

GERMANIA

ANZEIGER

DER RÖMISCH - GERMANISCHEN KOMMISSION
DES DEUTSCHEN ARCHÄOLOGISCHEN INSTITUTS

JAHRGANG 98

2020

1.–2. HALBBAND

PDF-Dokument des gedruckten Beitrags

Heinrich Härke

Rezension / Review / Compte rendu

**Der Weg zu einer archäologischen Wissenschaft. Band 2:
Die Ur- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie 1630–1850**
Barbara Sasse

SCHRIFTFLEITUNG FRANKFURT A. M. PALMENGARTENSTRASSE 10–12



GEBR. MANN VERLAG · BERLIN

MIT 77 TEXTABBILDUNGEN, 8 TABELLEN

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ISBN 978-3-7861-2867-0

ISSN 0016-8874

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Gebr. Mann Verlag · Berlin – www.reimer-mann-verlag.de

Verantwortlicher Redakteur: Alexander Gramsch, Römisch-Germanische Kommission

Graphische Betreuung: Kirstine Ruppel, Römisch-Germanische Kommission

Formalredaktion: Susanne Biegert, Bonn; Nadine Baumann, Bonn;

Julia Hahn, Römisch-Germanische Kommission

Die Schlagwörter werden nach der ZENON-Schlagwortsystematik vergeben

Satz und Druck LINDEN SOFT Verlag e.K., Aichwald

Printed in Germany

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Die mit den Initialen gekennzeichneten Résumés wurden von Yves Gautier (Y. G.) übersetzt.

of the antiquities of Rome, in the reconstruction programmes of the city, and in the excavations they prompted as well as in the accumulation of discoveries of antiquities. The great breakthrough was not only the profusion of antique texts, which were made available by the arrival of Greek manuscripts following the fall of Byzantium, but also the confrontation with the monuments and the philological approach of the Byzantine scholars.

The merit of Barbara Sasse's book is to propose a history of these discoveries by shifting the point of view from the texts to the monuments and objects. She offers us an original fresco with regard to both the history of ideas and the action of figures that contributed to this revolution of the knowledge of antiquity in Rome and then in the rest of Europe, which undermined the very structure of European culture. As a matter of fact, the movement which started in Rome, in particular due to the high Pontifical administration, progressively expanded across the whole of Europe as far as Britain, Scandinavia, and Spain. Sasse brilliantly accomplished a synthesis on a European scale of the phenomenon, the impact of which is redoubled by the Protestant Reformation and the transformations it brought about by the relationships between the states and the Church, and the gradual emancipation from the subjection of scholars to ecclesiastic and secular hierarchies. There was obviously still a long way to go, but the increase of savant societies, academies, and universities provided antiquarians with a prominent role that was not theirs in medieval society. Humanism contributed to the foundation of a "Republic of Letters" in which antiquarians played a leading role. The academic networks, the savant perigees, contributed to this accumulation of knowledge and techniques. The appendix dedicated to the most significant authors of "Renaissance archaeology" forms both an unprecedented and original sociogram of the antiquarian history of Europe (pp. 438–440). Nonetheless, the disproportionately small part of Hispanic and French erudition is regrettable: Luis de Góngora, Lope de Vega, Rodrigo Caro, François Rabelais, or Joachim du Bellay should have been included next to less renowned antiquarians.

The interest of poets in antiquity goes hand in hand with the development of curiosity cabinets as well as royal, princely, and shortly later bourgeois collections but also with the establishment of surveying and identification techniques for sites and monuments. Initial systematic excavations developed during the 16th century, as did the structuration of antiquarian fields such as epigraphy, numismatics, and the history of sculpture and architecture. The chapters devoted to Renaissance antiquarian culture focus on this new historiography. The phenomenon which unites the new course of studies related to antiquity is driven by an epistemological revolution. The antiquarians of the Greco-Roman world and the Middle Ages had only words to analyse the monuments and objects of the past. Renaissance painters, draughtsmen, and architects developed drawing and documentation techniques. With the publishing of the first illustrated books of antiquities at the beginning of the 16th century antiquarian science logically progressively improved the images taken from documentation, from the reconstruction of monuments, or the creation of iconographic types depicting ancient humankind. The illustrations (albeit not numerous) are well selected. The author produced an original picture dedicated to the quantitative history of antiquarian book printing (s. pp. 55–61). She has also proposed a revision of David Clarke's famous general model of archaeology (pp. 72–73; 76) and a diagram of M. Mercati's model of the origins of the so-called *Cerauniae* (pp. 444–445).

