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REVIEWS

MICHAEL NICK, *Die Keltischen Münzen der Schweiz: Katalog und Auswertung. Inventar der Fundmünzen der Schweiz 12*. Three volumes, 1680 pages, 387 figures, 113 plates, CD-Rom. ISBN 978-2-940086-11-5. Bern, Schweizerische Akademie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften, 2015. Price: CHF 219.

THIS MAGISTERIAL study by Michael Nick, the twelfth in the *Inventar der Fundmünzen der Schweiz* (IFS) series represents the outcome of an eight-year undertaking supported by the Schweizerischen Nationalfonds zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung to record all the Celtic coins found in the territory of present-day Switzerland and Liechtenstein. In one sense, this work is a twenty-first century Swiss version of Derek Allen's 1960 reappraisal of the origins of Iron Age coinage in Britain with its supporting gazetteer of find-spots, which together set the agenda and standard for much subsequent research in the field, as Nick's publication will undoubtedly do too. At the same time, the Swiss inventory goes beyond Allen's study in two critical ways. First, it includes photographs of all the available coins (and indeed of coin dies and production debris), minimising the likelihood of inadvertent find duplication, which has sometimes been a problem in Britain (Allen's visionary Celtic Coin Index was of course in its infancy in 1960, as was the computing which has since made it such a powerful research tool). Second, and importantly, given our still fragile knowledge of the fine chronology of many Celtic coin types and their function, Nick provides details of the archaeological contexts of the Swiss finds where known, whereas Allen had to rely on distribution maps and hoards for dating and interpreting the British material.

The inventory comprises three volumes, Volume 1 furnishing a synthesis of the material and the plates, along with a user's guide to Volumes 2 and 3, where the coins are catalogued. Despite its title, the inventory does not cover the entirety of Swiss territory in equal detail. The coins from Neuenburg (Neuchâtel) are the subject of a forthcoming IFS volume and are only tabulated (and not mapped), whilst for Waadt (Vaud), only published coins are listed and mapped, with new finds to be published separately by the Musée Monétaire Cantonale, Lausanne. This is a pity, as both cantons include key archaeological sites: the famous site of La Tène, which gave its name to the later Iron Age in continental Europe, is in Neuenburg, whilst among the lacunae from Vaud are the coins from the remarkable site at Mormont (Geiser 2014), which was found in 2006 when the project was just starting. In addition – and a sorry sign of the times – a large find from the Bern area was excluded to protect it from illegal pillaging – although it remains to be seen whether this will prove effective. Otherwise, as far as possible, all published and accessible unpublished finds were compiled. The cantons were inventoried one by one, so the terminal date for data collection varies from 2006 to 2013, but whilst new finds are coming to light all

the time, there is no reason why this should have significantly affected the overall picture they provide of coin circulation and deposition across the country.

After introducing the project, Volume 1 provides a brief survey of previous research on Iron Age coinage in Switzerland, touching among other things on the coins from La Tène (Allen 1973) and the publication of the coins from the excavations at Basel, which demonstrated the value of archaeological evidence for ordering types (Furger-Gunti and von Kaenel 1976). This is followed by the first of three main sections (pp. 15–116), which gives an overview of the principal Celtic coin types found in Swiss territory, from the earliest gold and silver coins down to the late metal issues inscribed Germanus Indutilli L and Avaucia, which date to the reign of Augustus; both these late coinages were non-local and were minted in Belgic Gaul some distance from the Swiss border, but penetrated the north-west of the country in some quantity. Readers unfamiliar with the material might perhaps have welcomed a summary table of the principal types at the start of this section, although this can be gleaned from the list of contents, which is at the end of Volume 1. For each category, the provenances are listed and mapped, examples illustrated, and the dating considered, but apart from a few series such as the Ninno *quinarii*, which are discussed at length in order to take account of recent research and finds, readers will often need to refer back to the primary literature for detailed discussion of typology and metal composition, which is not ideal for anyone without a numismatic library to hand.

