation eines neuen Kaisers, eines Thronjubiläums, vor und nach Feldzügen oder anderer wichtiger Ereignisse ein Multiplum verliehen. Auch befreundete germanische Herrscher konnten mit den kaiserlichen Großmünzen ausgezeichnet werden.

Goldmultipla wurden im Gebiet außerhalb der ehemaligen römischen Reichsgrenzen bislang nur äußerst selten gefunden. Sie waren im freien Germanien besondere Statussymbole, mit denen germanische Herrscher ihre Macht legitimierten. In meinem Vortrag werde ich die bisherigen Forschungen zur Bedeutung des Multiplums sowie seiner regionalen und überregionalen Einordnung vorstellen. Ein Fokus liegt dabei auf der Auswertung weiterer Goldfunde des 4./5. Jahrhunderts aus dem Umfeld des Fundortes.

*Christina Peek und Annette Siegmüller*

### **Fryske frijheid? Die Siedlungskammer von Dunum (Ostfriesland) im Frühmittelalter**

Das zwischen 1967 und 1971 fast vollständig erfasste birituelle Gräberfeld von Dunum in Ostfriesland befindet sich im Zentrum einer sich als Landzunge in die feuchten Niederungen hinstreckenden Siedlungskammer. Im ersten Jahrtausend grenzten die Ausläufer der weit ins Land hineinragenden Harlebucht unmittelbar bis an das Areal heran. Der wohl spätestens in der Mitte des 7. Jahrhunderts angelegte Friedhof diente annähernd drei Jahrhunderte als Bestattungsplatz. Nach seiner Aufgabe im 10. Jahrhundert wurde das gesamte Areal zeitnah mit Plaggenesch überdeckt und vermutlich unmittelbar danach als Ackerland bewirtschaftet. Gleichzeitig wurden auch die den Keramikfunden nach in der 2. Hälfte des 8. Jahrhunderts gegründeten Siedlungsplätze aufgegeben und von Plaggenesch überlagert. Die vielfältigen Grabbefunde und verschiedenen Beigaben in den annähernd 800 Bestattungen spiegeln eine Gesellschaft, welche die seit der Völkerwanderungszeit weitgehend unbesiedelte Region erneut in Besitz nahm.

Dem Ausgräber zu Folge wurden auf dem Gräberfeld die „friesischen“ Bewohner dieser Ansiedlungen in fünf vermeintlich deutlich voneinander abgegrenzten Friedhofsbereichen bestattet. Wenige Gräber mit vergleichsweise umfangreichen

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Beigabenensembles werden dabei in direkter Nähe zu den „Adelsgräbern“ des 8. Jh. gesehen, wie sie unter anderem von Frauke Stein beschrieben wurden. Der Ausgräber ordnet die im Gräberfeld bestattende Bevölkerung mehrheitlich einer mittleren sozialen Schicht „freier Bauern“ zu, die am überregionalen Handel partizipierte und eventuell mit den von Detlev Ellmers propagierten „landsässigen Wanderhändlern“ gleichzusetzen ist. Im Rahmen eines seit 2015 von der DFG geförderten Projektes sollen diese in der archäologischen Forschung vielfach aufgegriffenen Topoi umfassend untersucht werden. Die vollständige, detaillierte Erfassung aller Befunde und Funde des Gräberfeldes, anthropologische Analysen und umfassende landschafts- und siedlungsarchäologische Studien sollen fundierte Erkenntnisse zur sozialen Gliederung, zur kulturellen Orientierung und zur wirtschaftlichen Ausrichtung der in der Siedlungskammer von Dunum lebenden Bevölkerung erbringen. Dabei sind die anthropologischen und die landschaftsarchäologischen Untersuchungen sowie die Katalogaufnahme der Bestattungen bereits abgeschlossen, so dass erste Aussagen zur Siedlungsstruktur, zur Wirtschaftsweise und zum Gesundheitszustand der Menschen, aber auch hinsichtlich des siedlungsparallel ablaufenden Landschaftswandels getroffen werden können. In dem Vortrag werden diese aktuellen Ergebnisse des Forschungsvorhabens vorgestellt und zur Diskussion gestellt.

*Anna Flückiger*

### **Archaeological Exhibitions and the Responsibilities of Storytelling: A Case Study on the Early Middle Ages**

In German-speaking archaeology, the recent theoretical debate has recently led to challenge several long-standing narratives – centering amongst others on peoples, mobility or violence. Implementing these changing narratives within exhibition concepts proves to be a tightrope walk. Drawing from exhibitions and exhibition catalogues from the last few decades, this paper will highlight the use, role, and problematics of these narratives within early medieval archaeology. In order to find productive ways forward, I will present some ideas and creative examples on how to confront these problems and how to present complex narratives to the public.

*Kelvin Wilson*

### **Behind the Past is the Present**

In archaeological reconstruction art, or in German: ‘Lebensbildern’, restoring the appearance of past lives is merely a basic technique. Using those images to shape a narrative, is what the artist really aims for. The visual retelling of our distant past is, after all, essentially an art.

The nine portraits made for the Saxones exhibition are each very deliberate constructions. They might appeal to different people in different ways, yet the artist and curator built them on very precise narratives. Underlying the images are themes and references of an often unusual nature. Even the smallest details act out grand ideas.

In this presentation the artist will strip back the layers of paint to reveal the rich canvas of ideas beneath.

*Sam Lucy*

### **Anglo-Saxon Narratives: contesting the past in Britain, 1850-2019**

Archaeology has played a key role in contested narratives of the British past, but particularly so since the mid nineteenth century and the birth of the discipline in the UK. This paper will highlight the major shifts that have occurred in the story of the 'Origins of the English' and explore the ways in which interpretative frameworks have both enabled and challenged these versions of the past.

*Chris Scull and Tom Williamson*

### **Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia: New Narratives of Power, Polity and Territory in Early England**

Conventional narratives of post-Roman south-east England focus on ‘post-collapse resurgence’, emphasising the impacts of migration from the Continent and the re-emergence of socio-political hierarchies and economic complexity after the disintegration of the Roman imperial administration. The ‘long eighth century’ (AD 680–820) is seen as the key period for transformations of production, exchange and social relations that consolidated the power of regional rulers: the development of a monetised economy, commercial bulk trade and incipient taxation, intensification of agricultural production and economic specialisation, and the beginnings of a shift from extensive lordship to proto-manorial estates.



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The archaeology of the recently-discovered 5<sup>th</sup>- to 8<sup>th</sup>-century elite centre at Rendlesham, however, suggests that these narratives underestimate economic and administrative specialisation in the 5<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries. It indicates that significant socio-political differentiation existed earlier than current models would allow, and that the importance and longevity of the early-medieval central place may have been partly due to its character under the late Roman Empire. This has profound implications for understanding early-medieval identities and political authority in south-east England, and for broader models of developing socio-economic complexity and state-formation around the North Sea.

This paper presents the preliminary conclusions of a multi-disciplinary approach to modelling the territory and connections of the central place at Rendlesham, undertaken as part of the project Lordship and Landscape in East Anglia CE 400– 800, funded by the Leverhulme Trust. These are then considered against the regional contexts to interrogate current models of socio-political development and pathways to territorial lordship. Is it possible to identify other centres of power, and if so might these represent local configurations of rulership from which a regional hegemony – the East Anglian kingdom – was established in the later 6<sup>th</sup> century?

*Dirk Steinforth*

### **The early Vikings in the Irish Sea reconsidered – a preliminary report**

Countless entries in the chronicles leave no doubt that Scandinavians sailed into the Irish Sea very early in what was to be called the Viking Age, plundering coastal monasteries in Ireland as early as 795, and that they settled there permanently by the 840s and founded their own kingdoms, such as Dublin. Archaeological finds attest to their presence in Ireland by at least the middle of the ninth century. Regarding other shores, our information is much less comprehensive: There are no documentary sources to tell the story during most of the ninth century in places such as the Isle of Man or the coasts of north-west England (especially of Cumbria and Lancashire), and the date of archaeological finds is often ambiguous.

For a long time, it was considered virtually certain that both territories only were visited by Vikings in the very late ninth or even the early tenth centuries, when the Vikings in Dublin came under

pressure, which led to their expulsion from the town in 902. In a recent study, I concluded that contrary to this view, the Isle of Man was conquered and settled earlier than that, about 870, and I am now in the process of reviewing the available evidence – old and new – and reconsidering old paradigms to answer the question whether the common view, that Vikings came to the eastern coasts of the Irish Sea only about AD 900, is indeed reasonable and in accordance with facts and circumstantial evidence, or must be challenged in favour of an earlier date. With the Dublin Viking kings' fleets active in the Irish Sea (and beyond) by the later 860s, the earliest beginnings of a Scandinavian kingdom in York after 866, and a date of conquest about 870 already established for the Isle of Man, a similar, early date must be regarded a distinct possibility – or indeed a probability. This paper is going to present a preliminary report of an ongoing research project reconsidering the early Viking Age on the eastern shores of the Irish Sea.