Barbara Sasse's achievement is to present the different stages and variants of this iconic and cognitive revolution which radically transformed the techniques related to the study and representation of the monuments and objects. In this way, she contributes to a redefinition of documentary studies and to the interpretation of the data, which provides our modern definition of archaeology with unexpected depth. It is, of course, essential to read Sasse's second volume to catch the full scope of this (s. review by Heinrich Härke below), but this first volume, despite some minor

deficiencies, proves its worth as a reference work which completes and overpasses the renowned compilation by Karl Bernhard Stark cited above.

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Barbara Sasse, Der Weg zu einer archäologischen Wissenschaft. Band 2: Die Ur- und Frühgeschichtliche Archäologie 1630–1850. Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde Band 69,2. De Gruyter, Berlin, Boston 2018. € 123,95. ISBN: 978-3-11-047287-5 (Hardcover). € 123,95. ISBN: 978-3-11-047474-9 (PDF). doi: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110474749>. IX + 482 with 76 figures, 1 table, and 7 plates.

This monumental monograph is the result of a German *Habilitation*: that quaint 19th century tradition whereby those aspiring to a scholarly career in German academia demonstrate their ability to teach university students by producing a higher-level piece of research – higher, that is, than a Ph. D. The logic of this escapes most Anglophone colleagues (this review is mainly addressed at them and other colleagues outside the German sphere of linguistic and cultural influence), but similar systems are known in France and in Central and Eastern European countries which were heavily influenced by German academic traditions. This origin of the book needs to be mentioned here because it usually has two major consequences: the sheer volume of such *Habilitationsschriften* as well as their all too often mind-numbing compilation of extensive data and minute details – something that an English friend of mine once called ‘funnel vision’ (although at the time, some 30 years ago, he applied it to German archaeology as a whole). Fortunately, ‘funnel vision’ is not a problem of this book, which offers extensive details as well as wider vistas of the history of our discipline. It still leaves the reader to grapple with two volumes of a combined 928 pages exploring the development of prehistoric and early historical archaeology in central, northern, and parts of western Europe from its origins in Classical Antiquity to the 19th century, with concomitant challenges for any reviewer. This is certainly true of the present reviewer, although we are dealing here ‘only’ with volume 2 covering over 482 pages the period from the earlier 17th century to the middle of the 19th century (for vol. 1, see above the review by Alain Schnapp). A third consequence, the often late publication of a *Habilitation* thesis, will be considered towards the end of this review.

From the systemic context to that of intellectual tradition: In Germany, the history of archaeology used to be studied as *Forschungsgeschichte*, in the sense of a history of research methods and advances in the knowledge of *Fundmaterial*. I remember the stultifying effect of this perspective from my student days in the 1970s when it almost turned me off this subject for good. The Anglophone perspective of a history of archaeological thought, as exemplified by the works of Glyn DANIEL in Britain (*The Origins and Growth of Archaeology*. Pelican books A885 [Harmondsworth 1967]; *A Hundred and Fifty Years of Archaeology*² [London 1975]) and Bruce G. TRIGGER in the USA (*A History of Archaeological Thought* [Cambridge 1989]), was essentially missing for a long time. In Germany, it only came to the fore from the late 1980s, with a new generation of archaeologists uncovering the instrumentalisation of archaeology, and the complicity of German archaeologists, in the Third Reich (e. g. S. WOLFRAM / U. SOMMER [eds], *Macht der Vergangenheit – Wer macht Vergangenheit: Archäologie und Politik*. Beitr. Ur- u. Frühgesch. Mitteleuropa 3 [Wilkau-Haslau 1993]; H. HÄRKE [ed.], *Archaeology, Ideology and Society*. The German

Experience. Gesellschaften u. Staaten Epochenwandel 7 [Frankfurt a. M. 2000]). While this unsavoury episode was not entirely unknown, of course, it had previously been regarded as a research topic for historians, not for the archaeologists themselves. The new trend in studying the history of our discipline(s) was reinforced by German re-unification at the end of that decade, ironically distracting attention from a not dissimilar phenomenon of exploitation in recently dissolved Communist East Germany. As a side effect, this lop-sided attention also eliminated Marxist theory from serious debate in German archaeology. Since the 1990s, the discovery of postprocessual archaeological theory (more amenable to German approaches and debates than processual theory had been) has led to an increasing concern with the history of thought, but with a continued focus on historical links between politics and archaeology, quite understandable against the backcloth of German history.

