

COINS IN CONTEXT I

New perspectives for the interpretation
of coin finds

Colloquium Frankfurt a. M., October 25–27, 2007

edited by

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VERLAG PHILIPP VON ZABERN · MAINZ AM RHEIN

KOMMISSION FÜR GESCHICHTE DES ALTERTUMS
DER AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN UND DER LITERATUR · MAINZ

RÖMISCH-GERMANISCHE KOMMISSION
DES DEUTSCHEN ARCHÄOLOGISCHEN INSTITUTS · FRANKFURT A. M.

STUDIEN
ZU FUNDMÜNZEN
DER ANTIKE (SFMA)

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON
MARIA R.-ALFÖLDI UND HANS-MARKUS VON KAENEL

BAND 23



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Gefördert durch das Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, Bonn,
das Hessische Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst, Wiesbaden.

Redaktionelle Betreuung: Nathan T. Elkins, Stefan Krmnicek, David Wigg-Wolf

Bibliografische Information Der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet
über <<http://dnb.d-nb.de>> abrufbar.

ISBN 978-3-8053-4091-5

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Druck und Verarbeitung: Hubert & Co., Göttingen.
Gedruckt auf säurefreiem, chlorfrei gebleichtem Papier.

Printed in Germany

Economic and social patterns in Celtic coin use

Michael Nick*

1. Introduction

When working on Celtic coinage it is common to be concerned with archaeological context. For example it is not possible to solve chronological problems without it, and as H.-J. Kellner has stated, Celtic coins are archaeological objects and therefore must be examined with archaeological methods¹. But this was not always so. For a long time research was conducted primarily by means of traditional numismatic and historical methods, regarding the coin itself as the source. They were dated by connecting them with historical events, but not by the archaeological context². Not until the mid-1970s and the early-1980s, with the examination of the coins from the excavations at Basle³ and the inventory of graves containing Celtic coins⁴, did these paradigms begin to change.

But there is not only a closer archaeological context, above all the stratigraphical context. Context can also mean the different functions in coin use. As an example to show how the method is applied in the author's work⁵ the following questions will be examined in this article:

1. Did coins circulate for economic purposes?
2. What did such circulation look like? (metals, denominations, in which framework?)
3. Are there regional differences in the use of coins?

* The author wants to thank Dr. David G. Wigg-Wolf (Frankfurt) for proof-reading this text.

1 H.-J. Kellner, *Keltische Münzen*. Ostbairische Grenzmarken 26, 1984, 60-75 Taf. 2-6; esp. 61: *"Die keltischen Münzen erzählen uns zunächst nichts, so daß die gängigen numismatischen Methoden allein nicht ausreichen. So bleibt uns nur, diese Gepräge primär als archäologische Fundstücke zu betrachten und in archäologischer Methodik zu verfahren."*

2 The most prominent exponents of this doctrine were J.-B. Colbert de Beaulieu and K. Castelin. See for example: J.-B. Colbert de Beaulieu, *Traité de Numismatique Celtique I. Méthodologie des ensembles* Ann. Litt. Univ. Besançon 135 135 (Paris 1973) and K. Castelin, *Keltenmünzen in den Landschaften um das Rheinknie bei Basel*. In: S. Scheers (ed.), *Studia Paulo Naster Oblata. I. Numismatica Antiqua. Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta* 12 (Leuven 1982) 287-304. Recapitulating the history of research: A. Burkhardt/W.B. Stern/G. Helmig, *Keltische Münzen aus Basel. Numismatische und metallanalytische Untersuchungen*. Antiqua 25. Veröff. SGUF (Basel 1994) esp. 41; M. Nick, *Keltische Numismatik in der Schweiz 1972-2005*. Schweizer Münzbl. 56, 2006, 9-19; esp. 10-11.

3 A. Furger-Gunti/H.-M. von Kaenel, *Die keltischen Fundmünzen aus Basel*. Schweizer. Num. Rundschau 55, 1976, 35-76 Taf. 2-8.

4 H. Polenz, *Münzen in latènezeitlichen Gräbern Mitteleuropas aus der Zeit zwischen 300 und 50 vor Christi Geburt*. Bayer. Vorgeschbl. 47, 1982, 27-222.

5 M. Nick, *Gabe, Opfer, Zahlungsmittel – Strukturen keltischen Münzgebrauchs im westlichen Mitteleuropa*. 2 vol. Freiburger Beitr. Arch. u. Gesch. Erst. Jts. 12 (Rahden/Westf. 2006).

