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**Häuser der Bronzezeit und Eisenzeit im
Mittleren Europa. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung**
Peter Donat

SCHRIFTFÜHRUNG FRANKFURT A. M. PALMENGARTENSTRASSE 10-12



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PETER DONAT, Häuser der Bronzezeit und Eisenzeit im Mittleren Europa. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung. Weimarer Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte 43. Thüringisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie, Weimar. Verlag Beier & Beran, Langenweißbach 2018. € 39.00. ISBN 978-3-95741-056-6. 287 pages with 43 figures (of which 4 are maps), 43 tables, 5 lists.

This volume on the Bronze Age and Iron Age houses of the Northwest European lowlands and (west)central Europe is the product of Peter Donat's long-standing interest in contextualising the house-building traditions of southern and central Germany. Following his retirement, he took upon himself the challenging task to inventory and compare house plans from the Bronze and Iron Age in a geographical zone spanning Denmark, the Netherlands, Flanders, Germany and extending eastwards into the Czech Republic and Austria. With the numbers of house plans already known from these areas and the rate in which developer-led archaeology (p. 11) increases this in various nations, this is no small endeavor. In this sense, P. Donat's inventory is foremost a bold and much-needed overview of West- and Central European housebuilding traditions that will serve as a starting point for the contextualisation of settlement excavations across these regions. Numerous overview plates of house-plans (put to the same scale) and convenient maps (Figs 7; 9; 16; 35) help the reader take in all this information. The level of detail with regard to the descriptions is impressive, but to facilitate easy reading mostly placed in (ample, n = 1065) footnotes. In some cases, this leads to the peculiar situation that pages contain no more than nine words of narrative, while the rest of the page is footnotes (pp. 44; 118).

Chapter 1 (pp. 11–12) argues in short why such a study is much needed and describes its limits in terms of periodisation and geography. Some attention is paid to the variable data-resolution across the study area, as comparable intensity of settlement archaeology is seen as a requirement for valid cross-regional comparison (p. 11). Also, it is made clear in this chapter that data from hilltop fortifications and lake-shore settlements has not been integrated (p. 12).

The second chapter (pp. 13–34) deals with the two-aisled longhouses of the Early Bronze Age. Here, the primary axis of the narrative is geographical and house-plans are discussed by type (*Typ Eching-Öberau*, *Variante Zuchering* for southern Germany, *Typ Březno* for Middle Germany and the Czech Republic). For Denmark, two main types (with and without lowered floor parts) are distinguished, and the plans from the Netherlands and northwest Germany are discussed as 'other house types'. The distribution map for these sites (Fig. 7, p. 32) suggests three main geographically distinct zones of housebuilding traditions (Scandinavian, Central German [*Typ Březno*] and southern German [*Typ Eching-Öberau*]), but the level of lumping versus splitting may be questioned. For example, the distinction between houses with and without lowered floor parts is not reflected in the map, barring easy interpretation of regional patterns. Similarly, the Austrian sites of Franzhausen, Unterradlberg, and Reichersdorf may represent a separate cluster, but are now masked under the heading of '*andere Grundrissformen*'. For the Dutch and Northwest German sites, this is also the case. Whereas the positioning of splitting versus lumping in typology is to a degree personal to scholars – and ever subject to debate – I feel that P. Donat here could have made a nuisance into a strength: the fact that in the Low Countries and adjacent Germany no Early Bronze Age house plan seemingly looks alike should not lead to defiance viz. the difficulty to slot these into broader typological categories, but to be taken at face value for what they are; evidence for the fact that locally distinct building traditions not just developed, but dominated. For example, the plans of Sandhorst (D. C. FRANKE, *Endlich ein Dach über dem Kopf!* Arch. Niedersachsen 18, 2015, 31–34), Noordwijk (p. 21), and Bocholt (p. 24) – as different as they are to each other – may represent more regional traditions than P. Donat proposes, of which the plans of Hesel (p. 21), Hasselo (H. SCHOLTE LUBBERINK, *Opgraving Hasselo-‘t Oosterveld, Gemeente Hengelo. Een*

opgraving met archeologische resten uit het Meso- en Neolithicum, de Bronstijd en de Middeleeuwen. RAAP-Rapport 2191 [Weesp 2011]), and Molenaarsgraaf (p. 21) are respective counterparts. In this sense, P. Donat's groups presented in the map (Fig. 7) should be taken as a starting point for further enquiries at smaller geographical scales.