In that sense, the book reviewed here combines a comparatively recent trend in German archaeological debate with a format born of old German university structures. It is not an entirely happy marriage, but the author has tried hard to make it work. Given its subject matter, the volume is, not unexpectedly, structured chronologically but with strong thematic elements woven into this structure. There are two of these chronological blocks, of uneven length, the first under the heading of ‘Enlightenment Archaeology’ lasting from 1630 to 1807 (chapter 1, pp. 1–244), its beginning marked by the foundation of the *Reichsantiquariat* in Stockholm and its end by another Scandinavian juncture, the foundation of the *Nationalmuseum* in Copenhagen (both named by the author thus in their German versions). These one-and-a-half centuries are followed in the second block by half a century of ‘historicist and early evolutionist archaeology’, essentially the first half of the 19th century (chapter 2, pp. 245–386). One may quibble with these subdivisions, and the end date of 1850 certainly looks like a compromise between the year of the 1848 bourgeois revolution and the 1852 foundation of the first pan-German association, the *Gesammtverein der deutschen Geschichts- und Alterthumsvereine*, and its offspring, the *Römisch-Germanisches Zentral-Museum* at Mainz; but one could probably quibble with almost any other structure. One should note, however, that institutional and organisational events have been taken here to indicate watersheds in the development of archaeological thought in Europe. A third, much shorter chapter presents the main conclusions of this study (chapter 3, pp. 387–399). Some 80 figures and plates from contemporary sources discussed in the text, apparently most of them redrawn or imaged by the author, serve to illustrate the subject matter. The volume is rounded off by the usual scholarly apparatus of bibliography (a massive 34 pages of primary sources and secondary publications, occasionally a difficult distinction) and by two indices (of persons and places), which are invaluable for making targeted use of the book – after all, few will read it cover to cover.

Those who do are plunged, after the short preface, straight into chapter 1 because the introduction to volume 1 is, understandably but unhelpfully, not repeated here. Thus, the reader of volume 2 only learns from an aside what the “methodological algorithm” (p. 36) of this study is: progression from sources to analysis to evaluation and interpretation. The structure of this chapter follows this “algorithm” in its exploration of the development of archaeology in the 17th and 18th centuries, regularly harking back to the Renaissance which is covered in volume 1, usefully linking the two. One of the new insights for this reviewer was the role of medical doctors who, in the Enlightenment, took over part of the leading role which lawyers and artists had previously played in the Renaissance. Thus, the Danish antiquarian Ole Worm, who belongs to the transition between these epochs, had studied medicine in Northern Italy where the empirical-rational method was taught which these medically trained scholars then transferred to the study of the past. Overall, the author sees in this phase of Enlightenment Archaeology “a condensing of archaeological methodology” (p. 127). This process included the first inklings of source criticism (borrowed from history); observations on

finds association; the progress of excavation techniques (with increasing attention to stratigraphy, as yet imperfectly understood); the improvement of measurements and illustrations (from symbolic to realistic); and the transition (often by donation) of aristocratic collections to scholarly museums. It was in the discussion of the latter that probably the only factual error of the author occurred (and it is a minor one not repeated later in the volume): the Tradescant family who provided the ‘curiosities’ for the foundation of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford were not themselves from that city – their estate and home was at Lambeth, south of London.

The key intellectual development of these two centuries is identified by the author in the succession of two historical models: from genealogy to peoples. A number of factors, including voyages of discovery, were leading to a greater awareness of cultural differences (she uses the modish term ‘Diversität’ [p. 185] that was not used widely, if at all, in German archaeology when she wrote the original thesis), and by the end of the 18th century the first attempts at defining culture on the basis of artefacts were undertaken. But the author puts great emphasis on the observation that in the context of the 18th century the ethnic interpretation whereby Celts were thought to precede the Romans in England (William Stukeley) and in Alsace (Johann Daniel Schoepflin) has to be considered “progressive” because it contributed to “de-mythologizing the oldest period” (p. 241). It was only later that this progress turned into ‘Celtomania’; this is also true of ‘Germanomania’ (p. 369). Equally interesting for its balanced assessment is the excellent, earlier explanation of the political contexts (dynastic and religious rather than nationalist) of the discovery of Childeric’s burial (found at Tournai in 1653) and the contrasting treatment of the Merovingian royal graves at Saint-Germain-des-Prés (discovered 1643–1646; pp. 32–34).