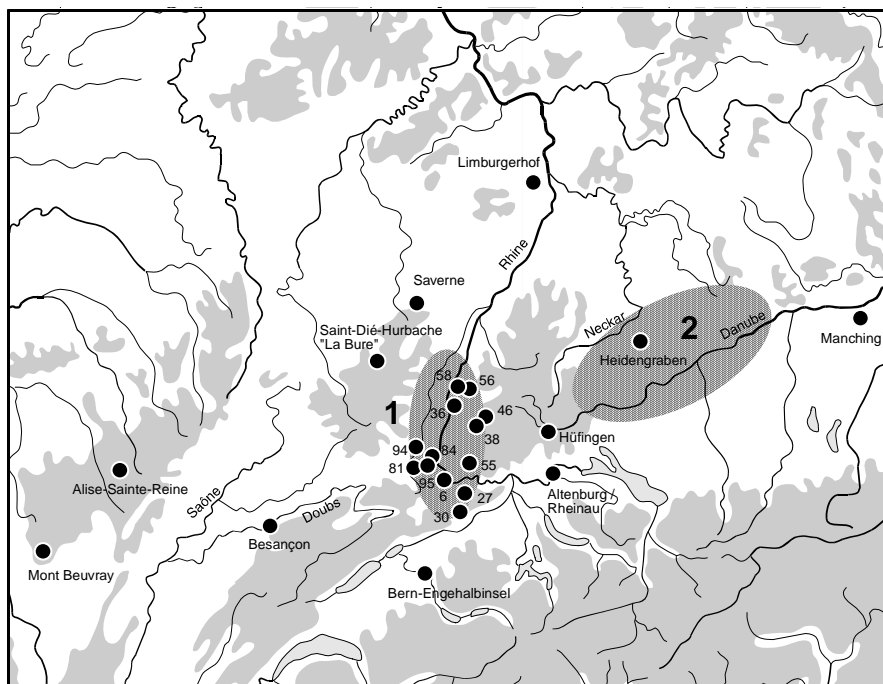


Fig. 1: The study area with the sites mentioned in the text. 1: the southern Oberrheintal, 2: the Mittlere Schwäbische Alb.

Even though basic research on dating and geographical attribution of the coins is still in progress (and will continue in the future), to a certain degree it is already possible to consider these questions. It is obvious that they cannot be answered exclusively from the coins and their distribution themselves; the other archaeological evidence and those archaeological sites which have not yielded coins must also be taken into consideration. For the individual numismatist this is, in practice, hardly possible if the state of publication for the relevant regions is insufficient for the period in question. Exceptionally, these conditions are fulfilled for two adjacent regions; one in and one bordering south-western Germany (fig. 1). A comprehensive publication of the late-La Tène material from the southern "Oberrheintal" was undertaken by G. Weber-Jenisch, which is supplemented by several articles by the Department of Archaeology in Basle (Archäologische Bodenforschung des Kantons Basel-Stadt) and a general survey for the canton of Basle-Country by J. Tauber⁶. The other region to be compared with this area is the "Mittlere Schwäbische Alb" published by G. Wieland⁷.

⁶ Selected literature: Southern Oberrheintal: Y. Hecht/P. Jud/N. Spichtig, *Der südliche Oberrhein in spätkeltischer Zeit. Beispiel einer frühgeschichtlichen Region*. Arch. Schweiz 14, 1991, 98-114;

2. Basis and patterns

At first all coin finds from the study area must be registered. This is followed by an examination of the chronology and the distribution of the main types⁸. Chronological questions must be approached by means of the archaeological evidence, either by closed features such as graves⁹ or on the basis of the period of occupation of the settlements where the coin type in question was found¹⁰. The more settlements that are available for this purpose, the sounder the estimation of the circulation period of a type will be, and by means of distribution maps it is possible to determine the area of circulation. However, it is important to realise that a high concentration of a type at one site does not necessarily imply production there. The coins could also have been arrived there by other means, for example long-distance trade. Only diffusion into the surrounding region increases the probability of minting at or near the site¹¹.

The character of coin circulation in the study area can be established by means of a comparison of some significant coin series from settlements with those from adjacent regions (fig. 2)¹². Coin series from the southern Oberrheintal suitable for this purpose exist from Besançon, Basle-Gasfabrik (6), Tarodunum (46), Kegelriss (38) and Riegel (56). Obvious differences in compositions are apparent from a comparison with the finds from the settlements to the West at Alesia (Alise-Sainte-Reine; not the finds from the military structures of Caesar's siege) and Bibracte (Mont Beuvray); to the North from Saint-Dié-Hurbache "La Bure", Limburgerhof and Saverne; to the South from the settlement at Berne-Engelhalbinsel; and to the East with the finds from Altenburg, the Heidengraben near Grabenstetten and Manching. The coin circulation in the southern Oberrheintal is dominated by the potin coins of the Sequani group A (known as "Sequanerpotin" or "grosse tête") and quinarii of the Kaletedou type (fig. 3). Imitations of obols from Massalia as well as staters and their quarters (imitations of staters of Philipp II. of Macedonia) are also to be found in small numbers there. Although potin coins of the Leuci

G. Weber-Jenisch, *Der Limberg bei Sasbach und die spätlätènezeitliche Besiedlung des Oberrheingebietes*. Materialhefte zur Arch. in Baden-Württemberg (Stuttgart 1995). – Canton Basle-City: Y. Hecht/G. Helmig/N. Spichtig/A. Burkhardt/E. Deschler-Erb/P. Jud/M. Poux/K. Richner/H. Rissanen/S. Rodel, *Zum Stand der Erforschung der Spätlatènezeit und der augusteischen Epoche in Basel*. Jahrb. SGUF 82, 1999, 163-182. – Canton Basle-Country: J. Tauber, *Die Latènezeit im Baselbiet – eine Bestandsaufnahme*. In: P. Jud (ed.), *Die spätkeltische Zeit am südlichen Oberrhein*. Kolloquium Basel, 17./18. Okt. 1991 (Basel 1994) 45-48.

7 G. Wieland, *Die Spätlatènezeit in Württemberg*. Forsch. u. Ber. Vor- u. Frühgesch. Baden-Württemberg 63 (Stuttgart 1996).