*Dagfinn Skre*

### **Rulership and Ruler's Sites in 3<sup>rd</sup>–10<sup>th</sup>-century Scandinavia**

This discussion of the shifting types of rulership and polities in 1st-millennium Scandinavia is based on evidence on the upper echelon of 'central places', those that may arguably be regarded as ruler's sites, as well as on written evidence, primarily the Old English poem *Beowulf* and the Old Norse skaldic poem *Ynglingatal*.

The Roman expansion into continental Europe amplified interaction between Germanic peoples as well as with the Roman Empire, mainly through military campaigns and trade. The intensified mobility triggered deep cultural and societal integration processes within 2<sup>nd</sup> to mid-6<sup>th</sup>-century Germanic Europe. This interaction and integration is evident in martial proficiency and in the rise of a new type of leaders, the *dróttinn* (army commanders), among many Germanic peoples. Challenging the authority of tribal rulers, the *kindins* and *þiudans*, some of the *dróttinn* became *de facto* rulers.

In southern and middle Scandinavia, where a southern and a northern economic zone overlap, some *dróttinn* of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century established economic and political centres that also served as ritual and communal assembly sites. Sites such as Uppåkra, Gudme, Helgö, Åker and Avaldsnes

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appear to have constituted the nodes where the dróttinn's networks into the two economic zones intersected. Commodities obtained through one network were conveyed into the other, and at the sites, raw materials were worked into commodities. At the core of each site was the residence and hall of the dróttinn; they were ruler's sites.

In the decades around AD 500, royal lineages were initiated in several Germanic polities, the Merovingians the most prominent among them. In contemporary Scandinavia, the Skjöldungar, the Skilfingar, and other royal lineages were initiated. In the same period, the number of tribes was reduced from the plethora of the 1<sup>st</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries to predominantly three: the Danir, the Svíar, and the Norðmenn. The 6<sup>th</sup> century also saw the downfall of several ruler's sites and the emergence of new such sites. It is suggested that these three parallel developments were related to the introduction of kingship and the establishment of kingdoms.

Following the downfall of southern long-distance networks and societal and climatic upheaval in late 6<sup>th</sup> to early 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, Scandinavia became less economically and culturally connected to the west and south. In the same period, most continental and British kingdoms were christianised. No longer deeply integrated with the latter, Scandinavian kingship came to follow its own trajectory. Within the pagan universe, the heroic warrior ethos of the past was developed and refined, only to recur overseas in the 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries, embodied in seaborne warrior bands. After a turbulent two centuries, Scandinavia was reintegrated among what was now the west-European normality: the Christian kingdoms.

*Mats Roslund*

### **The key to Uppåkra – a domain ready for new narratives**

During the last five years, activities concerning Uppåkra have been directed towards three objectives. An infrastructural online based facility for further research is launched (The Key to Uppåkra), cooperation with contract archaeology investigating sites surrounding the central place has put it into a landscape perspective, and the continuation of seminar excavations have expanded the discussions on functional zones. Dr Manuel Gabler's dissertation analysing geophysical observations at the site has contributed greatly to the understanding of the enigmatic settlement structure.

Scientific analyses on osteological sources, archaeobotanical remains and three gold foil figures (guldgubbar) have enhanced our knowledge. In this lecture, an assessment of the latest interpretations will be presented, as well as the plans for further research.

*Adam Cieśliński*

### **Zur Herkunftsfrage der Goten im südlichen Ostseeraum um die Jahrtausendwende – Mythen und Hypothesen**

Die Goten gehören zu den bekanntesten germanischen Völkern des späten Altertums, der Völkerwanderungszeit und des Frühen Mittelalters. Ihre Geschichte ist verhältnismäßig gut aus Schriftquellen bekannt, besonders ab dem 3. Jahrhundert, als Goten sich in der Nähe der römischen Grenzen angesiedelt haben. Nach einer sehr viel späteren Überlieferung durch Jordanes aus der ersten Hälfte des 6. Jhs., die auf Cassiodor fußt (Getica IV, 25–26), sollen die Goten von der Insel Scandza, also aus Skandinavien, stammen.

Diese territorial und chronologisch unpräzise Information, die aus der mündlichen Tradition des Stammes hergeleitet werden kann, wird seit Jahren von Historikern sowie Sprachwissenschaftlern untersucht, dominierte aber auch wesentlich die archäologische Forschung. In der Fachliteratur wurde die These der skandinavischen Herkunft der Goten entweder akzeptiert, sehr oft ohne kritische Analyse, oder vollständig abgelehnt – im letzteren Fall wurde die Überlieferung von Jordanes als Topos betrachtet. Im Referat werden die wichtigsten Diskussionen über die Herkunftsfrage der Goten im südlichen Ostseeraum um die Jahrtausendwende zusammengefasst sowie einige Elemente der materiellen und geistigen Kultur mit skandinavischen Bezügen, wie z. B. Steinkreise, präsentiert.

*Ludwig Rübekel*

### **Southern or Saxon? The meaning of areality and ethnicity as labels for runic inscriptions**

How to apply labels such as Saxon, Frisian or Frankish to linguistic material of the Migration Period is a critical issue in historical linguistics as well as in neighbouring disciplines. The specific problem in philology and language history is that a term such as 'Saxon' refers to a language that does not appear before the ninth century. Therefore, to identify a language of earlier times as 'Saxon' can

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only be done on the basis of language-external criteria, such as, an ethno-historical label 'Saxon' applied by classical authors and its localisation in the same geographical area. This approach sometimes conflicts with the fact that the characteristics of the linguistic material in question often do not coincide with the later corpus languages. This becomes even more problematic on the background of a research history, which relied on a rigid family tree model and tried to resolve potential problems by postulating intermediate diachronic stages. After all, larger reconstructed units like West Germanic, North-West Germanic or North-Sea Germanic themselves do not do justice to the complex reality of language variation and change. My paper will address these issues on the basis of a group of runic inscriptions from the North Sea area dating from around AD 400 including the Weser bones and the Bergakker scabbard mount. Runic inscriptions sometimes offer new perspectives of interpretation since their language is meaningful to linguistics – as is the object carrying the inscriptions for archaeologists. As archaeologists try to link those objects to other runic or non-runic artefacts in order to embed them in a wider context, linguists try to find formal, mostly etymological correspondences in order to locate the inscriptions in time and place. Starting from a linguistic analysis of the inscriptions, this paper explores in how far labels like 'Saxon' can be applied to this material. Going beyond traditional linguistic approaches, it will examine the sociopragmatic relationship between objects, inscriptions and societies along the North Sea.

*Rica Annaert*

### **Funerary practices in the transformation period between the late Roman and early medieval period in the periphery of Northern Francia**

Until recently the rich material culture from the Merovingian cemeteries in Francia were not fully understood as researchers remained under the influence of prevailing paradigms. Today, instead of believing in a forced and abrupt imposed Germanic culture as a result of mass migrations in a depopulated area, new *longue durée* models are developed based on the research of some recently excavated cemeteries. This paper will demonstrate how grave depositions and a variety in funerary practices give us a good picture of the economic position and social dynamics of the early medieval

rural communities in the northern peripheral regions of Francia.

The research results do not deny a decrease in population in the northern periphery of Germania Secunda after the 3<sup>rd</sup>-century crisis, but in some regions there seems to be a continuity in habitation during the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. This habitation is often characterized by a merged population consisting of the remained Gallo-Roman inhabitants and families of 'Germanic' *laeti* and *foederati*. The numbers of 5<sup>th</sup>- and 6<sup>th</sup>-century graves point to an increase of the population in Northern Francia. Locally some new transrhenean settler families intermingled with the local – already mixed – inhabitants. In this period this rural communities clearly established a new identity, resulting in the so called Frankish culture. Later on during the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD new social changes can be noticed: the rural almost egalitarian population is shifting towards a territorial based class society. Moreover, in this northern periphery of the Merovingian kingdom, we can see that Christianization only achieved success during the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> centuries.