The first part of chapter 3 (pp. 35–59) addresses the emergence and development of the three-aisled house-tradition. For the Middle Bronze Age, for Low Countries the types '*Emmerhout*', '*Variante Oss 1A*' and '*Zijderveld*' are discussed (pp. 35–46), whereas for Denmark and adjacent Germany types '*Trappendal*' and '*Højgård*' are considered (pp. 46–53). Personally, even if myself preferring the analytical power of splitting (S. ARNOLDUSSEN, *A Living Landscape. Bronze Age Settlement Sites in the Dutch River Area* [Leiden 2008] 194–198) over ease of comparison provided by lumping, I understand P. Donat's explicitly argued decision to maintain standing typological labels (p. 35–36). Moreover, he is thorough and critical in its association of houses to types (or the dismissal thereof) and his classifications instil trust. A rare exception may be the labelling of the house from Øster Ørbæk (Fig. 13), where the small diameter of wall-posts may perhaps fit his own *Typ Højgård* better. Yet, the point I want to make here is not about the (mis)classification of a single house-plan, rather I want to address the wider concern that classification by 'traditional' types – if relying on (visibility / presence of) features easily affected by taphonomy (e.g. hearths, stalls, wall-ditches; pp. 56; 133; 192) – can skew our understanding. The walls of the house plans of Øster Ørbæk, Hemmed-Kirche, Hemmed Plantage, and Trappendal may differ mainly in preservation and could – whilst archaeologically 'looking distinct' – reflect prehistoric identical outlooks. Similarly, recent excavations of Middle Bronze Age houses from the southern Netherlands have clearly shown how differential preservation may blur categories as archaeologically distinct as between plans with two versus four rows of roof-bearing posts (e.g. T. DE JONG / S. BEUMER. *Archeologisch onderzoek knooppunt Ekkersrijt-IKEA, gemeente Son en Breugel, Deel 2: Prehistorische bewoning in Ekkersrijt*. Arch. Centrum Eindhoven en Helmond Rapport 52 [Eindhoven 2013]; J. VAN KAMPEN / V. VAN DEN BRINK. *Archeologisch onderzoek op de Habraken te Veldhoven*. Zuidnederlandse Arch. Rapporten 52 [Amsterdam 2013] 69–71).

The second part of chapter 3 (pp. 59–72) is dedicated to three-aisled house plans from the Late Bronze Age. Compared to those of the preceding Middle Bronze Age (Fig. 9), these have been uncovered in more regions than before (Fig. 16): the northern part of Niedersachsen and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern as well as southern Germany now also show – regionally distinct – types. Here, I would have liked to read more on what this difference in regional traditions means in social terms. Why were previously widely adhered to traditions of Middle Bronze Age housebuilding replaced by more, and more local, traditions at the close of the 1st millennium BC? What does it mean that we can identify 'out of place' houses such as the Elp type house of Daverden (p. 62) in the *Typ Ochtmissen*-area? Does this reflect neolocality of house-builders or is it an artefact of low-research intensity (i. e. did their distributions overlap)?

Chapter 4 (pp. 73–93) is dedicated to the two-aisled house plans of the Middle- and Late Bronze Age of the types *Ochtmissen* (Elbe-Weser region), *Nossendorf* (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), and those of the Lausitzer (east of the Elbe / Saale), Hügelgräber-, and Urnenfelderkultur in southern Germany and the Niederrheinischen Bucht. Two main traditions are reflected: one of longer houses with rounded short sides and frequently wall posts placed in ditches (types *Ochtmissen*, *Nossendorf*) and one of smaller rectangular buildings with frequently a row of ridge-posts flanked by outer posts (Fig. 22). For the latter, dimensional analysis shows that those of the Urnenfelderkultur are typically shorter (7–21 m) and wider (4.7–9.6 m) than other Late Bronze Age types (rarely exceeding 8 m in width).