The second main section examines the regional and chronological development of Iron Age coinage in the territory of present-day Switzerland, and what the nature of the findspots for the different series indicates about their likely roles and functions. In the first phase, beginning in the third century BC, gold predominates, initially confined to north and west Switzerland, but spreading into the central plateau and north-east of the territory around 200 BC, when the first local issues appear. These include the *Unterentfelden* quarter-starters, of which there are two examples from graves. Some silver also occurs at this period, both staters, and imports and copies of Massalia obols, but Nick regards this early silver as secondary to the gold – although given the precocious copying of Greek silver in the Po plain (Gorini 2014), one may wonder whether, in parts of Switzerland, silver was actually of greater significance from the outset than gold. A grave at Vevey containing a Massalia obol is older than the two with *Unterentfelden* quarter-starters, and there are obol imitations from several early second century BC graves at Bern. Burials apart, most first phase coins come either from hoards, or from wet places and bogs, a pattern we find in other regions of Iron Age Europe (e.g. Haselgrove 2005), leading Nick to infer that coin use at this early period was confined to the social and ritual sphere.

From the mid-second century BC (in archaeological terms, the La Tène C2–D1 transition), coins start to occur increasingly in the larger settlements. These site finds consist mainly of cast potin coins, along with silver obols and *quinarii* on the Gaulish model such as the Kaletedou series, but gold is rare and few coins of any type are found at contemporary rural sites, implying that at this period coin use was confined to the major centres, and indeed to the regions nearest Gaul, since there are few finds from the east of the country. Around 80 BC (the La Tène D1–D2

transition archaeologically-speaking), we see a marked change in the pattern of coin use at settlements, with the proportion of potin falling from around 80% to less than half, and silver *quinarii* now accounting for the majority of finds. This development has only been recognised fairly recently thanks to new finds, and can be divided into four chronological phases based on Nick's analysis of the finds from the major settlements at Altenburg-Rheinau – astride the Swiss-German border – and Yverdon-les-Bains. This change is accompanied by intensified links with southern Germany, although I would be more cautious than Nick in seeing military activity as the main reason for the increase in silver coin production.

In eastern Switzerland, coin use seems to remain at the same relatively low level as before, whilst in the Tessin, where the evidence of coin use in La Tène D1 is mostly from hoards containing Padanian drachms, there is little sign of any Iron Age coinage in La Tène D2. This may however simply reflect the extent to which Roman coinage had gained traction among the inhabitants of the southern Alpine valleys by this period, shown by the greater number of Roman than Celtic coins in graves at Ornavasso and other cemeteries, even though it was not until 15 BC that they were formally incorporated into the Roman realm. In general, we have underestimated the extent of Roman influence over the peoples of eastern Gaul from 150 BC onwards, manifest in the extensive *quinarius* coinages of this zone (Martin 2015). This is likely to be equally true of Switzerland, even if the Roman conquest of much of the territory did not take place until the Augustan period. How the Roman occupation affected the Iron Age coin pool and how long Iron Age coins remained in circulation are the focus of the final main section of the text (pp. 187–218). Most of the silver and potin from Roman sites are types also found on Iron Age sites, but the army was clearly responsible for the influx of Gallic gold, brass and struck bronze coins into the region, including the Germanus Indutilli L and Avaucia types noted above. Although still common at the start of the first century AD, these coins seem rapidly to have disappeared from circulation and are rarely found after the middle of the century.

The text, which is in German throughout, concludes with a useful summary of the main arguments and prospects for future research, with excellent translations into Italian, French and English, which will help to ensure that the important insights generated by the research find a wide audience. The rest of Volume 1 comprises an explanation of the catalogue structure, lists of abbreviations, the bibliography, and indices – of find sites, SFI codes, concordances of both with coin inventory numbers, and also an index for plated coins. Also provided are the excavation codes for the city of Basel, whilst the final section of Volume 1 comprises 113 plates of photographs at 1:1 (or occasionally drawings) of the coin and dies recorded from Switzerland and Liechtenstein, in catalogue order. It feels slightly curious to find the lists and indices right in the middle of Volume 1, after the academic synthesis, rather than at the beginning or end, but this is caused by the inclusion here of the plates.

