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CVSTOS ARMORVM

The publication of the catalogue of military equipment from Vindonissa marks a milestone in the discipline, as this is sure to become one of the most important resources for the study of 1st century AD arms and armour. There is a certain joy to be derived from any new catalogue of arms and armour, but one boasting over 2,500 items is apt to set even the sanest of artefactualists drooling... or am I betraying some curious behavioural idiosyncrasy here?

Military equipment studies are driven by two compelling forces: on the one hand the need to catalogue and publish, on the other to analyse and synthesise. Both are interdependent and, in some cases, merged into what might be termed an analytical or synthetical catalogue, occasionally accompanied by some phrase implying that a selection has had to be made from the available finds. This is worrying, not only because the criteria for such selections are unclear and, one suspects, subjective (one scholar may just see 15 lobate hinges, whereas another would identify 6 of type 1, 3 of type 2... and so on). Perhaps the need for analytical text within catalogues should be done away with altogether, allowing more room for the raw data – artefacts themselves, adorned with only the barest of essentials in terms of contextual information and the like.

However, it has to be said that a list of objects with no explanation of their significance (or lack of it) makes for pretty poor reading for the non-specialist reader and, arguably, contributes further to the fragmentation of archaeological reports into specialist ghettos, crudely nailed together into a disparate mess. This is a problem of the whole genre of archaeological reports (aptly summed up by John Casey once with the question 'who reads archaeological reports?'), and one we can only hope will eventually find a solution in the multimedia age. One thing is certain: the problems of producing archaeological reports in the paper age are manifold and, seemingly, insoluble for the time being.

BY JUPITER!

An exhibition of finds from the forts at Velsen, in the Netherlands, is being held at the Archaeological Museum at Haarlem until 20th June 1998. Entry is free.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?

The exhibition of the book (or was it the book of the exhibition?) *Reiter wie Statuen aus Erz* about cavalry sports equipment will be at the Limesmuseum in Aalen (D) until 29th March 1998.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The book everybody has been waiting for has finally arrived: the catalogue of military equipment from Vindonissa. Anybody with an interest in 1st century AD equipment will find something of interesting in the volume, and probably more examples than can reasonably be expected of even the most prolific site. Note that it does not contain all of the Vindonissa equipment: objects found after 1975, and most (but not all!) of those already published by Unz from the old Aarau Kantonalmuseum have been excluded.

Mention above of *Reiter wie Statuen aus Erz* brings us to the latest Junkelmann oeuvre which is essentially an updating of Garbsch's seminal catalogue of cavalry sports equipment, a prolegomena to which was to be found in the rear of *Erz*.

Unz, C. and Deschler-Erb, E.: *Katalog der Militaria aus Vindonissa. Militärische Funde, Pferdegeschirr und Jochteile bis 1976*, Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft Pro Vindonissa Bd.14, Brugg 1997. SF80.-

Born, H. and Junkelmann, M.: *Römische Kampf- und Turnierrüstungen*, Slg. Axel Guttmann, Bd. 6, 1997. DM 138,-

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ROMAN "HORNED" BUCKLES: THE EVIDENCE FROM HISPANIA

Joaquín Aurrecochea Fernández

"Horned" buckles are one of the most representative forms of metalwork in Late Roman Hispania.¹ They are connected with the "Douro cemeteries horizon", a local culture similar to the "Mischzivilisation" from boundary zones, dated in the second half of the 4th to the early decades of the 5th century.² Many personal belongings and harnesses from this culture are related to the contemporary military world, but the majority is more closely related to military bronzes characteristic of the first three centuries and especially the 3rd century. In particular, hispanic "horned" buckles from Dominate times could be derived from the "horned" buckles with trapezoidal form (also quadrilateral or rectangular), concave-sided and spherical projections on each of the two leading corners, used in military environments during late 1st to 2nd centuries. "Horned" buckles' initial chronology could be Flavian. Items from the early Imperial age were normally hinged to the belt-plate, they were unadorned except for some mouldings that joined knobs and loops. These specimens are far less frequent than the pelta-shaped buckles from earlier periods. Among the relevant finds from those centuries, we can cite specimens from Richborough (dated 80–120 AD) (Fig. 1, no. 2 and 3),³ Viroconium (Wroxeter, end of the 1st century), Newstead⁴ Arae Flaviae,⁵ Oberstimm⁶ Bank East,⁷ Camuntum⁸ and Nether Denton.⁹ Grew type F which includes an unusual "horned" buckle with an internal pelta shape made of bone from Colchester, dated around 44 to 55 A.D.¹⁰ Finally, there are other brasses that are clearly related to the group described above, and these are the harness and baldric fittings with rectangular "horned" loops from the 2nd to 3rd century. Some examples are a stud from Vireux-Molhain (3rd century),¹¹ a harness fitting discovered in Verulamium (105/115 A.D.)¹² and one NUMERUM OMNIUM plate (3rd century).¹³