8 Nick (note 5): vol. 1, 19-85 (chronology and distribution); vol. 2 (catalogue of coin finds).

9 Polenz (note 4).

10 For example, C. Haselgrove, *Les potins "au personnage courant"*. Gallia 52, 1996, 51-59.

11 Although the settlement at Manching (Bavaria) was situated in a zone where circulation was dominated by silver and gold, a high proportion of potin coins was found there, but they did not spread from the settlement into the surrounding region. Therefore it is probable that they were not cast in Bavaria, but arrived there by means of long-distance trade. See B. Ziegeus, *Inventaire des potins de Manching, de Bavière et de Bohême*. Gallia 52, 1996, 95-100 and Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 115-116.

12 Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 194-197.

D.	Type	Al	MB	B	BSG	Ta	Ke	Ri	Bu	Li	Sa	BE	A	H	Ma
P	Senones (dIT 7434)	70	3												
P	Lingones (S ornaments)	228	19	min. 1					2	1			1		
P	Lingones (Janus head)	242	9	4	2			1?	31				4		6
Q	Aedui (dIT 5138-5252)	5	min. 82	1	1				3				13		1
Q	Aedui (other)	3	min. 67									1	1		
P	Aedui (bull)	10	176												
P	Aedui (seahorse)	1	405									1			1
P	Sequani A1/5	86	223 (+14?)	?	2				?						3
P	Sequani A, others	69	133	25	104	52	31	12	X	10	1	7	62	2	37
Q	KALETE-DOU	16	81 (+8?)	5	12	37	8	1	30 (+1?)	15		4	172 (+11?)	1	10
O	Basel-Gasfabrik				14	4				4					1
P	Leuci (boar)	13	7	4	25	11	13 (+1?)	6	265	177 (+5?)	25	3 (+1?)	17 (+2)	3	53
P	Zurich type				5	1						17 (+1?)	19		4
Q	Bushel (S. Germany)											2	min. 68	2	181
KS	S. Germany				1								2	2	143
Au	S. Germany rainbow cups									3			5	7	31 (+5?)
Q	S. Germany cross types									5				2	60
KS	Boii														17

Fig. 2: Shortlist of some import coin series from eastern Gaul, Switzerland and Germany.

Grey: main coin types in the region. A = Altenburg (Baden-Württemberg), Al = Alise-Sainte-Reine (Côte-d'Or; coin finds from the oppidum), B = Besançon (Doubs), BE = Bern-Engelhalbinsel (CH), BSG = Basel-Gasfabrik (6), Bu = Saint-Dié-Hurbache ("La Bure", Vosges), H = Heidengraben near Grabenstetten (Baden-Württemberg), Ke = Kegelriß (38), Li = Limburgerhof (Rheinland-Pfalz), Ma = Manching (Bavaria), MB = Mont Beuvray (Saône-et-Loire), Ri = Riegel (56), Sa = Saverne (Bas-Rhin), Ta = Tarodunum (46). D. = denomination, Au = gold denomination, KS = Kleinsilber/small silver denomination (= obol), O = obol, P = potin, Q = quinarius. Quantities after Nick vol. 2 (note 5) with modifications, except for Altenburg (mainly unpublished) and Mont Beuvray (K. Gruel/L. Popovitch, *Les monnaies gauloises et romaines de l'oppidum de Bibracte*. Collection Bibracte 13 [Glux-en-Glenne 2007] with modifications).

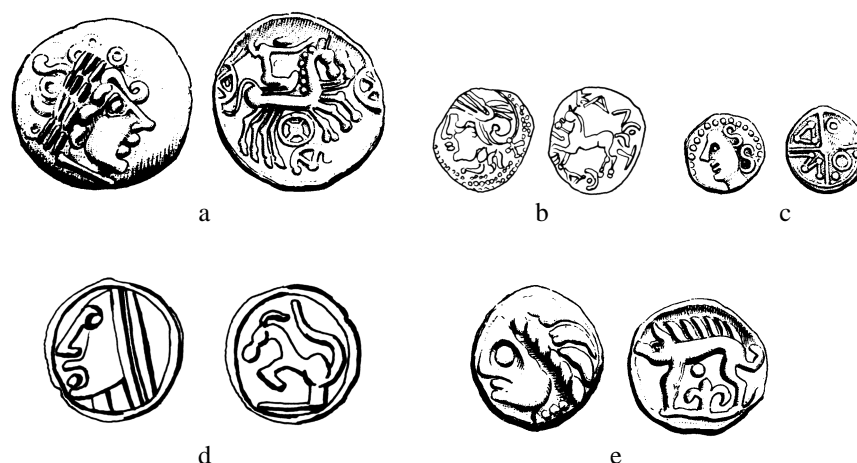


Fig. 3: Main coin types from the southern Upper Rhine Valley.

a: Stater with wheel ("Radstater"), b: Quinarius of Kaletedou-type, c: Imitation of Massalia-obol, Basel-Gasfabrik type, d: Potin of Sequani type A, e: Potin of Leuci type. Drawings: a, c and e: H. de la Tour, *Atlas de monnaies gauloises* (Paris 1892) pl. 5, 2172; pl. 36-37, 8901. 9078; b: F. Müller/G. Kaenel/G. Lüscher (eds.), *Die Schweiz vom Paläolithikum bis zum frühen Mittelalter. 4: Eisenzeit* (Basel 1999) 224 fig. 9; d: Nick, *Sequanerpotin* (note 13) pl. 2 (type A2/6).

appear in considerable numbers as well, they only spread into the southern Oberrheintal from the north, where they are present in much higher proportions in the coin series¹³.