Chapter 5 (pp. 93–133) discusses first the three-aisled Iron Age house plans by regions, highlighting the similarities observable across the study area. The ensuing review of the two-aisled counterparts hints at their more southern distribution (concentrating in Flanders, the southern Netherlands and only rarely in the north[eastern] Netherlands [pp. 117–130]), but no distribution map is offered for the sites of this chapter. Both sections finish with a particularly thorough and well-argued conclusion on dating, size, constructional properties, function and regional specifics for the discussed types. Why the house plans of Middle and Eastern Germany now discussed in chapter 6 (just seven pages, pp. 135–141) were not integrated into this chapter, is unclear. The separate discussion of the Iron Age houses from Southern Germany, however, in chapter 7 (pp. 143–176) is well deserved due to their geographical position and contextual potential. Albeit not strictly central to the topic of the book, chapter 7 provides an interesting digression into the (recognisability and variability of) cult structures and enclosed sites and *Viereckschanzen*. The short chapter 8 (just six pages, pp. 177–182) on ancillary structures such as granaries and outbuildings to my mind adds little to the overview apart from the observation that such structures are not yet known from Danish sites with *Typ Højgård* houses (p. 180).

The final chapter (ch. 9, pp. 183–197) provides the overarching narrative and starts off with a review of house-building traditions for the entire study area from the Late Neolithic to the Iron Age (pp. 182–186), followed by more regionally specific summaries (pp. 186–189). To this discussion, it could be added that long, two-aisled, house plans from the 3rd millennium BC are also known for Flanders and the southern Netherlands, suggesting a potential origin for early 2nd millennium two-aisled traditions in this part of Europe (J. VAN KAMPEN ET AL. [eds], *Archeologisch onderzoek op de Habraken te Veldhoven: twee unieke nederzettingen uit het laat Neolithicum en de Midden Bronstijd en een erf uit de Volle Middeleeuwen*. Zuidnederlandse Arch. Rapporten 52 [Amsterdam 2013] 43–50; M. HISSEL, *Een inheems-Romeinse nederzetting te Oerle-Zuid*. Diachron Rapport 50 [Amsterdam 2011]; F. DEMEYERE ET AL., *New evidence of the [final] Neolithic occupation of the sandy lowlands of Belgium: The Waardamme “Vijvers” site, west Flanders*. Arch. Korrb. 36,2, 2006, 179–194). Following the regional conclusions, a (rightly!) critical evaluation of the use of house-sizes as direct proxies for social hierarchies is offered (pp. 189–191), suggesting that – based on their sparse occurrence – a function as cult buildings may be assumed (p. 192). I would like to add that non-religious communal functions (gathering / feasting halls) could be postulated as well. Three more thematic sections draw the book to a (somewhat abrupt) close: a discussion of livestock economies and stabling (pp. 192–193), a discussion on the Hallstatt-period *Herrenhöfe* (pp. 193–194), and a final discussion on the plausibility of combined domestic and ritual articulations of use within *Viereckschanzen* (pp. 194–195). These sections are more interpretative and less descriptive, and I would have loved to read much more of these kinds of texts, as on the whole, the interpretative sections (ignoring the various valuable footnotes) take up just 17 pages versus 180 pages of a more descriptive nature. Pages 198 to 287 concern lists and tables.