From Hispania we also have some earlier examples. In an unknown site in the province of Toledo, one unpublished buckle appeared which is identical to those found in British forts and on the Rhine-Danube Limes (Fig. 1, no. 1 and Fig. 2). Some parallels can be cited coming from Vindonissa,¹⁴ Oberstimm,¹⁵ Richborough¹⁶ and Lincoln.¹⁷ Excavations in Conimbriga have produced other hispanic pieces (without knobs) which belongs to Flavian and Trajanic levels.¹⁸ Other bronzes from the early Imperial period were discovered in Citania de Briteiros,¹⁹ León and Ampurias.²⁰

Although the hispanic pieces clearly parallel those found in other parts of the Empire it cannot be specified whether these are imported bronzes or were manufactured locally in Hispania. Among the early items, the one from León²¹ deserves special consideration, because it was found in the hinterland of the Legio VII Gemina (Fig. 1, no. 4). This hinterland could be the original focus of the

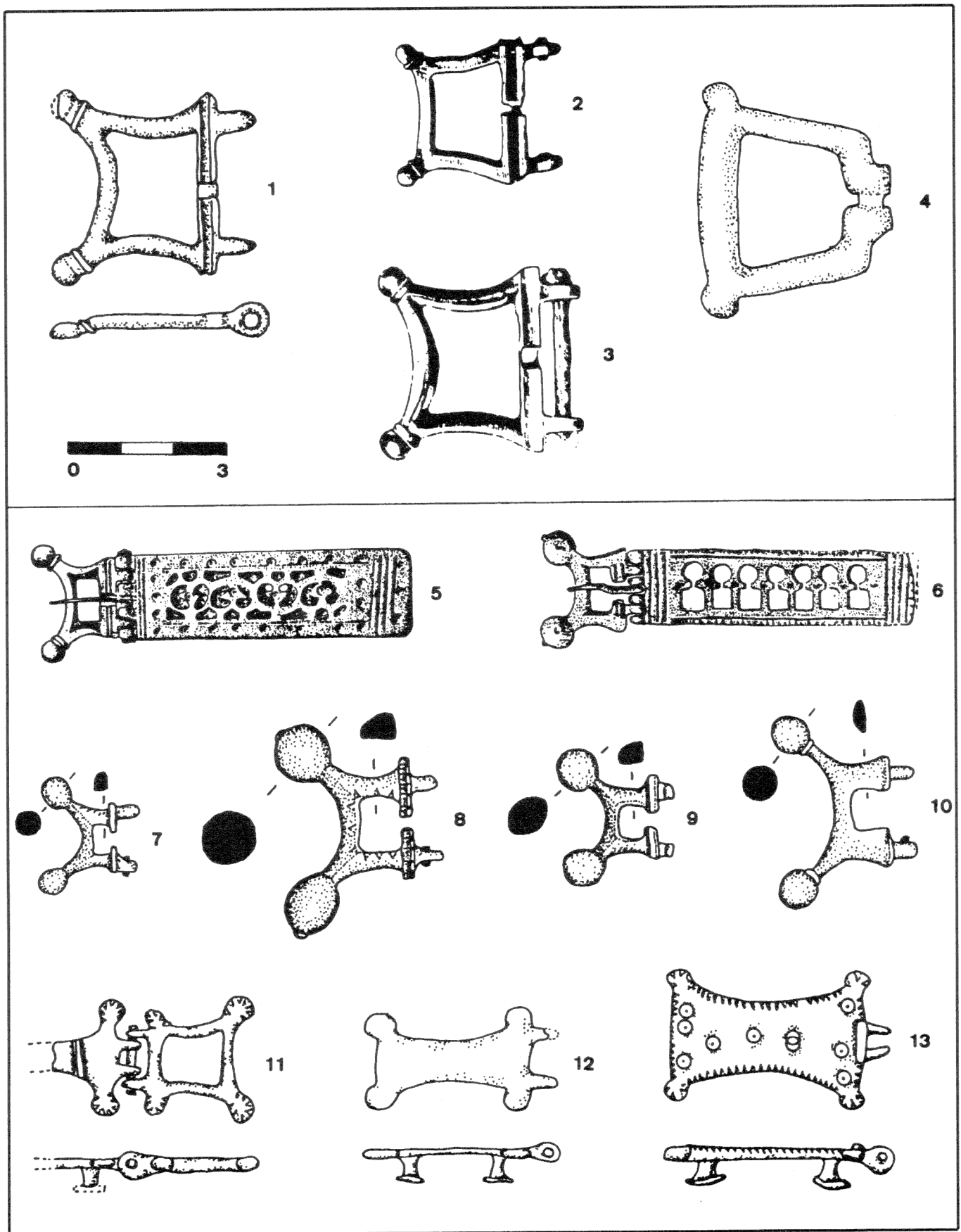


Fig. 1: Earlier "horned" buckles: 1.- Province of Toledo, 2 & 3.- Richborough (Cunliffe, 1968), 4.- León. Later "horned" buckles: 5.- La Morterona, 6.- Burial no. 1 at Fuentespreadas, 7.- Carpio de Tajo, 8.- Villarrubia de Santiago, 9.- Puebla de Montalbán, 10.- Santo Tomé del Puerto. Later "four knobs" buckles: 11.- Ocaña. "Bienvenida" belt plates: 12.- Villasequilla de Yepes, 13.- Almendros.