Having the coin photographs in Volume 1 has the great advantage that they can be viewed in parallel with their catalogue entries in Volumes 2 and 3. The catalogue is arranged by canton, following a common format. Each canton has a

brief introduction and map of findspots; the find sites are ordered alphabetically, with large sites sub-divided into separate areas, finds and even layers. Of particular value for archaeologists are the detailed maps showing the location of finds at the major sites such as Basel-Gasfabrik and Basel-Münsterhügel, the oppida at Bern-Engelhalbinsel and Rheinau, the civitas capital at Avenches and the fortresses at Augst and Vindonissa. The catalogue entries are extremely comprehensive, providing not only standard numismatic information for each coin, but also details of the nature and date of the archaeological contexts of excavated coins. The catalogue also includes Massaliot coins, and a few other Greek and Roman Republican coins from the same finds/deposits as Iron Age coins. In all, just over 3400 coins feature in the catalogue, with another 220 coins in the table for Neuenburg.

The monograph is beautifully presented and generously illustrated, most of the maps and plans being in colour. I found few if any errors. In terms of academic quality and fullness of coverage, it is difficult to see how it could be bettered, aside from the unequal coverage of Neuenburg and Waadt. There can be little doubt that in years to come it will form a standard work of reference for research on Iron Age coinage not only in Switzerland, but across continental Europe. Therein, however, lies the one tangible weakness of the monograph, in that it assumes a relatively detailed knowledge of Switzerland on the part of the reader, fair enough with respect to its primary role in the IFS series, but a bit of a barrier to its use by researchers from other countries. As an example, the standard abbreviations for the Swiss cantons are used throughout the text (e.g. VD for Waadt/Vaud), but are not included in the list of abbreviations, except for two where confusion with other countries is possible (FR, NE). A map of Switzerland showing the cantons would have been useful, along with a table of the different versions of the names. Anyone from French- or Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland will of course know automatically, for example, that Neuenburg and Neuchâtel are one and the same, but for the outsider, this requires a degree of concentration to decode.

The volume is accompanied by a CD, which includes Excel tables listing all the coins in the catalogue order, as well as the find sites (summarising the coins found at each) and concordance information, together with photographs of all the coins filed by canton and site, and copies of all 113 plates. This inevitably raises a final question about the decision to publish the inventory in conventional printed form, consequently at a cost that even many institutions will balk at paying. Might it have been better to have instead placed some of the information on-line (perhaps restricted to purchasers of SFI 12), thereby bringing the cost of this outstanding study down to a level that more individuals can afford?

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ANNA GANNON, *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles 63: British Museum Anglo-Saxon Coins I. Early Anglo-Saxon Gold and Anglo-Saxon and Continental Silver Coinage of the North Sea Area, c.600–760* (London: British Museum Press, 2013), pp. 304 including 37 plates. ISBN 978 0 7141 1823 9.

THIS IMPRESSIVE volume, one of the latest in a series that began publication in 1958 and is currently under the general editorship of Dr Rory Naismith, offers a comprehensive catalogue of the British Museum's important collection of early Anglo-Saxon coinage. That this feat was last undertaken in 1887 alone makes this a welcome addition to the *Sylloge*,¹ not least considering the enormous increase in the size of the collection since then. The 1887 catalogue included 206 coins from the entire Anglo-Saxon period, whereas the new catalogue, which covers only the period up to the mid-eighth century, includes 857 coins (a little confusingly, in her contribution Marion Archibald gives the figure of 849 coins).

In the catalogue proper, which takes up about half of the volume, each coin is numbered and described in detail and illustrated with high-quality black and white photographs at 3:2 scale magnification. Forty-one gold coins (three *solidi* and 38 shillings) are contained in the collection, dating from c.600 up to the 670s, with the remainder of the collection comprising silver coinage from 670s to c.760. Supplementary chapters include a chapter by Marion Archibald (for many years curator of coins and medals at the British Museum, who passed away in 2016) on the formation of the coin collection; an analysis of the gold content of the seventh-century coinage by Dr Gareth Williams and Duncan Hook; and a detailed survey of the catalogue by Dr Anna Gannon herself. Further auxiliary materials include an account of acquisitions from sales, auctioneers, collectors and vendors; a bibliography; an annotated list of provenance-types by hoard, excavation, 'productive site', or single find, with an appendix listing hoards and single finds by type; a helpful note on classification and chronology; an overall list of types contained in the collection; and

¹ C.F. Keary, *A Catalogue of English Coins in the British Museum, Anglo-Saxon Series*, Vol. 1 (London, 1887).