In contrast to the Gallo-Roman period, coinage played a relatively minor role in late-La Tène society, so that we must ask whether Celtic coins did indeed possess an economic purpose at all; but a number of indications suggest that it did. For example, in southern Germany, especially in Bavaria, monetary systems exist which consist of quinarii and associated quarters. In the case of the Dühren type (fig. 4) the quinarii as well as the quarters bear the same designs, so that a correlation between the two denominations is undeniable¹⁴. The same applies to the Kaletedou quinarii and the imitations of obols of Massalia on the upper Rhine. Although they do not have the same images, they correspond in weight just like the Bavarian silver coins. Bimetallic monetary systems can also be reconstructed on

13 Coin types: For the Sequani group A see M. Nick, *Die keltischen Münzen vom Typ "Sequanerpotin". Eine Studie zu Typologie, Chronologie und geographischer Zuweisung eines ostgallischen Münztyps*. *Freiburger Beiträge zur Archäologie und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends* Bd. 2 (Rahden/Westf. 2000). – For the others see Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 23-24 (staters and quarters with wheel); 59-63 (Kaletedou with classification); 63-67 (obols); 72-75 (potin coins of Leuci type).

14 For Dühren type see Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 45-46.



Fig. 4: Quinarius (a) and quarter (b) of Dühren type.

After H.-J. Kellner, *Die Münzfunde von Manching und die keltischen Fundmünzen aus Südbayern* (Stuttgart 1990) pl. 54, 2178; pl. 6, 107 (photos: Archäologische Staatsammlung München, M. Eberlein).

the basis of legends. For example, the inscription Q DOCI SAM F on an eastern Gaulish quinarius type also appears on potin coins in a modified style (fig. 5). While these coins date well into the first century B.C., by implication there was a similar correlation between the earlier potin coins and the silver. The Houssen hoard at Colmar, for example, comprises mainly quinarii of Kaletedou type together with a dozen potin coins of Sequani group A¹⁵, and a similar function can be assumed for the two denominations. Moreover, in eastern Gaul they regularly appear together in the larger late-La Tène settlements¹⁶, the function of which as ports of trade is widely accepted¹⁷. However, gold coins are hardly found at these sites, in many cases only occurring as plated examples. In spite of the fact that



Fig. 5: Coins from eastern Gaul with legend Q DOCI SAM F or similar.

a: Quinarius with legend Q DOCI / Q DOCI SAM F), b-d: Potin coins of Sequani type B and C with legend Q SAM, DOCI and Q DOCI. Drawings: a: H. de la Tour, *Atlas de monnaies gauloises* (Paris 1892) pl. 16, 5405-5411; b-d: Nick, *Sequanerpotin* (note 13) pl. 2 (types B2/3 and B3); pl. 3 (C1 [BN 5508]).

¹⁵ D.F. Allen, *The Houssen hoard at Colmar*. *Rev. Belge Num.* 122, 1976, 79-85 pl. 3-5.

¹⁶ For example see Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 137 tab. 23.

¹⁷ Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 126-129 (market places).

denominations smaller than the stater (mostly quarters) existed in gold, they still represented such high values that they will have been used only to a small extent for daily monetary transactions. Numerous hoards illustrate that instead the primary function of gold coins was to serve as objects of wealth storage and as the social medium that this use implies¹⁸. The hoarded coins often show no or only small traces of circulation, while the fact that the deposits comprise numerous coins from the same dies argues for hoarding immediately after minting and against the purpose of the coins being to circulate as individual pieces. Moreover, many gold hoards from across Europe are linked by coins struck from the same dies. The depot of "Saint-Louis", for example, is linked in this manner with at least seven others, and the presence of three uniform contingents of "foreign" gold coins indicates the hoarding of a large number of coins of the same type at once. All these observations argue against formation of the hoards by the selection of single pieces drawn from monetary circulation. Rather they suggest a separate sphere of circulation between the hoards. The objects were used in the primarily social field of gifts of various kinds, for example "diplomatic gifts", dowries, tribute or soldiers' pay. Therefore we must assume that the small denominations in silver and non-ferrous metal were the favoured medium for the use of coins as economic objects. In this context gold only comes into consideration for large payments.

As a further basis for answering the question posed above the character of settlement patterns in the middle- and late-La Tène periods is of eminent interest. Thanks to open-pit lignite mining in the Rhineland it was possible to conduct archaeological examinations over all of an extensive area, so that A. Simons was able to reconstruct the development of settlement from the Bronze Age to the end of the Iron Age in the entire area¹⁹. Whereas from the Urnfield to the early-La Tène periods the landscape was initially structured by evenly spread hamlets, in the middle- and late-La Tène periods an obvious concentration of settlement is to be observed, so that the region was now characterised by fewer but larger settlements. On the basis of their size and exceptional finds some of them are assumed to have had central functions. The development observed here is also apparent in other regions²⁰, and overall the emergence of large urban settlements in the La Tène period can be ascribed to similar procedures.