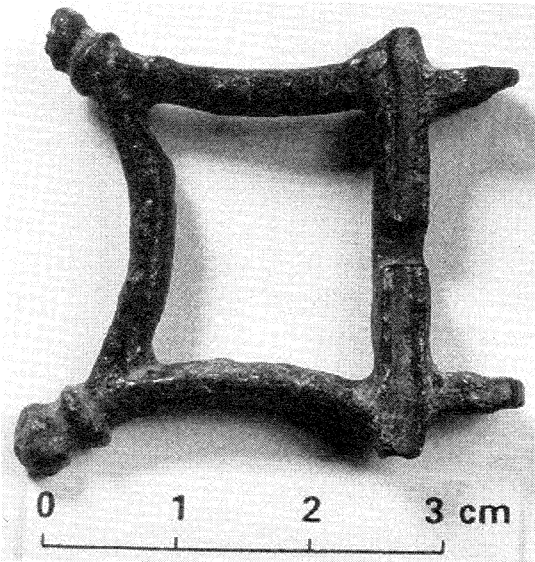


Fig. 2: "Horned" buckle found at Province of Toledo (Central Spain).

hispanic "Mischzivilisation" in Dominate times, stemming from a legion quartered there over the centuries.²² Old legions demonstrate a predilection for old forms, such as late "horned" buckles, something which could explain the example of this type of outdated piece amongst the people of the "Douro cemeteries horizon". This local culture is characterized by its adoption of anachronistic or "antique" military fashions, like belts decorated with pelta shaped studs and pelta shaped buckles, ring-buckle belts, etc.

Later Imperial "horned" buckles were associated with "Simancas" type belt-plates. "Simancas" plates with shanks on the rear for attaching the leather to form a homogeneous group with a rectangular shape and openwork decoration. The grave goods from the burial no. 1 at Fuentespreadas (Zamora), dated to the end of the 4th century, are interesting because two buckles were discovered with their belt-plates in the same tomb (Fig. 1, no. 6). Both plates and buckles are unusually narrow which could imply that the deceased from Fuentespreadas was wearing two belts (like 1st century legionary fashion) or perhaps he was wearing one belt and a baldric.²³ Grave no. 1 from Fuentespreadas contains, in addition to two complete belts, two complete mount harnesses (bits, phalerae, etc.), bronze tableware (patera and situla), ceramic (Late Hispanic Terra Sigillata), spears and a knife.²⁴

The total number of later finds is 17 objects. Well-known specimens belonging to the late Roman period were found in: Castillo de Capiro Bernardo (Salamanca),²⁵ Castillo de Soria,²⁶ La Morterona (Saldaña, Palencia) (Fig. 1, no. 5),²⁷ Penadomina (Lugo),²⁸ Carpio de Tajo (Toledo) (Fig. 1, no. 7),²⁹ Santo Tomás del Puerto (Segovia) (Fig. 1, no. 10),³⁰ Puebla de Montalbán (Toledo) (Fig. 1, no. 9),³¹ Villarubia de Santiago (Toledo) (Fig. 1, no. 8),³² Arco-briga (Monreal de Ariza, Zaragoza),³³ Huete (Cuenca),³⁴ Palencia,³⁵ Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena, Jaén)³⁶ Museo Arqueológico Nacional³⁷ and Museo de Linares.³⁸

With regard to their geographical distribution, late Roman "horned" buckles seem to be concentrated, for the

moment, in the Iberian Meseta. Outside this region we only know about one pair of Andalusian studs and another couple in the North. In Galia and North Africa, provinces which have so many connections to metalwork finds in Hispania, hardly any items of this class have been discovered. We only know of a late "horned" buckle which appeared in St-Michel cemetery (Montpellier)³⁹ and another from Volubilis.⁴⁰ Another late buckle comes from Richborough.⁴¹ Geographical spreading shows that "horned" buckles are characteristic of Hispania during the end of the 4th and early 5th century.