In the first half of the 19th century, the emerging archaeological discipline underwent some marked progress on several aspects, and, while not as momentous as the pace of change in the second half, this explains why the author felt it necessary to devote the entire chapter 2 to this half century. It saw, for example, some (though variable) progress in the systematisation of archaeological collections across Europe, with greatest success in Scandinavia; it witnessed the first steps towards an institutionalisation of pre- and protohistory as an academic subject at German-speaking universities (lagging behind Classical Archaeology by several decades); and the emergence of local and regional history societies, many of them with an interest in antiquities, after the Napoleonic Wars, which had brought questions of regional and national identities to the fore. Concerning archaeological methods, the author singles out the breakthrough for the acceptance of stratigraphy initiated by geologists and adopted by botanists and some archaeologists (the best-known being Jens Jacob Asmussen Worsaae and Boucher de Perthes); she rightly emphasises the spread of the concept of the ‘closed find’ in parts of European archaeology, and the intense debate on the classification of artefacts (much of this initiated by Christian Jürgensen Thomsen’s work since 1816), paving the way towards methodological standardisation of typology and chronology on an empirical basis; and she mentions the ‘invention’ of the classic tripartite type of excavation report (excavation results, finds, and interpretation; Karl Wilhelmi, 1830).

In archaeological thought proper, the most important developments were probably the now decisive shift of research questions towards peoples, their identities, histories, and migrations; and a return to Classical concepts of developmental stages of culture and technology. Both these developments foreshadowed the rise of cultural evolutionism and of national archaeologies in the later 19th century. There are two incidents from the middle of the century which intrigued this reviewer because they demonstrate how close together apparent reason and obvious bias may be, not just within archaeological debates but even within the same individual. Both relate to the Danish archaeologist Worsaae, and they need to be seen together although the author of the volume failed to juxtapose them. In 1846, Worsaae suggested that the German attempts to identify their

ancestors in early populations are a problem for archaeological progress, and they would be better advised to use medieval populations for this exercise (p. 249). But two years later, exactly at the start of the First Danish-German War, the same ‘reasonable’ Worsaae postulated that the (early medieval) Danevirke dyke is the historical and natural border between Denmark and Germany (p. 370) – a political use of archaeological evidence associated in current debates almost exclusively with Gustaf Kossinna and the Nazis.

But it is the short chapter 3 which most readers will want to read in full before using the table of contents and indices to navigate through the hundreds of pages in search of specific data or information. In these 13 pages, the author presents her view of the overall results of her study (not just those relating to volume 2), and she does it in the emphatic style of clear answers to concise questions – which are the questions she had posed at the beginning of volume 1. There are six of them:

- 1) Why did any scholarly concern with remains of the past start at all, and with what aims?
- 2) Which non-scientific factors influenced aims and the choice of methods?
- 3) Is it possible to see chronological horizons (in the development of the discipline), and what do they relate to?
- 4) Was there an increase in insights (and understanding)?
- 5) Was there a purposeful choice of methods?
- 6) Were there differences between the European regions and nations?

Only some of her answers shall be commented on here. Most importantly: yes, the author does see an overall development of thought which happened in a “dialectic wave movement” (p. 395) of phases tending either towards evolutionist or historical (and historicising) explanations, something she interprets as part of a general process of secularisation. But bizarrely, she presents the results of her analysis of this development in a *Stufenchronologie* of the type so beloved of traditional German archaeology, though applied here to the history of thought, shown in colour tables (pls. 5–6), with phases numbered RI–III (for Renaissance), AI–III (for Enlightenment), and First Historical Phase of Pre- and Protohistory (p. 393). Her identification of the dominant paradigms for each of these ‘periods’ is more interesting and results in the following sequence: humanistic–antiquarian (for the Renaissance, dealt with in vol. 1), culture-historical–archaeological (Enlightenment) and historicist (First Historical Phase). The really interesting point about this system is, however, that paradigm changes and advances in the institutionalisation of the discipline did not coincide neatly, so the author had to ‘harmonise’ these two parallel developments in order to arrive at her system of phases – a problem which anybody creating a *Stufenchronologie* with actual artefacts (let alone other features of the archaeological record) is only too aware of. On the other hand, the author concedes that paradigms are historical processes which may well overlap (thus explicitly contradicting Thomas S. KUHN who is named in her text on p. 394 but is missing in the bibliography: *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Internat. Encyclopedia Unified Scien. Foundations Unity Scien. 2,2 [Chicago 1962]).