Peter Donat deserves our praise for going through the ordeal of reading all the site-reports, in different languages, and combining these in such a thorough, critical, and well-accessible book. With the rate of new discoveries being as it is, one may wonder whether a book of this scope is ever again possible in the future. Yet, any broad-brush inventory will come at some form of cost: coherence at the supra-regional level downplays more small-scale patterns in housebuilding traditions and invariably some sites now unmentioned may have served a role. Additionally, I personally would have loved to see more social interpretations as to the patterns observed: how do regional house-building traditions evolve, shrink or expand? What drove the widespread adoption of the novel Early Iron Age house concept of short rectangular houses with opposed entrances (p. 186)? Why and how do the distributions for two- and three-aisled Iron Age houses differ? What do boundaries between the *Hauslandschaften* of byre-houses and *fermes indigènes* mean? Whilst

discussions on themes such as tenure and stabling are part of chapter 9, the wealth of information accessible to P. Donat could perhaps have sparked a discussion in more systematic and extensive form. This is not to say that the people once inhabiting the farmhouses are completely hidden from view, but their role seems limited to discussions of social inequality based on ‘economic’ properties such as numbers of outbuildings (p. 188) or byre capacities (p. 116). I would argue that houses, the process of housebuilding and house-building traditions, are inherently more social than this (ARNOLDUSSEN 2008, 220–222).

However, the principle judgement of this book should not be based on what the reviewer ‘feels is not there’ but on ‘what *is* there’. Peter Donat has managed to collect, digest, and present an utmost valuable inventory of West and Central European Bronze and Iron Age house plans and has done this with tremendous attention to detail and an appropriately critical view (e. g. pp. 33; 131; 137; 184; 190). It will provide a much needed and helpful starting point to many scholars in the areas under study to contextualise their newly found house plans. Moreover, it unlocks a wealth of data on specific house-elements such as sods walls, byre partitions, partitioning walls, or hearth locations, for which it is very hard to acquire a supra-regional overview. And whilst peripheral to the central scope of the volume, I find the discussion of cult buildings a welcome little extra.

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SOPHIE GOUDEMEZ, Chasse et élevage au Premier âge du Fer dans le nord-est de la France.
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Bei der vorliegenden Monographie handelt es sich um die Publikation einer archäozoologischen Dissertation, welche an der Universität Bourgogne, Franche-Comté, durchgeführt wurde. Im Rahmen dieser Arbeit wurde der archäozoologische Fundus einiger früheisenzeitlicher Fundstellen im Nordosten Frankreichs untersucht.

Die Monographie besteht aus fünf Hauptteilen: „Cadre de l’étude“ (Einführung, Chronologie, Geographie, Forschungsziele, S. 11–20), „Méthodes et corpus“ (verwendete Methoden, Vorstellen der Fundensembles, geographische Verteilung und Chronologie der Fundstellen, S. 21–80), „Les animaux: morphologies, productions, utilisations“ (Vorstellung und morphologische Beschreibung der wichtigsten Tierarten, Tierartenspektrum, Nutzbarkeit der Tiere, Pathologien, S. 81–138), „Consommation carnée et utilisation des matières animales“ (Fleischverzehr und Nutzung tierischer Produkte, wirtschaftliche Bedeutung und spezielle Verwendungszwecke einzelner Tierarten, Jagd, S. 139–185) und der „Synthèse“ (S. 187–193).

Der erste Teil gibt einen kurzen Überblick über die Chronologie der ausgehenden Spätbronzezeit und der frühen Eisenzeit in Frankreich, Deutschland und der Schweiz. Es wird auch auf Handelsbeziehungen, die soziale Organisation und die Wirtschaftsweise der frühen Eisenzeit, soweit bisher bekannt, eingegangen. Die verschiedenen Siedlungstypen, aus denen das im Folgenden untersuchte Tierknochenmaterial stammt, werden vorgestellt, sowie die geographischen Gegebenheiten und die Umwelt, in der die Fundstellen liegen. Dies alles sind ebenso wichtige Informationen, damit die archäozoologischen Resultate in einen größeren Zusammenhang gestellt werden können, in dem auch die übrigen archäologischen Fundgegenstände verankert sind. Das Forschungsziel ist unter anderem eine erstmalig durchgeführte Synthese zur Archäozoologie früheisenzeitlicher