A common view among scholars is that these large urban settlements had an effect on the surrounding regions, and a widely accepted theoretical model of exchange was proposed based on the archaeological evidence²¹: goods were imported from the Mediterranean to the large urban settlements and some of them

18 Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 88-104 (hoards of gold coins). See also M. Nick, *Am Ende des Regenbogens... – Ein Interpretationsversuch von Hortfunden mit keltischen Goldmünzen*. In: C. Haselgrove/D. Wigg-Wolf (eds.), *Iron Age Coinage and Ritual Practices. Studien zu Fundmünzen der Antike* 20 (Mainz 2005) 115-155.

19 A. Simons, *Bronze- und eisenzeitliche Besiedlung in den Rheinischen Lössbörden. Archäologische Siedlungsmuster im Braunkohlengebiet*. BAR Internat. Ser. 467 (Oxford 1989).

20 For example, P.S. Wells, *Settlement, Economy, and Cultural Change at the End of the European Iron-Age. Excavations at Kelheim in Bavaria, 1987-1991*. Internat. Monogr. Prehist. Arch. Ser. 6 (Ann Arbor 1993).

21 S. Fichtl, *La ville celtique. Les oppida de 150 av. J.-C. à 15 ap. J.-C.* (Paris 2000) 148-149.

No.	Site	Date	Site type/Features/Finds	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	CH-Balsthal ("Holzfluh"), SO	LT D1	S (coins; pottery; Nauheimer fibulae)	X	0	0	0	?	?		
6	CH-Basel-Gasfabrik, BS	LT C2 / D1	S; metalworking; pottery production	X	0	X	X	X	X	X	X
16a	CH-Messen ("Altes Schulhaus"), SO	LT D2, R	Farmstead (features; amphorae Dressel I; dolia; glass armring fragment; imported pottery; pottery)	0	0	0	0	X	X	0	0
26	CH-Sissach ("Sissacher Fluh"), BL	SLT	Refuge; fortification	0	0	0	0	0	0		
27	CH-Sissach-Brühl, BL	SLT (prob. D1)	S; pottery production	X	0	0	X	X	0		
30	CH-Waldenburg ("Gerstelflüh"), BL	SLT	S; iron ore mining?	0	0	0	0	X	0		
36	D-Breisach-Hochstetten, FR, BW	LT C2 / D1	S; coin minting (Au/Ag); pottery production	X	0	0	0	X	X	X	X
38	D-Ehrenstetten, Gde. Ehrenkirchen (Kegelriß), FR, BW	LT D1	S; fortification; coin minting (potin); mining	X	0	0	X	X	X	0	0
46	D-Kirchzarten ("Rotacker"; Tarodunum), FR, BW	LT C2 / D1	S (amphorae Dressel IA; glass armrings; coins; graphite-clay pottery); coin minting (Au); metalworking	X	X (2nd cen.)	0	0	X	0	X	X
47	D-Liel ("Karlshof"), Gde. Schliengen, LÖ, BW	SLT	Iron smelting site	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
49a	D-Mengen ("Abtsbreite"), Gde. Schallstadt-Wolfenweiler, FR, BW	MLT / LT D1	Viereckschanze	0	0	0	0	X	0	0	X
50	D-Merdingen ("Gasthaus zur Sonne"), FR, BW	SLT	Farmstead (painted pottery; amphorae)	0	0	0	0	X	0	0	X
54	D-Oberbergen ("Spührenloch"), Gde. Vogtsburg im Kaiserstuhl, FR, BW	LT D1	Farmstead (MLT fibulae; Nauheimer fibulae; "Kammstrich" pottery)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
55	D-Raitbach ("Schweig-matt"), Gde. Schopfheim, LÖ, BW	SLT, R	Quarry; millstone production	0	0	0	0	0	0		
56	D-Riegel ("Fronhofbuck"), EM, BW	LT D1	S (houses; pottery kiln; campana; graphite-clay pottery; painted pottery; "Kammstrich-Grübchen" pottery; coins; glass armrings); D with 27 electron coins	X	X	0	0	0	X	X	X

Fig. 6: Shortlist of recorded late-Latène findspots from the southern Oberrheintal. For the complete list see Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 453-456 tab. 85.

1: Celtic coins, 2: Roman coins, 3: Celtic coins of precious metals from outside the area, 4: Celtic coins of non-ferrous metal from outside the area, 5: amphorae, 6: other imported goods, 7: graphite-clay pottery, 8: painted pottery. D = depot, LT = Latène, MLT = mid-Latène, R = Roman, S = settlement, SLT = late-Latène.