*Bente Majchczack*

### **A new light on the early North Frisians – Results on Early Medieval trading sites on the islands of Föhr and Sylt (Germany)**

During the recent years, the North Sea Harbour Project investigated Early Medieval settlement sites (7<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century) on the North Frisian island of Föhr (Germany) and analyzed findings from the neighboring island of Sylt. The extensive fieldwork combined geophysical and geoarchaeological surveys as well as archaeological excavations to uncover the harbor locations as well as the settlement sites. The paper presents results from the harbor and trading sites of Nieblum, Goting and Witsum on the island of Föhr and Tinum and Wenningstedt on Sylt. The sites are usually located in small inlets along the edge of the high pleistocene cores of the islands with access to the low marshlands, the beaches or tidal creeks. The geoarchaeological surveys show a clear maritime impact and navigability of the waterways, providing natural harbors for the settlements. The islands feature impressive ring forts, housing a military elite and providing security and control for the trading sites. The prospections and excavations revealed a distinctive settlement pattern dominated by pit houses with traces of craft activities such



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as glass and amber working and a large-scale textile production. Remains from smithing workshops prove the construction or repair of boats. Numerous finds of imported goods from the core Frisian area, the Frankish empire and Scandinavia indicate a strong connection to the cross-regional trade routes along the North Sea coasts. Especially the analysis of glass objects shows that the North Frisian islands are strongly embedded in the North Sea trade networks of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century with connections towards the Rhineland as well as the important emporium of Ribe (South Denmark). The results of the North Sea harbor project provide a new view on the narrative of the early North Frisian history. It found indications for the first settlers in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, an economic boom in the 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> century and transformations of the 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century, when the settlement landscape changes completely while the islands are still strongly involved in the North Sea networks.

*Martin Segsneider*

### **The deconstruction of a narrative – or still a story to tell? Bits and pieces from looted graves on the island of Amrum**

In the 1970s, the looting of migration-period urn graves, embedded in a bronze-age grave mound, occurred in the Dunes of the North Frisian Island Amrum. The looter smashed the urns on the ground in order to find precious metals, and then just left them behind. After detecting the disaster, volunteers collected all the bits and pieces as accurately as possible, not least by sieving the dispersed former urn contents. Regrettably, it was not possible to reconstruct grave entities, as the disturbance of the graves by the looter had been too severe. One might argue, therefore, that the recovered finds have lost their historical value, or in other words, their narrative potential. However, the scattered and fragmented finds still have a variety of short stories to tell. They can tell us about e.g. pottery styles, cultural connections, trade relationships, burial rituals and grave goods like miniature tools - information, which is still worth revealing.

*Martina-Johanna Brather*

### **Brandenburg – In der Mitte und “... in the middle of nowhere ...”**

Für das heutige Bundesland Brandenburg gibt es, anders als beispielsweise für das Land Niedersachsen, keinen auf eine „germanische Zeit“ oder „Germanische Stämme“ zurückgreifenden Gründungsmythos. Ein wesentlicher Grund dafür ist das weitgehende Fehlen archäologischer Quellen aus dem 7. Jh. n. Chr. Damit fehlen bisher eindeutige Belege für eine bis in die ersten nachchristlichen Jahrhunderte, also in die „Germanenzeit“, zurückreichende Besiedlungskontinuität. Eine solche ist erst ab dem 8. Jh. n. Chr. mit Siedlungen sicher zu fassen, die kulturell dem slawischen Milieu zuzuweisen sind. Der Bezug auf eine gemeinsame slawische Wurzel mit dem Zweck einer Identitätsbildung erfolgt in Brandenburg aber aus historischen wie auch politischen Gründen so gut wie nicht.

Möglicherweise wird es in Zukunft gelingen, in Brandenburg die Siedlungslücke des 7. Jahrhunderts zu füllen. Doch auch dann dürfte es schwierig werden, mit Hilfe der archäologischen Quellen der beiden vorangehenden Jahrhunderte (in Brandenburg gemeinhin als Völkerwanderungszeit bezeichnet) ein griffiges und in sich konsistentes Narrativ zu entwickeln, denn auch die Befundlage für diesen Zeitraum ist nach wie vor schütter. Dies gilt insbesondere für die Zeit ab der Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts. Allerdings ist in jüngster Zeit die Zahl von völkerwanderungszeitlichen Detektorfunden immens angewachsen. Und diese ergänzen und differenzieren das bisher recht skizzenhafte Bild erheblich. So wird in den Funden die Anwesenheit einer Elite bis in die zweite Hälfte des 6. Jahrhunderts erkennbar, die offenbar nicht nur überregional bestens vernetzt und in der Lage war, kulturelle Einflüsse aus benachbarten Regionen bis hin zum reiternomadischen Milieu aufzugreifen, sondern diese teilweise auch in eigene Formensprache übersetzte. Letzteres gilt insbesondere für Formen der zweiten Hälfte des 5. und ersten Hälfte des 6. Jahrhunderts.

Daraus jedoch eine eigene „archäologische Kultur“ generieren und diese vielleicht noch mit einer historisch überlieferten Bevölkerungsgruppe in Verbindung bringen zu wollen, würde das vorliegende Material deutlich überstrapazieren. Denn nach wie vor ist der Befundkontext (Grab/Siedlung/Hort?) fast aller Detektorfunde Brandenburgs unbekannt. Nachgrabungen an Ort und Stelle haben bisher so gut wie nie Befunde

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ergeben, wofür nicht immer landwirtschaftliche Aktivitäten und natürliche Vorgänge verantwortlich gemacht werden können.

Auch bis auf weiteres offen bleiben muss angesichts der sehr geringen Zahl an Funden, ob und wie weit die Region ab der Mitte/zweiten Hälfte des 6. Jahrhunderts in die neuen großen Machtblöcke, insbesondere in den fränkischen Machtbereich, eingegliedert gewesen ist. Es ist zwar wahrscheinlich, dass insbesondere für das geringe Fundmaterial aus dieser Zeit ein massiver Bevölkerungsrückgang verantwortlich ist. Archäobotanische Untersuchungen zeichnen eine starke Wiederbewaldung während der Völkerwanderungszeit nach. Keinesfalls aber lässt es das vorliegende archäologische Quellenmaterial derzeit zu, den Bevölkerungsrückgang unmittelbar auf konkrete historische Ereignisse und daraus resultierende Wanderungsbewegungen zurück zu führen – auch wenn solche Narrative immer wieder einmal für einzelne Fundkomplexe ins Spiel gebracht werden.

*Michael Neiß*

### **Between narrative and symbol – Reflections on Scandinavian Animal Art**

Pictorial art on pre-historic objects is a special kind of source material. Pictures do not hover in thin air, but are often the product of an extensive creation process that demanded thought, time and skill. Therefore it seems reasonable to assume that those images were created to convey a message. Sometimes, people created objects with the primary intent to carry images (as with picture stones). Yet, more often, images were placed on utility items. The recurring connection between Animal Art and functional objects lead scholars to regard it as meaningless décor. But a few decades ago, archaeologists opened up to the idea that Animal Art might express something more. Interestingly, this renewed interest arose almost simultaneously within research networks that differed in terms of theory, method and – on occasion – publishing language. One group consisted of archaeologists who deciphered narratives and symbols from different objects with the aid of well established methods from art history. The other group consisted of postprocessual archaeologists who focused on the symbolic function of Animal Art and its relevance to prehistoric ideologies. In recent years, a synthesis of these research traditions has been in progress.

As a general tendency, the symbolic function of Animal Art has been attracting much attention. In my paper, I intend to reflect on how to identify narrative compositions within Animal Art and how to interpret these scenes.

*Sigmund Oehrl and Michael Fergusson*

### **Project presentation: Ancient images 2.0. A digital edition of the Gotlandic picture stones**

The Gotlandic picture stones are iconic. They are among the internationally most famous historical monuments from Sweden. These exceptional memorial stones, conventionally dated to about AD 400-1100, are covered with images of humans, animals, monsters, carriages, ships, and geometrical figures. They are a unique source for studies of male and female dress, weapons, riding techniques, wagons and ships as well as Old Norse myths and early Christianity.

Although much research on the Gotlandic picture stones has been carried out since the early 1940s, most of this research, by necessity, has been based on Sune Lindqvist's edition "Gotlands Bildsteine". However, 75 years after the publication of this book it is quite clear that Lindqvist's edition is outdated, and it is outdated for two reasons. Firstly, his edition only includes 240 picture stones, which were the number of monuments known in the early 1940s. Today, about 570 picture stones and fragments of picture stones are known. Consequently, a new edition of all the Gotlandic picture stones is much needed. Secondly, all interpretations of the published picture stones and their images have been based on Lindqvist's painted pictures, that is on the fundamental perception of the shallow carved lines by a single scholar. Although Lindqvist was an excellent specialist, his perceptions of the images are sometimes doubtful and have been challenged several times. Consequently, a new digital, more precise documentation of all the monuments is highly needed.