Another interesting line of her conclusions relates to the development of methods, which she sees as having been driven by questions changing over time. She identifies the “foundations of disciplinary independence” (p. 396) of the archaeological subjects as being classification, the exact documentation of context, and the Principle of the Closed Find (her capitalisation), with everything else derived from those factors – in explicit contradiction to Alain SCHNAPP’s triad of stratigraphy, typology, and technology as foundations of archaeological disciplines (*La conquête du passé. Aux origines de l’archéologie* [Paris 1993]). Differences between countries and regions in the development of methods and concepts arose, in her view, from the presence or absence of a

Roman past, which exerts its influence up to the present day. This factor gave the Scandinavian countries, with their distance to *Romanitas* in combination with their “centralised archaeological tradition” (p. 398), a key role in the development and institutionalisation of *Ur- und Frühgeschichte* (pre- and protohistoric archaeology). Perhaps the most surprising statements of the author, where she diverges most clearly from the conventional German archaeology of her generation, is the comment that there is no fundamental difference between inductive and deductive approaches (“Both are right where appropriate”, p. 397) and her final agreement with Leo KLEJN’s critical observation (Is German archaeology atheoretical? Comments on Georg Kossack. Prehistoric archaeology in Germany: Its history and current situation. Norwegian Arch. Rev. 26, 1993, 49–54. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00293652.1993.9965557>) that the “basic concept of German archaeological research continues to be historicist” (*historistisch*; p. 399).

In this reviewer’s opinion, the author simply has to be commended for her achievement. Given the pan-European and multi-period background of her previous research and employment, few archaeologists would have been better prepared and qualified to undertake this research and to write this book, although it makes some of the geographical gaps in her coverage (explored in Schnapp’s review of vol. 1, above) even more puzzling. But whatever the minor deficiencies of this book, it is an immense contribution to the study of the history of archaeology. It will from now on be the indispensable compendium of sources and data, but beyond that its historical insights will also serve as a starting point for further debates on the early intellectual foundations of the discipline. Having said this, the book remains essentially an essay on the history of thought forced to fill the oversize frame of a two-volume monograph, and the author would be well advised to distil her main arguments into a couple of compact articles, preferably including one in English. This is not to say that her text is a bad example of *Wissenschaftsdeutsch* – it is not. But like almost any other scholarly text in German, it will be a challenge to non-native speakers, and there is not even an English or French summary provided for those who have to rely on their School German to get a quick idea of what these 900-plus pages (counting both volumes) are all about.

An internationally accessible, concise presentation of her key ideas would seem advisable for another reason. The 20-odd year delay between writing the thesis (from 1994; submitted in 2000 at the University of Freiburg) and its publication (vol. 1 in 2017, vol. 2 a year later), while partly due to extensive updating and expansion, has placed this book now in a context which is substantially different from the one in which it was conceived and drafted. When the author embarked on her thesis, the exploration of the impact of Nazism on archaeology was still in its early stages; and while the apparent link between the emergence of national states and the origin of the ‘project’ (everything was a ‘project’ in those days) of prehistoric archaeology was a central issue in Anglophone theory debates of the 1990s (see e. g. *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe*, edited by Margarita DÍAZ-ANDREU and Timothy C. CHAMPION [Boulder, San Francisco, and London 1996]), there is no evidence here that the author was aware of it at the time. By the time of publication, the search for any traces of nationalism in archaeology, and indeed all humanities, has been reaching fever pitch in some quarters and is now being given further impetus by the recent rise of post-colonialism. This should affect neither the core data nor the interpretations of the author; after all, the chronological range of her thesis ends just before the critical period for this link between nation states and national archaeologies (in Germany, at any rate). But at least one early reaction to the publication (J. NOTROFF [Rez. zu]: B. Sasse, Der Weg zu einer archäologischen Wissenschaft 1–2. RGA Ergbd. 69,1–2 (Berlin, Boston 2017–2018). Arch. Inf. 42, 2019, 441–444. doi: <https://doi.org/10.11588/ai.2019.0.69478>) foregrounds the deep roots of national archaeologies (implying a negative connotation) supposedly uncovered by the author – a slant which this reviewer cannot read into the essential results nor the main drift of the book. In fact, the section on the role of archaeology in the formation of national identities (pp. 364–371) empha-

sises the European-wide quest in the earlier 19th century for identities in general, and the pages which summarise external influences on the discipline (pp. 387–389) do not once mention the word ‘national’. A summary of her results in article form would therefore give the author also an opportunity to clarify her original intentions and restate concisely her views on the contemporary relevance, political or otherwise, of this deep exploration of disciplinary history.

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