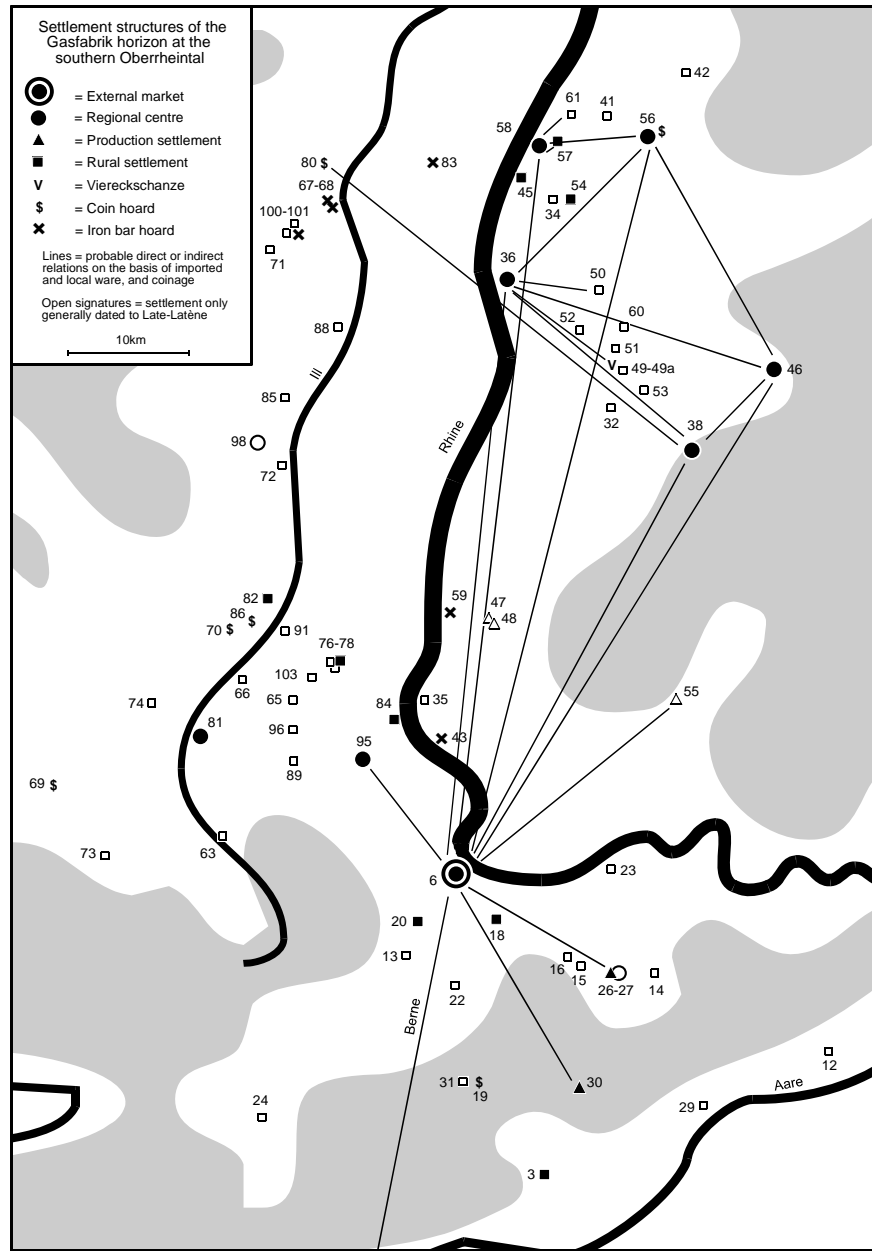


Fig. 7: Late-Latène findsspots from the southern Oberrheintal. After Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 134.

were passed on to minor settlements. The latter supplied the urban settlements with food, resources and surplus production for external trade. With this model in mind the author established three categories of settlement and defined them²². The first category, the "external markets", were situated on important long-distance trade routes and owed their existence primarily to trade with imported goods, for example wine, as numerous finds of amphorae indicate. Normally these sites produce sizeable coin series which often include external coins. "Regional centres" were situated on minor routes and played the role of relay stations between external markets and rural settlements. They yield fewer imported goods and coins (local and sometimes external). "Rural settlements" and "production settlements" were situated in areas suitable for agriculture or near deposits of resources. At such sites coins and imported goods are the exception.

3. Reconstructing exchange in a defined area

Firstly all find spots in the area must be recorded, taking into account economical features which are relevant to determining the status of each settlement. The factors can vary from region to region. In the case of the southern Oberrheintal the following were listed (fig. 6): chronology and the archaeological evidence on which it is based, Celtic coins (1), Roman coins (2), Celtic coins from outside the area, both in precious (3) and non-ferrous metal (4), amphorae (5), other imported goods (6), "Graphittonkeramik" (7), painted pottery (8), coin minting, economic basis (e.g. mining, pottery production et al.), settlement size, fortification, routes of communication and crafts. In many cases a settlement's features allow us to ascribe it to one of the categories defined. In the area under consideration here the site of Basle-Gasfabrik (6) can be characterised as an external market, situated as it was on the crossroads of two major long-distance trade routes, one coming from the West through the Burgundian Gate and continuing along the Rhine upstream to the East, the other coming from the South and following the Rhine downstream to the North (fig. 7). The other features characterizing an external market are also present here. A few other sites can be identified as regional centres, for example Kirchzarten "Rotacker" (Tarodunum, 46), Ehrenstetten-Ehrenkirchen "Kegelriss" (38), Breisach-Hochstetten (36), Riegel (56), Sasbach-Limberg (58), Illfurth (81) and Sierentz (95). The others can either not be characterized due to too few archaeological data being available, or belong to the third group of rural and crafts settlements.

Economic contacts between the sites can be detected by comparing the coin series and the distribution of local and imported goods. The coin series at the major settlements consist mainly of quinarii of Kaletedou type, potin coins of Sequani type A, and to a lesser extent of the Leuci type (fig. 8). As shown above this spectrum can clearly be differentiated from that from the adjacent regions, thus implying close contacts between the settlements compared here, and the use of coins as a medium of exchange between the sites. A few rare but characteristic

22 Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 131.