For these reasons, a new project has been started recently, financed by the Swedish Research Council, located at Stockholm University and Gotlands Fornsal Visby, in order to create a new digital edition of the entire material. The project has three major aims: 1.) Digitization of the entire corpus of Gotland's picture stones, applying the most advanced 2.5D and 3D recording methods available, combining differed technical approaches. 2.) Creating an interactive online edition of the picture stones, addressed to both the public and

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researchers. The edition will include images, digital data, original find contexts, chronology, and research history. 3.) New interpretations of the images based on the digital documentation as well as comparative studies of similar pictures and ornaments in Northern Europe and the Mediterranean world, as well as research on the stones' re-use in churches.

*Melanie Augstein*

### **“Gewaltsam zerbrochen oder verbogen ...” – Manipulationen von Grabbeigaben als Elemente komplexen Ritualgeschehens?**

Gräber werden in der Regel als materieller Niederschlag des sozialen Status und/oder biographischer Aspekte der oder des Verstorbenen verstanden, insbesondere bezogen auf Hierarchien, Herrschaft, Reichtum und Macht. Die Grabbeigaben spielen dabei – neben Parametern wie dem veranschlagten Arbeits- und Materialaufwand für die Grabkonstruktion – die zentrale Rolle. Bei der Rekonstruktion der Bedeutung von Grabbeigaben muss allerdings bedacht werden, dass die Objekte eines Ensembles weder alle dieselbe noch die jeweiligen Objekte nur eine einzige, fixe Bedeutung besitzen (müssen). Sie sind daher nicht zwingend direkt auf den Verstorbenen und seine Biographie bezogen.

Gräberfelder und Gräber sind Schauplätze differenzierten Handelns, das symbolischen und rituellen Rahmenbedingungen unterliegt. Die aktuelle Ritualforschung und -theorie stellt den performativen Aspekt von Ritualen heraus, bei dem auch Objekte eine wesentliche Bedeutung haben können. Wichtig ist nach diesem Verständnis die Rekonstruktion der Praktiken, in die sie eingebunden waren. An Objekten aus Gräbern nahezu aller ur- und frühgeschichtlichen Epochen lassen sich regelmäßig Spuren von Manipulationen – wie Zerstörung, Demontage, Inversion, Fragmentierung oder Splitting – ablesen.

Das gilt auch für die großen Urnengräberfelder des Niederelbegebietes. Trotz des vorherrschenden Bestattungsritus der Kremation lässt sich ein komplexer Umgang mit den Grabbeigaben nachzeichnen. In dem Vortrag werden das Spektrum der Manipulationen und die betroffenen Objektgruppen vorgestellt. In einem zweiten Schritt sollen die Beobachtungen in einen weiteren Kontext eingeordnet und die Interpretationslinien vorgestellt werden – denn Manipulationen an Grabbeigaben sind ein raum-zeitlich ubiquitär

fassbares Phänomen, das auch nicht auf Gräber beschränkt ist.

Versteht man Manipulationen an Grabbeigaben (und auch an den menschlichen Überresten) als Ausdruck ritueller und symbolischer Kommunikation, kann die überkommene Fokussierung auf Gräber als direkte Reflektionen von Status und Macht, mithin Hierarchien, aufgebrochen, zumindest erweitert werden, denn die Einbeziehung anderer Quellengruppen erlaubt Fragen nach dem Wandel im Umgang mit Dingen, nach der Gleichzeitigkeit und Abfolge von Praktiken und den Orten und Kontexten, an denen sie stattfanden – und damit nach der vielschichtigen und komplexen „Verwobenheit“ des Ritualen.

*Stuart Brookes, Sue Harrington  
and Sarah Semple*

### **Revisualising Death and Data**

Inhumation burials are recorded in Britain and Europe during excavations in a very standardised way, especially graves of early medieval date. Recent projects that have digitised these data have opened up the possibilities of interrogating burial practices in new and visually different ways. In this paper we will discuss some experimental approaches that we have undertaken, using the resources generated by the People and Place: Making of the Kingdom of Northumbria and the Beyond the Tribal Hidage projects. Working from digitised grave plans we re-examine issues such as burial orientation, body position, ‘empty’ spaces around the body, the categories of grave-goods interred with the deceased, and their positions in the burial tableau. We argue here that these factors enable us to define communal burial profiles and can facilitate the identification of group perceptions and actions in dealing with death.

*Katrine Balsgaard Juul and Charlotta Lindblom*

### **Investigating new narratives of settlements in the greater Jelling area in the First Millennium**

Since the 1980es, several archaeological excavations have been carried out in the greater Jelling area. Investigations such as Haughus, Hvesager, Syrenlunden, Rønnelunden and Grangård Allé revealed numerous houses and settlements from the First Millennium. According to the archaeological research the southern outskirts of modern Jelling was preferred for the settlements of the First Millennium. Although new knowledge about



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the greater Jelling area in the First Millennium AD still is being added, it is related to an overall narrative of that particular area and period of time. That narrative has not really changed for decades. In Danish archaeology, a limited number of classical sites such as Vorbasse was used to refine the Danish longhouse chronology in the early 1990s. For many years, that particular chronology has been used for the archaeological dating of new excavations. In recent years, this approach has been questioned in relation to regional differences. There is in fact a growing awareness of the challenges related to using only one long house chronology among Danish archaeologists. However, we still return to the well-known chronology and narrative presenting a uniform development of houses and settlements. Based on selected settlements in the greater Jelling area this paper discusses the need for adjusting the overall longhouse chronology according to regional similarities and differences. By doing so, we might reach a slightly different narrative of the First Millennium.

*Johan Hoorne, Ewoud Deschepper, Nele Heynssens and Dries Tys*

### **New narratives for rural settlements in northern Francia. The contribution of a recent large-scale excavation in early medieval Maalte (near Ghent, Belgium)**

Up to 2005, knowledge about early medieval rural occupation in sandy Flanders was limited due to the rather modest number of archaeologically known settlement sites and the restricted excavation-areas. By consequence questions regarding settlement size, settlement mobility and the duration of occupation, for example, were difficult to address.

Large-scale excavations in Maalte (near Ghent, in eastern Flanders) starting in 2007 offered the opportunity to study an early medieval settlement almost in its entirety. During multiple campaigns, a total of 45 hectares have been archaeologically examined with test trenching, of which 18,5 hectares have been (fully) excavated, in the context of redevelopment of the vast area. This brought to light an early medieval zone of occupation, with a surface of about three hectares. A total of nine houseplans, multiple outbuildings and 17 wells were excavated. These are grouped in several individual farmsteads. Based on the material culture and through dendrochronology,

these features date between the late 7<sup>th</sup> and early 9<sup>th</sup> century. The site of Maalte is unique for Flanders because of its sheer size, richness with regards for paleo-ecological data, and its refined chronology.

To be able to understand this site fully, a research grant has been awarded. This allows to reassess the settlement features and to better integrate the paleo-ecological and archaeological data, aiming to a more profound understanding of chronological transformations in settlement structure, landscape and agricultural economy. As such, the settlement of Maalte can become a true reference site for sandy Flanders, but moreover also adds to comparative settlement research in a wider North-Western European context.

*Ewoud Deschepper*

### **Between Clovis and the Counts of Flanders: settlement and agriculture in the North Sea-Scheldt region**

Early Medieval rural settlement archaeology has a quite short but nevertheless fruitful research history in the area between the North Sea and the river Scheldt (modern-day Western Flanders, Belgium). This has already led to important insights on rural society, mostly revolving around hand-made pottery and building traditions. As such, the existence of two different socio-cultural spheres on the level of peasant communities between the later 5<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> century is now widely accepted (i.a. Van Doorselaer and Rogge 1991; Hamerow, Hollevoet and Vince 1994; Hollevoet 2007; Deckers 2014; De Groote and De Clercq 2015; De Clercq 2017). More recent research was also able to link the disappearance of the coastal regional traditions during the 8<sup>th</sup> century to social and economic reorganisations, involving a growing importance of landowning and of a stricter social hierarchy (Deckers 2014; Deckers 2017).

In general, however, most of this academic attention, both on the socio-cultural as well as on the socio-economic level, was focused on the Merovingian period or foremost aimed at the coastal zone. For a long time, this could be attributed to the existence of a larger archaeological data set for this subregion. The growth of development-led archaeology in Flanders since ca. 2005 however, has had two important effects with regards to the study of Early Medieval settlement in the region. The first is that more Carolingian



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settlements are discovered in the coastal zone, the second that numerous settlements, Merovingian as well as Carolingian ones, have been excavated further inland, on Pleistocene soils. As such, it is now possible to establish a *longue durée* framework on the socio-economic and socio-cultural developments of rural society over the course of the whole Early Middle Ages (ca. AD 500 – AD 1000) in the North Sea-Scheldt region, taking into account house form, settlement structure, landscape and agrarian economy, while also comparing the coastal zone with the inland region. This paper will discuss the first insights and hypotheses coming from ongoing PhD-research on the rural Early Middle Ages in the North Sea-Scheldt region. More precisely, based on a dataset of some 65 rural settlements and some 140 house plans, it will be argued that from this *longue durée* perspective, foremost the (long) 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century can be defined as periods of important transformations in Early Medieval rural society. Following this, it becomes more and more clear that the evolutions in this region are in several ways comparable to those discerned in other parts of North-Western Europe (e.g. Peytremann 2003; Dijkstra 2011; Van der Velde 2011; Hamerow 2012; McKerracher 2018), although it remains vital to be attentive of regionally specific developments in house building and settlement organisation.