Den.	Coin type	BSG	Sis	BH	K	Ta	R	I	Ke	Sa	Sie
	Roman Republic						4	3			
1/1-St	Philippus (CH), silver stater	1									
1/1-St	Philippus (Upper Rhine)			1		1					
1/1, ¼	Philippus (wheel stater)	6				1					1
1/1-St	Philippus, other				1	2					
D	Allobroges (SLM 29)							1			
Q	Aedui (dIT 5138-5252)	1									
Q	KALETEDOU	12	1		8	37	1	1	1		1
O	Nauheim					1					
O	Massalia imitation (Basel-Gasfabrik)	14				4					
O	Massalia imitation (Tarodunum)					2					
O	Massalia imitation, other	1						1			
KS	Manching 2	1									
P	British potin?								1		
P	Leuci (boar)	25	1	4	14	11	6	2	1	1	2
P	Leuci (bull/lily)	1?	1								1
P	Lingones (head of Janus)	2					1?				2
P	Remi (bear/snake)	4			3					2	
P	Sequani A	106	7	17	31	55	12	9			13
P	Sequani B/C/D								1		
P	Sequani E							1			1
P	Sequani?				1	6					
P	Zurich type	5				1					
AE	"Riegel"					6	21				
AE	Aduatuci?										2
AE	GERMANVS INDVTILLI L.							1			5

Fig. 8: Shortlist of some imported coin series from the southern Upper Rhine Valley. Grey: main coin types. For the complete list see Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 137 tab. 23.

BH = Breisach-Hochstetten (36), BSG = Basel-Gasfabrik (6), I = Illfurth (81), K = Kegelriß (38), Ke = Kembs (84), R = Riegel (56), Sa = Sausheim (94), Sie = Sierentz (95), Sis = Sissach-Brühl (27), Ta = Tarodunum (46). Den. = denomination, AE = Aes, D = drachm, KS = Kleinsilber/small silver denomination (= obol), O = obol, P = potin, Q = quinarius, St = stater (1/1 = full, ¼ = quarter).

coin types, such as the Philippou-imitations of upper Rhine type, the obols of Basle-Gasfabrik type, potins of the Remi and Zurich types, and even the aes coins of Riegel type, help to define the contacts even more closely. The evidence of the coins shows that this circulation was mainly restricted to the urban settlements.

For the area examined it is possible to identify at least one local product which was marketed. These are the millstones manufactured from the red breccia deposits from the Wiesental (Raitbach, 55) in the southern Black Forest near Basle²³. Because the River Wiese, along which the stones were most likely transported, flows into the Rhine at Basle, they were very probably traded on the market at

23 Hecht/Jud/Spichtig (note 6) 109 fig. 19 (distribution map); Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 136-137; 189-190.

from BSG	to BSG	Rai	Wa	Sis	Sie	Ke	Ta	BH	Li	Ri
Amphorae			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Imported goods (italic bronze vessels, Campana et al.)					X	X		X		X
Coins				X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Regional trading goods (millstones)			X	X		X	X	X	X	
Luxury goods (e.g. glass armrings etc.)			X							
	Millstones	X								
	Iron		(X)							
	Pottery			(X)						
	Coins			(X)	(X)	X	X	X	X	(X)

Fig. 9: Economic contacts of the urban settlement of Basel-Gasfabrik to its surrounding region. – Based on Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 133-146. BH = Breisach-Hochstetten (36), BSG = Basel-Gasfabrik (6), Ke = Kegelriß (38), Li = Sasbach-Limberg (58), Rai = Raitbach (55), Ri = Riegel (56), Sie = Sierentz (95), Sis = Sissach-Brühl (27), Ta = Tarodunum (46), Wa = Waldenburg (30). X marks the contacts, which are based on the artefacts mentioned.

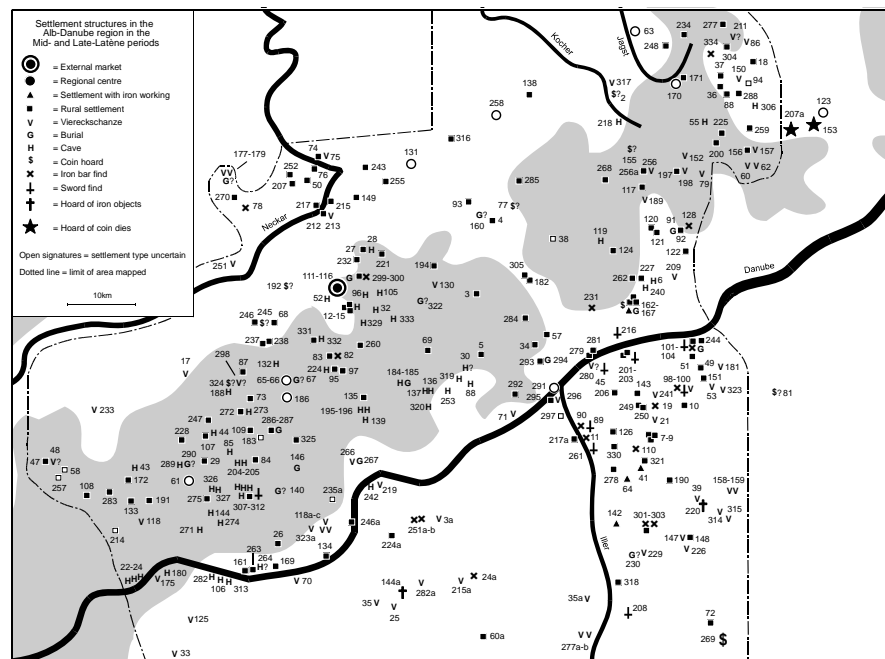


Fig. 10: Mid- and late-Latène findspots from the Mittlere Schwäbische Alb. After Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 163.