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### **The Anglo-Saxon migration and formation of the early English gene pool**

A series of migrations and accompanied cultural changes has formed the peoples of Britain and still

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represents the foundations of the English national identity. For the most prominent of these, the Anglo-Saxon migration, the traditional view, resting upon historical sources and derived concepts of ethnic and national origins from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, outlined that the indigenous Romanised British population was forcibly replaced by invading Germanic tribes, starting in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. However, to which extent this historic event coincided with factual immigration that affected the genetic composition of the British population was focus of generations of scientific and social controversy. To better understand this key period, we have generated genome-wide sequences from 51 individuals from eight cemeteries in East and South England. We combined this data with previously published genome-wide data to a total dataset of more than 100 ancient British genomes spanning from the Early Bronze Age to the Early Middle Ages, allowing us to investigate shifts and affinities in British fine-scale population structure during this phase of transformation. Here we present two preliminary results: First, we detect a distinct increase in continental Northern European ancestry akin to the extant Dutch and Danish populations during the Early Anglo-Saxon period. Second, we highlight the continuous presence of ancestry identified in Pre-Saxon Iron Age and Roman individuals during the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon period, originating in the Early British Bronze Age and closely resembling present-day Celtic-speaking populations from Ireland and Scotland. Our observation of a culturally homogenous but genetically diverse Anglo-Saxon population demonstrates that admixture between Britons and continental immigrants was not a geographically restricted or exceptional phenomenon, verifying results of previous ancient DNA studies restricted to smaller sample sizes. Therefore, our study suggests that the early English population was the outcome of long-term ethnogenetic processes in which the acculturation and assimilation of native Britons into the immigrating Anglo-Saxon society played a key role. Besides these preliminary results, we are currently in the process of collecting and generating additional genetic data from skeletal material from England, and most importantly also from Friesland (Netherlands) and Lower Saxony (Germany), amounting more than 50 individuals. Covering all potential source regions of the Anglo-Saxon migration as well as the actual immigration area, we are aiming to reconstruct the life histories of single Anglo-Saxon individuals,

determining the geographical origins of their ancestry components. Combining the individual evidence, we will further describe the Early English gene pool composition between the poles of genetic continuity and replacement and illuminate the relationship between continental immigrants and indigenous Britons on a larger scale than all previous studies.

### Posters

*Katrine Balsgaard Juul, Charlotta Lindblom,  
Christian Juul and Mads Ravn*

#### **The Hjørnø-treasure hoard from the 6<sup>th</sup> century**

One of the most interesting treasures in the vicinity of Vejle – a hoard of golden and some silver objects, was found at the small island of Hjørnø in 2016-2018. The treasure contains 26 pieces of gold and five pieces of silver with inlaid golden threads. Among these three golden bracteates of a recently defined new type similar to the D-type, 12 golden beads ornamented with filigree, a golden sword bead with almandines in “cloisonné”, a miniature golden brooch, two pieces of golden rings, two pieces of golden ingots, four golden pendants with filigree ornamentation and finally a belt buckle and pieces of the strap fittings in silver with golden ornamentation. The main part of the artefacts dates to the first part of the 6<sup>th</sup> century – apart from the miniature golden brooch, which probably dates to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Detectorists found this hoard as early as 2016, and Vejle Museum has together with them made several investigations at the site, in order to limit the area of the finding.

In 2018, Vejle Museum made a small excavation, but unfortunately without finding any underlying constructions. It was obvious that the hoard had been scattered by the plough through the past centuries. Despite this, it is quite clear that the hoard had been hidden or sacrificed in the early parts of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. This hoard fits well in the pattern of hoards from the 6<sup>th</sup> century, which could be related to the climatic changes during the Little Antique Late Ice Age. Similar pieces and hoards have been found in the nearby area at Hvorslev (Århus) and Kirkemosegård (Randers). The bracteates differ, but the use of filigree ornamentation seems to be quite the same. Also the ornamentation on the eyelets and the fact that the ornamentation only appears on the front side of the eyelet, could be a regional pattern as this



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phenomena also appears on some golden coins in the region (Horsnæs, Helle 2019). Digital x-ray of the artefacts from Hjarnø also revealed some interesting information of the process of production.

*Lisa Backhouse*

### **People and Pottery in Anglo-Saxon Kent: The Lyminge Pottery Assemblage in Context**

The recent programme of excavation at the Anglo-Saxon royal and monastic settlement of Lyminge, Kent (UK) generated the largest assemblage of fully stratified Anglo-Saxon pottery in the region dating between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Embracing the entirety of the settlement's occupation sequence, the pottery assemblage is completely unique in Anglo-Saxon Kent and is thus an unprecedented opportunity to contribute not only to Anglo-Saxon scholarship, but further, to offer a reassessment and new understanding of the development of ceramic culture in the kingdom. Under the influence of emerging socially-informed theoretical perspectives and through the unique integration of domestic settlement and cemetery pottery assemblages, the analysis of the Lyminge assemblage forms the primary case study of the author's current PhD research project which contributes to and revises the story of Kent's formation and consolidation as the earliest and most powerful Anglo-Saxon kingdom in England. The poster will detail the results of the fine-grained contextual, spatial and chronological analysis of the Lyminge pottery assemblage and draws upon analysis of selected contemporary settlement and cemetery assemblages from elsewhere in Kent to unlock new perspectives of the social and cultural dynamics of Anglo-Saxon Kent's formation and to situate Lyminge within its broader regional ceramic context.

*Heidemarie Eilbracht*

### **Prussia-Museum digital: Archaeology in former East Prussia**

The long-term project "Research of Continuity and Continuity of Research – Basic Research on Iron Age Settlement Archaeology in the Baltic Region" started its work in 2012. A central focus is the processing and restoration of pre-war archival records and finds from the former Prussia-Museum in Königsberg. The Museum for Pre- and Early History in Berlin and the Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology in Schleswig are

partners in this project, which is funded by the Academy of Science and Literature in Mainz. The poster offers a brief overview of the aims and work of the project.

*Catherine Hills and John Blair*

### **A seventh century relic/work box from Ascott under Wychwood, Oxfordshire**

This recent discovery by a metal-detectorist is an example of a type of small container already known from seventh century Anglo-Saxon burials. It is unusual because it is decorated with incised zoomorphic ornament.

*Wojciech Nowakowski*

### **Aestiorum gentes: Mythos und archäologische Realität**

Es handelt sich um eine Konfrontation der Überlieferungen von Tacitus (Mangel an Eisen, heilige Eberdarstellungen usw.) und von Jordanes (das friedlichste Volk unter den Nordbarbaren) mit archäologischen Funden aus dem ehemaligen Ostpreußen.

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### Excursion

The excursion leads firstly to two prehistoric burial mounds **(1)** and a Bronze Age fortification **(2)**. They were – partly provably, partly probably – also the settings for interactions between the local “saxon” upper class of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and the ruling classes in the empire of the Frankish kings. We spend the lunch break (12:15 – 14:15) in the “paläon” in Schöningen **(3)**. Schöningen is one of the two oldest places known by name in today’s Lower Saxony. Together with the village Ohrum (cf. map, **A**), the settlement is mentioned in connection with a military advance in 747 AD by Pepin the Younger († 786; father of Charlemagne) against “Saxons” who had formed an alliance with his half-brother Grifo against him. The “paläon” accommodates the, at present, oldest known hunting weapons used by mankind: seven wooden spears that are around 300,000 years old. They were discovered between 1994 and 1998 during excavations in the run-up to opencast mining near Schöningen. In the afternoon we visit the Königslutter Kaiserdom **(4)**. It is a monument of late “saxon” claim to power and counts among the outstanding buildings of the romantic period in Germany. On our way to Königslutter we pass another well-preserved prehistoric burial mound in Evessen (cf. map, **B**).

(Texte: 1) Babette Ludowici; 2) Robert Hintz, Babette Ludowici; 3) © paläon; 4) © Stiftung Braunschweigischer Kulturbesitz/Kaiserdom Königslutter; Übersetzung aller Texte: Will Huntley)

### **(1) The tumuli of Klein-Vahlberg**

Two large burial mounds above today’s village of Klein-Vahlberg in the District of Wolfenbüttel at the southern tip of the Asse range of hills are literally among the most prominent archaeological monuments in Lower Saxony. The monuments are called “Meescheberg” and “Galgenberg”. There is proof that the “Galgenberg” was constructed as early as the transition from the Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age. That seems to apply to the “Meescheberg” as well, but at the moment that can be proved neither through old finds nor through the results of excavations.

Both tumuli offer a splendid prospect: the view up there extends all around, far into the countryside as far as the Harz Mountains, and not just in good weather. The terrain at the feet of the Asse hills, which you are able to look out over towards the south, is traversed by a marked route of the Hellweg, the great historic trade route that already led from the Lower Rhine to the Baltic Sea region in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Conversely, the burial mounds are for their part widely visible landmarks to this day.

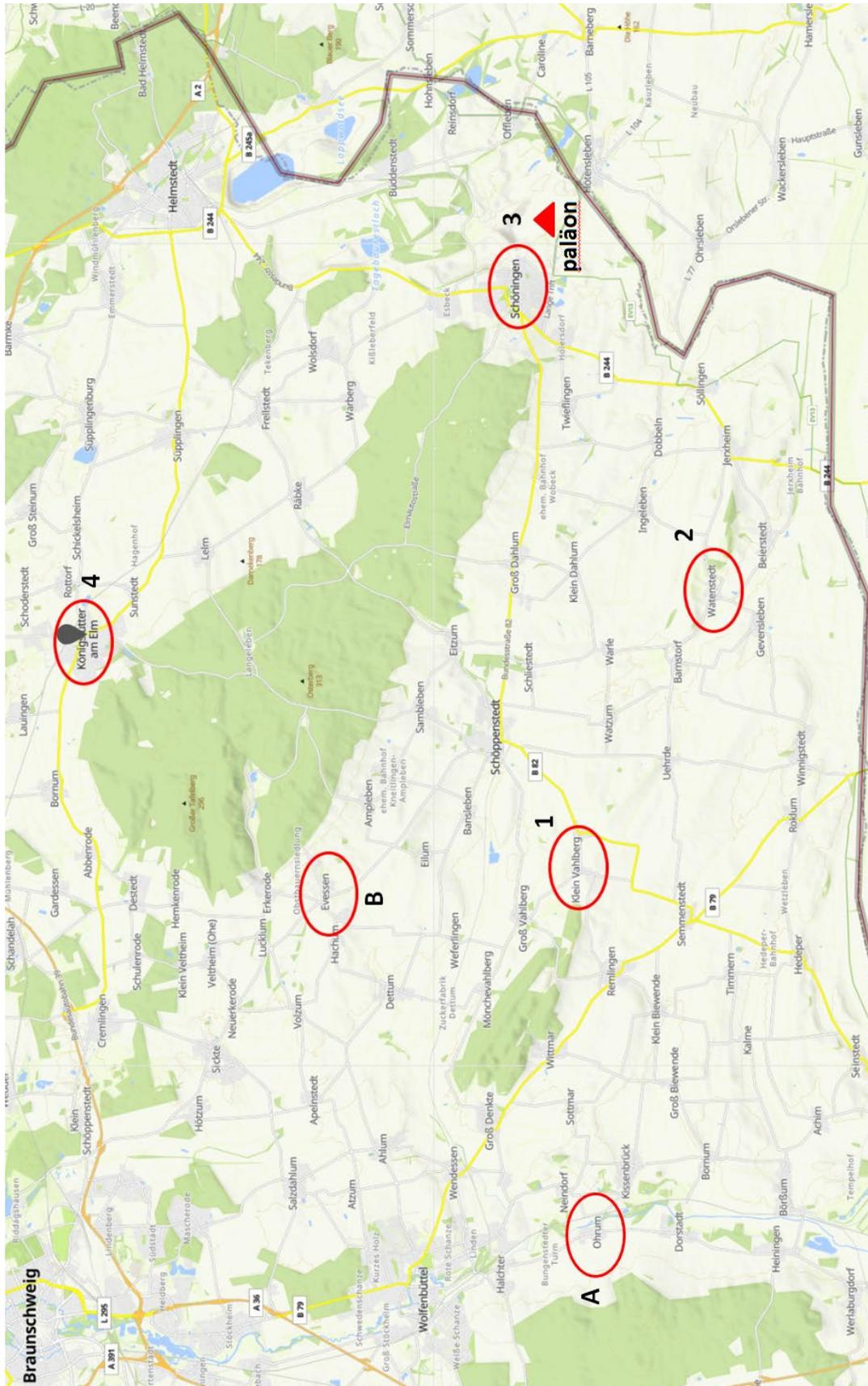
The “Galgenberg” was opened during the period around 600 or the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century to receive the corpse of an adult female. The tumulus was closed again after the interment and its height clearly restored. The monument was already well over 2,000 years old at the time and part of the artificial landscape from time immemorial. The family of the deceased literally followed in the footsteps of powerful rulers of bygone eras and therefore, like these, marked a claim to power in the landscape – for contemporaries and as well as for posterity. This family was obviously entitled to an exclusive right of disposition over the prominent location.

Several objects that were buried with the deceased show that the family was not only influential but also wealthy and had access to a network of wide-ranging contacts. The excavators who exposed the burial in 1907 certainly found only a few fragments and remains of the grave goods of the deceased – a simple hand-crafted ceramic vessel, a handful of beads, a few remains of metal trimmings and strap ends – and, to top it all, most of what was recovered then is now missing. But what little has been preserved still throws much light on the social sphere of the deceased. Among the objects are several remains of gilded and decorated sheets of bronze that were originally mounted on a wooden beaker: comparable drinking vessels have been found up to now only in the graves of members of the highest social circles of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe.

Photos that were taken after the recovery of the objects allow moreover the reconstruction of very special elements of clothing, of a so-called “Wadenbindengarnitur”, a set of bands of material or leather with metal trimmings to fix legwear. They were at that time part of the clothing of wealthy Frankish and Alemannic women. The trimmings of the Klein-Vahlberg “Wadenbindengarnitur” were of craftsmanship of the highest quality, their ornamentation masterfully executed. Pieces of similarly high quality are very rare and are known, for example, from the grave of a Frankish nobleman from the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century that was discovered in the Basilica of St Severin in Cologne. The “Wadenbindengarnitur” from Klein-Vahlberg is up to now unique in Lower Saxony and Westphalia. The lady came possibly from a high-ranking family in the Frankish Empire. The people who were buried in the “Galgenberg” with so much deference were evidently very concerned with representation. Influential and wealthy, also well connected, and perhaps even related to the elite in the



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empire of the Frankish kings, they could have been actors in the supraregional trading operations on the Hellweg. And they evidently sought out and prepared the “Galgenberg” for an interment for a second time: in 1907, the excavators also came across remains of cremated human bones below the top layer of extra earth that was spread on the crest of the burial mound. The cremation could stem from another member of this family. His interment may have taken place in the 7<sup>th</sup> but also perhaps not until the 8<sup>th</sup> century: there is evidence of the cremation of deceased in the northern foothills of the Harz Mountains up to this time.



Tumulus “Galgenberg” near Klein-Vahlberg (Foto: A. Hindemith)



„Wadenbindengarnitur“ from the „Galgenberg“ mound, around 600 AD

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### (2) The Hünenburg near Watenstedt, District of Helmstedt

→ [www.3landesmuseen.de/Vernetzte-Lebenswelten.1429.0.html](http://www.3landesmuseen.de/Vernetzte-Lebenswelten.1429.0.html)

The so-called “Hünenburg” is a Late Bronze to Early Iron Age fortification on the western plateau of the Heeseberg, an area of high ground above the village of Watenstedt in the District of Helmstedt. A Bronze Age external settlement and several cemeteries adjoin it in the directly surrounding area. The entire complex is regarded as an imperial seat that existed between 1200 and 650 BC.



„Hünenburg“ (Watenstedt, Kr. Helmstedt) – Aerial view

#### *History of research*

The discovery of a cast bronze bowl (about 900 BC) near Watenstedt in 1901 provided the first indication of the importance of the place. Its precise find site and that of several finds from the Bronze Age made at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century remained, however, unknown for a long time. The State Museum Braunschweig (BLM) carried out the first modern excavations; the first excavation campaign took place on the ramparts in 1998, under the direction of W.-D. Steinmetz. Since 2005, the investigations at the “Hünenburg” have been progressed as a collaborative project of the BLM and the University of Göttingen under the direction of Professor Dr. K.-H. Willroth and Dr. I. Heske (Göttingen); sponsors were the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture. In the process, proof of the external settlement, among other things, was established. The settlement can be dated to the centuries around 1000 BC. In addition, from 2015 to 2018, the BLM carried out, together with the Department of Pre- and Protohistory of the University of Göttingen, the research project “Vernetzte Lebenswelten. Untersuchungen zur Bevölkerungszusammensetzung an bronzzeitlichen Herrschaftssitzen” (sponsor: Volkswagen Foundation, funding initiative “Forschung in Museen”). The focus was on questions of mobility, communication and trade between various European regions in the Late Bronze Age.