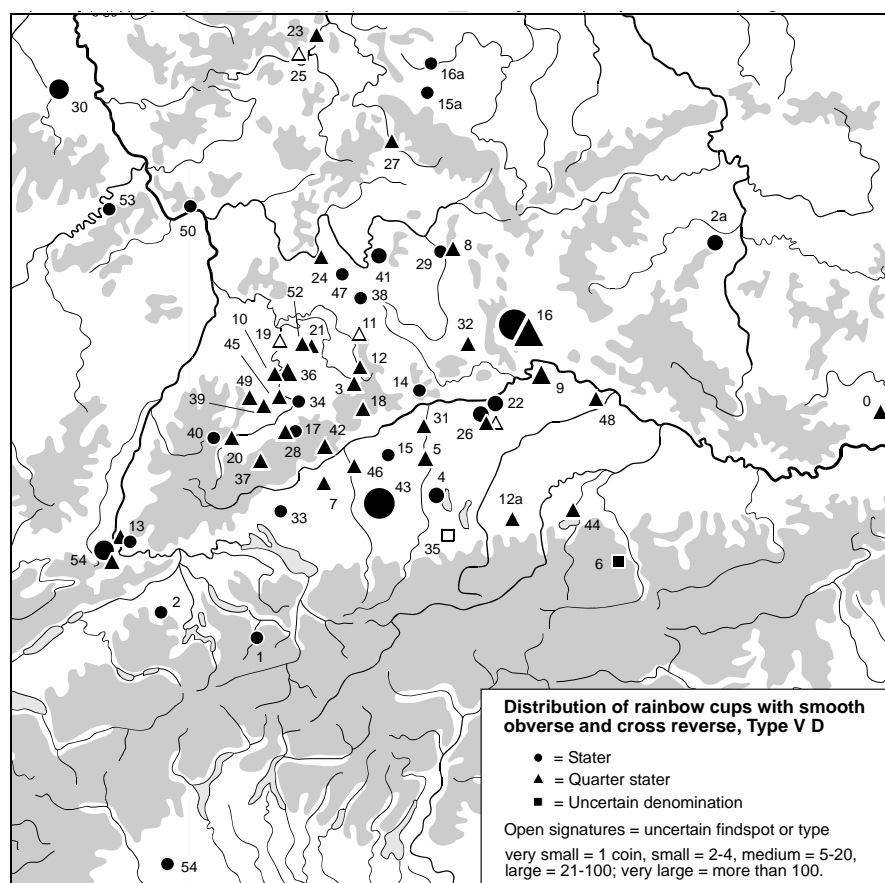


Fig. 11: Example for the domination of gold coins in the region of the Mittlere Schwäbische Alb: Distribution of the Rainbow Cups type V D. After Nick vol. 1 (note 6) 39. For further Gold types in the area see Nick vol. 1 (note 5) 24-40.

Basle-Gasfabrik. Only few millstones are found from distant sites (Berne, Kirchberg SG), and their main distribution is limited to the southern Oberheintal, which again confirms the close local contacts and that the goods were supplied via the urban settlements (fig. 9). Because Basle-Gasfabrik was conveniently situated for long-distance trade, it is probable that it was the emporium for goods imported from the Mediterranean. That this was so is indicated by thousands of sherds of amphorae found there, much more than at any other site in the region. From this site the wine was distributed to the surrounding region, either in unopened amphorae or refilled in smaller portions (and so in smaller vessels, possibly made out of perishable materials). The amphora sherds are in fact the only evidence for

such transactions. They are found at nearly every larger settlement, but also to a lesser extent at smaller ones.

The next step is to compare these results with those from another area, in this case the region of the Mittlere Schwäbische Alb (fig. 10), which must be examined in the same manner as that described above for the southern Oberrheintal. Only one site which can be characterised as a large urban settlement is known on the Alb, the so called "Heidengraben" near Grabenstetten (111-116). The Heidengraben is also the only site in this area which has yielded a large coin series. This consists mainly of gold coins; the few smaller denominations in silver and potin are external, and there is no small change of local origin. At the other sites in the region the situation is the same, but the quantities are smaller. An assessment of the single finds from the area conveys the impression that coin circulation was largely dominated by gold (fig. 11). The comparison with the southern Oberrheintal shows quite clearly that coin use on the Mittlere Schwäbische Alb was completely different. No monetary economy existed; almost exclusively gold coins were used, and then for storing high values. This example demonstrates that the character of coin use is not transferable from one area to another. Even adjacent regions can differ greatly.

4. Conclusion

Some of the underlying patterns may seem commonplace. However, it is important to draw attention to them because from time to time it is necessary to bear in mind the patterns of thought and paradigms used in one's own work. But the main result is that only when even those sites which have yielded no coins and the other archaeological data they have produced are considered is it possible to estimate the intensity and the character of coin circulation in a region. Indeed the lack of published archaeological data often anticipates an examination like the one described here. As a result the author hopes that future research will see an increase in the publication of middle- and late-La Tène material from coherent areas.