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Cast bronze bowl from Watenstedt found in 1901 together with a fragment of its casting mold found in 2009 in the external settlement of the "Hünenburg".

### *Results*

The ramparts of the "Hünenburg" were constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC (wood-earth construction), but it was destroyed in a fire despite its stone cladding. A short time later, the construction of a stone exterior followed and with it an enhancement of the fortification (= the arrival of people from the south who brought these ideas with them?), linked with a probably not inconsiderable gain in prestige.

The external settlement founded in the 12th century BC at the Hünenburg is the oldest evidence of a town-like, dense development in central Europe – comparable finds are up to now first known from the Mediterranean region, for example Troy, Mycenae or Tiryns. The external settlement seems to have accommodated up to 500 people. The imperial seat in Watenstedt can therefore be regarded as one of the – up to now – largest known Bronze Age settlements in central Europe.

The area around the Hünenburg was already sought out by the Late Neolithic cultures. An Early Bronze Age culture was also recorded in Watenstedt, with burials by the Únětice Culture. However, there is no evidence of settlement activities during this period. Loose settlement structures in the area of the later external settlement are first recognisable from the later Middle Bronze Age. Certainly, at this point, neither the extended fortification nor the cemetery (cinerary urn cemetery of Beierstadt; 300 m further to the south, cinerary urn cultures, among others) is left.

Then there are signs of change from the late Montelius period IV. The fortified complex is extended: a fortificatory complex with a rampart, a wall and palisades. At the same time, the outer settlement grows. The evaluations of the most recent excavations yielded numerous settlement activities in the form of settlement pits and post settings of houses as well as extensive settlement finds from the Late Bronze Age.

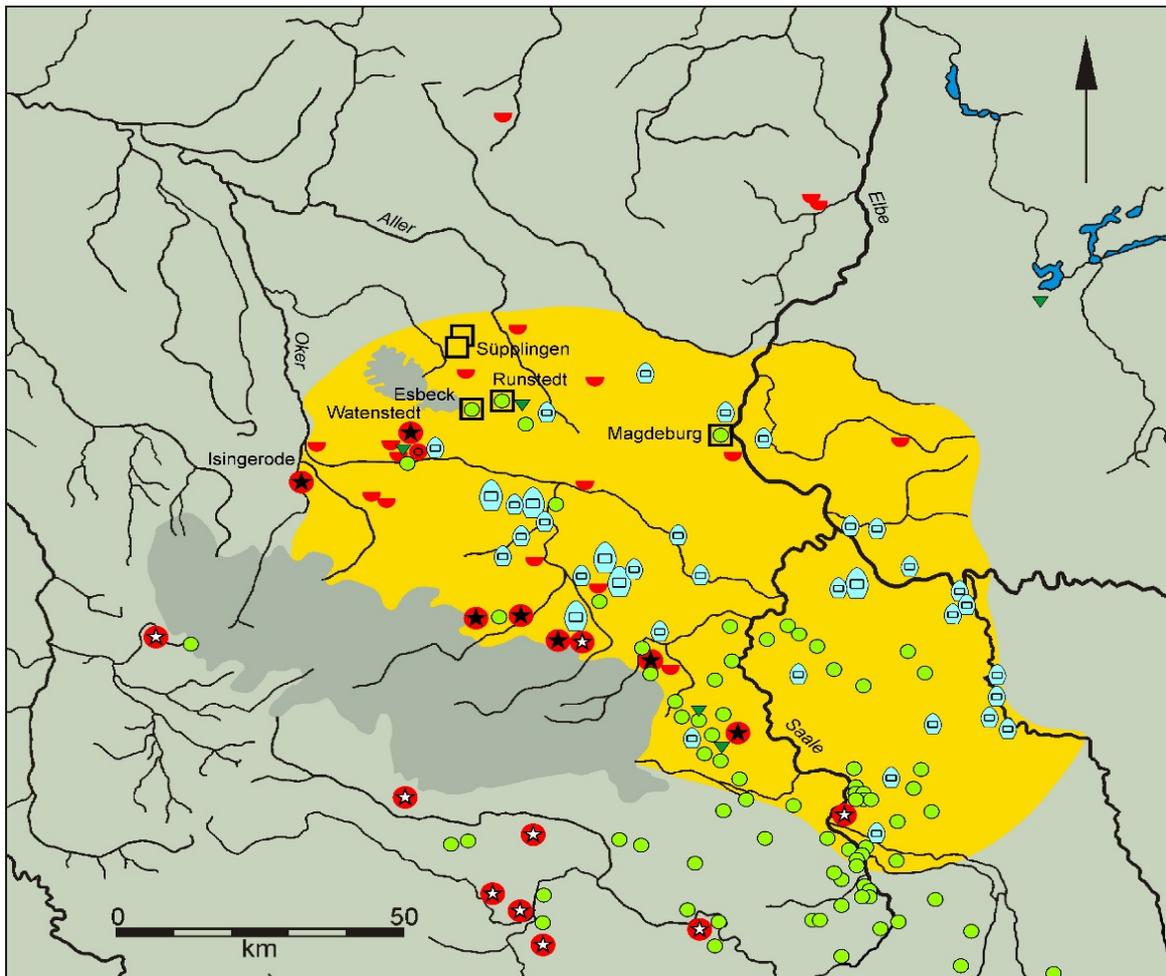
From Montelius period V, an extension of the surrounding area around the Hünenburg is also noticeable: open flat settlements are created every 10 to 13 km around the Hünenburg (Runstedt, Esbeck-Kakelsberg, Süpplingen, Süpplingen-Nordschacht and Süpplingen-Göseckenberg, all District of Helmstedt).

Also, a cinerary urn cemetery belonging to the external settlement from Montelius periods V and VI is now established. Prospections and excavations have brought to light a cult area with depositions as well as a huge

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area with a series of cooking pits (c. 500 finds) by a watercourse. The latter presumably served the preparation of ritual meals on heated stones. In 2014, more bronze finds were discovered between the cooking pits. Among them were matching fragments of walls of a cast bronze bowl that had already been found there in 1903 as part of a religious deposition together with items of jewellery and horse bridle. Another similarly assembled deposit had already been found in 1901 in the directly surrounding area.

A fragment of a clay casting mould for the completely preserved bronze bowl from 1901 was discovered in 2008 – for the first time a vessel produced in today's Germany; the other casting moulds stem from today's Denmark. The bronze bowls were cast on the Hünenburg in the moulds. The production of such bronze bowls was difficult and demanded skilled craftsmanship, particularly because the bowls were made with a thin wall less than 1 mm thick. They were cast products of the highest quality in the north. That proves that the Hünenburg was much more than a trading hub, rather the seat of outstanding bronze casters who possessed corresponding know-how and access to the metal raw materials. Between 2006 and 2013, ten clay reproductions of the cast bronze bowls were found – objects that actually come from the north. A special feature among these finds is a miniature bowl whose ornamentation is identical to that of one of the bronze bowls from Watenstedt. That means: not only the bronze bowls but even the clay bowls were produced on the Hünenburg.



- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Saalemündungsgruppe / Hausurnenkultur am Nordharz |  | Pferdebestattung                          |
|  | Befestigungen Per. IV-VI                          |  | Bronzebecken Per. V / Per. VI             |
|  | nicht dauerhaft genutzte Befestigungen Per. IV-VI |  | Bronzeschild                              |
|  | Siedlungen mit zu bearbeitendem Fundmaterial      |  | Haus- und Gesichtstürumen (1-3 Exemplare) |
|  | Menschl. Skelettreste in Siedlungen               |  | Haus- und Gesichtstürumen (> 3 Exemplare) |

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In Bronze Age Europe from c. 1200 BC, the first fortifications were founded at economically important trading crossroads for strategic reasons. That also applies to the Hünenburg: the east-west connection later called the “Hellweg” and the long-distance routes coming from the north crossed near Watenstedt and linked southern Scandinavia, northern Germany and the area of today’s Lower Saxony. There are many indications that a group of people from Scandinavia settled here around 900 BC. A trading settlement that was to guarantee the transfer of raw material of valuable metals to the north can be imagined here just as much as a migrant population from the north. The power and wealth of the inhabitants of the “Hünenburg” and their long-distance contacts are clearly reflected in the valuable objects that they have left behind. The depositions are evidence of cult practices that ended with the sacrifice of ritual implements and the presentation of ritual meals “at the dining place of the gods”. Both these religious phenomena, that is, the complex of cooking pit areas and the depositions with bronze bowls, actually have their focus of distribution somewhere completely different, namely in the Baltic Sea region. The grand fortification with the large external settlement near Watenstedt radiated in its importance as far as the north.

*Did the “Hünenburg” play a role in the conflicts between Frankish kings and “Saxons” in the 740s?*

In the course of the struggles for power that Pepin the Younger († 768; father of Charlemagne) and his brother Carloman fight out with their half-brother Grifo, there are military conflicts around a castle called “Hoohseoburg” in the years 743 and 748. The castle is regarded as the ancestral seat of a “Saxon” called Theoderic, whose ally Grifo has become. The locating of the fortification has been unsuccessful to date, but descriptions of the events of 743 and 747/8 respectively suggest that the fortification is to be sought in the area surrounding the places Schöningen and Ohrum. The “Hünenburg” near Watenstedt really could be the sought-for site and, at least in places, traces of a settlement and pottery of the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century were recorded in the course of the excavations undertaken from 1998. They prove a subsequent use – of whatever kind – of the interior of the Bronze Age fortification at this time. Furthermore, there is evidence of an at least partial renewal of the Bronze Age ramparts through a palisade, with earthwork, built on it. Ceramic finds indicate a dating of this most recent phase of extensions likewise to the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century.

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### (3) Schöningen: The Schöningen spears and the “paläon”

→ [www.palaeon.de](http://www.palaeon.de)

Dr. Hartmut Thieme of the Lower Saxony State Office for Preservation of Historic Monuments (Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, NLD) is the discoverer of the world-famous Schöningen spears. They are about 300,000 years old and up to now mankind’s oldest preserved hunting weapons. The finds remained preserved thanks to unusually favourable geological conditions. From 1983, the archaeologist together with his team undertook rescue excavations in the run-up to opencast mining at Schöningen. The high point of his efforts came between 1994 and 1998 with the discovery of several completely preserved wooden artefacts from the Palaeolithic – a find without equal, making their finder world-famous among experts. They found more than 10,000 bones of wild horses as well as seven wooden spears, further spear fragments, a lance, and a throwing stick in the middle of a hunting camp.

In Lower Saxony’s Schöningen, it can be uniquely appreciated how and where our predecessors, Homo heidelbergensis, lived and hunted. Based on the whole find ensemble, the settlement history of northern Europe can be explained and many assumptions about the life of Homo heidelbergensis now finally proved. Acting according to plans, communication skills, technological competence, sophisticated hunting strategies, and a complex social fabric were among his capabilities. He was therefore much closer to modern man than was previously thought.

The paläon forms a fitting setting of Thieme’s find for interested visitors and experts from all over the world. But the Schöningen spears are of sensational significance not only for Lower Saxons but also for the history of the whole of mankind. They belong to the oldest evidence of creative intelligence. The knowledge of the cultural and social accomplishments of early man was revolutionised by the find. In the exhibition’s exciting enactments, you experience how a hunting expedition might have played out about 300,000 years ago.



paläon (© Foto: Jan Ritter / Holzer Kobler Architekturen)

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Hartmut Thieme (left) and spear Nr. VI (© Foto: P. Pfarr, Niedersächsisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege).

Mankind's oldest hunting weapons are the trigger for much new knowledge about the Palaeolithic. They are one of the most important and significant elements of the exhibition. For only here, at their find-spot, can the original spears be seen. Also, the geological feature of the find-spot in Schöningen allows a telling insight into the history of the region's climate. The strata afford unique insights into changes in the climate between ice ages. Changes in the environment and the adaption of humans to them are therefore further topic areas in the permanent exhibition. In this way, a relationship with the phenomena and mechanisms of the present changes in climate is presented.

The modern building of the paläon was designed by the renowned Zurich architectural practice Holzer Kobler Architekturen. The outer skin of the paläon seems like an oversized mirror, which reflects the surrounding

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landscape and so becomes at one with the surrounding area. Extensive, fascinating views of the find-spot of the spears and the pit of the open-cast mine, the nearby forest landscape, and the grazing wild horses are produced through large-format, sharp slits in the cladding. The grounds were conceived by the Berlin landscape architects Topotek 1. The expressive architecture combines artificial and natural landscapes and so becomes a landmark for culture and knowledge. The scenography of the exhibition also comes from Holzer Kobler Architekturen.

One highlight of the outside area consists of the two Przewalski horses, Magda and Heimweh. The animals came to the paläon from the breeding programmes in Münster and the Döberitzer Heide and, as the last representatives of genuine wild horses, illustrate the life by the ice age lake in Schöningen.



Przewalski-horses in the paläon outside area (© Foto: paläon).

### (4) Königsutter: Lothar III of Supplinburg and his “Kaiserdom”

→ [www.kaiserdom-koenigsutter.de](http://www.kaiserdom-koenigsutter.de)

Born in 1075, Lothar came from Saxon nobility. He is the grandfather of “Henry the Lion”, who lies buried in Braunschweig Cathedral. His home was the region between Braunschweig and Helmstedt. He is called “of Supplinburg” after the ancestral seat of his family. His marriage to Richenza of Northeim brought him extended property and governing rights. From 1106, Lothar was Duke of Saxony. After the death of the last Salian emperor, Henry V, in 1125, an election of king took place, in which Lothar was able to prevail over his rivals. The conflict that then broke out with the defeated Frederick II of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and his brother Conrad overshadowed almost the whole of Lothar’s reign. Conrad had himself elected anti-king and tried to gain a foothold in Italy. Lothar received support from the Bavarian Duke Henry the Proud in the struggle against

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his opponent. He bound the member of the House of Welf strongly to himself by giving him his only daughter's hand in marriage. In addition, he assigned his son-in-law the title of Saxon duke and resolutely built him up to be his successor. From the outset, it was Lothar's aim to found a new dynasty – he had Saxon-Welf rule in mind. In 1133, Lothar set out for Italy to have himself crowned emperor by Pope Innocence II. As St Peter's was occupied by the anti-pope, Lothar as the first emperor of the Middle Ages had to make do with the Lateran church as the location of the ceremony. Lothar was able to call himself "the august Emperor of the Romans by the grace of God" – in the understanding of the time, he was the direct successor of the antique emperors. When the rivals from the Hohenstaufen dynasty finally submitted, his position in the empire was undisputed. At the peak of his power, he decided to have a church constructed in his native Lutter and he, together with his wife, laid the foundation stone in the summer of 1135. It was intended to be the burial church for himself and his family and furthermore the visible sign of his Christian-imperial claim to power.

A second Italian campaign took place in 1136/37. Lothar advanced as far as Apulia with his army. He died on 4 December 1137 in Breitenwang/Tyrol during his return journey. His remains were transferred to Königslutter and buried under a provisional house of the dead on the construction site of his church on the last day of the year. Henry the Proud did not succeed in taking over imperial rule. He died two years after Lothar's death. Gertrud remarried. Their son Henry, scarcely ten years old at the time, was later to be called "the Lion".

The Königslutter Kaiserdom counts among the outstanding buildings of the romantic period in Germany. It is regarded as the Saxon counterpart of the Salian cathedral in Speyer. In the summer of 1135, Emperor Lothar III dissolved a canoness collegiate he had inherited from his mother's side of the family. On the same site, on the northern slope of the Elm, he laid the foundation stone for the burial church of his family and founded a new private monastery, which he filled with Benedictine monks. The convent under the leadership of Abbot Eberhard came from the Berge monastery near Magdeburg, a centre of the Hirsau reform movement in northern Germany. The church was dedicated to St Peter and St Paul.



Kaiserdom Königslutter (Foto: © Friedrich Brüggeboß, Braunschweig).

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The imposing appearance of the structure, the outstanding quality of the stonework of the eastern parts of the building in particular, the wide vaults spanning the choir and transept as well as the Italian architectural sculptures are proof of the high demands the emperor set for his church. A prominent position in the history of art and culture befits the Kaiserdom. The Kaiserdom has three naves and pillar basilica set out in the bound system with transept, three-part choir and westwork. The whole building was originally invested with arches. Only the vaults in the eastern sections were completed in the 12th century and they are regarded as the earliest of their kind in northern Germany. The Kaiserdom in Königslutter is famous for its architectural sculptures in particular. The Lion's Gate, the hunting frieze on the main apsis and the wonderful columns in the cloister come from the workshop of the northern Italian sculptor Nicolaus. The master had already created outstanding sculptures in his homeland for churches and cathedrals in Piacenza, Ferrara and Verona.



Kaiserdom Königslutter, Lion's Gate (Foto: [wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/21/Kaiserdom\\_Königslutter\\_Löwenportal.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kaiserdom_Königslutter_Löwenportal.jpg))



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