Connected with the examples we have just seen other buckles with knobs on each corner have also been found. The initial chronology of this type in Hispania is still more ancient than "horned" items, because they were discovered in military sites during the Republic period as attested by the buckle from Cáceres el Viejo camp. This camp was in use around 80 B.C.⁴² In the Iberian Peninsula we don't know of any early Imperial specimens dating from the 1st to 3rd centuries, however these were only found in small numbers in others countries. For instance, buckles from this category have been found in South Shields⁴³ and Straubing.⁴⁴

In Dominate times, buckles with spherical projections on each corner return to our province. Hispanic buckles, "horned" and "four knobs" were both in contemporary use during the second half of the 4th century, because they are all represented in the grave goods from the burials at "Douro cemeteries horizon". These late Roman buckles with four knobs are less common than "horned" buckles, because only 3 fittings have been found. Late items cannot be assigned with certainty to belt-plates. An example was found in Ocaña (Toledo) associated with a belt-plate type "Bienvenida" (Fig. 1, no. 11).⁴⁵ The belt plates of "Bienvenida" category are rectangular or concave in shape, also with spherical projections on each corner, decorated with incised concentric circles and no openwork (Fig. 1, no. 12 and 13). The chronology of the "Bienvenida" plates points towards early 5th century A.D., but it is not sure. "Bienvenida" items are connected with some military plates dated in the 3rd century, like the one found in Feldberg.⁴⁶ The one from Santiago de Compostela is joined with a "Simancas" plate, decorated with openwork in the shape of a horse.⁴⁷ This late date is also confirmed by the piece that appeared in the burial no. 36 at the Simancas (Valladolid) cemetery. This last find was a buckle without plate.⁴⁸

Finally, we cannot leave unmentioned other buckle classes, also with rectangular loops and later chronology. These are fittings of the Gala and Gauting-Bregenz types, typical of Illyricum. Buckles with rectangular form are unusual in Dominate times, except belts belonging to these categories. However, limited rectangular loops were also discovered in Britain (Lankhills, grave 234 dated 350/390)⁴⁹ or Galia (fortification de Vireux-Molhain),⁵⁰ for example. We do not think that Spanish "horned" buckles are connected with Danubian belts. Finds and distribution of hispanic later items have a local development. Geographical differentiation in 4th century belt fittings

suggests that regional variants continued to develop according to army groups. In Hispania, military and civil fittings are related to anachronistic or “antique” fashions and perhaps to Legio VII bias.

joaquin@bblcat.bbl.uma.es

NOTES

1. I want to offer special thanks to M. Bishop and Jeff Nash for the interest taken in this work and for offering all kinds of assistance with translation.
2. The term “Douro cemeteries horizon” is geographically incorrect, because finds from this culture have appeared all over the Iberian Meseta. See AURRECOECHEA, 1995/96, 85–93.
3. CUNLIFFE, 1968, 93–4, plate 35, 97–8.
4. BUSHE-FOX, 1916, 32, fig. 1, 5.
5. PLANCK, 1975, 186, plate 71, 12.
6. BÖHME, 1978, 171, 206, 138–39.
7. ALLASON-JONES, 1988, 216, fig. 5.
8. GRÜNEWALD, 1981, Taf. 17, 16.
9. STOBBS, 1996, 49; ARNOLD, 1996, 13–14. Now in the British Museum. We are grateful to R.P.J. Jackson and Barry Ager for their valuable information on this object.
10. GREW AND GRIFFITHS, 1991, 49, 76, no. 156.
11. LEMANT, 1985, 68, fig. 63, no. 33.
12. FRERE, 1972, 130, fig. 40, 125.
13. OLDENSTEIN, 1979, 543–52.
14. We know of the Vindonissa pieces from a personal communication from Eckhard Deschler-Erb.
15. Cited note 6.
16. See note 2. I am indebted to Malcolm Lyne who sent me complete information about the pieces found there. They conform to type M of Lyne. One item is interesting because it is dated around 300/450.
17. Published in *The Searcher*, February 1997.
18. ALARCAO, 1979, 96–7, fig. 20, 67–8. One more without date in PALOL, 1969, 151–2, fig. 25, 6.
19. PALOL, 1969, 151, fig. 25, 7, 8 and 11.
20. Unpublished. Deposited in the Museo de Gerona. Pers. Com. Michel Feugere.
21. Deposited in the Museo Arqueológico de León, no 159. MAÑANES, 1983, 403, plate 4, no. 24.
22. We are conscious of the inter-ethnic significance which the term *Mischzivilisation* possesses, like the fusion of Roman and Germanic elements. To apply this concept in the case of Iberian Meseta, we are restricting it to the convergence between two cultures, or better still, between two different worlds, the military and the civil.
23. Generally, the class of buckles described do not contain examples of great size or weight, the dimensions of most lying within the range of 3,0–3,5 cm in length and 3,5–4,0 cm in breadth.
24. CABALLERO, 1974, 40, fig. 11, 1 and 2.
25. MARTIN VALLS, 1982, 195, fig. 3.
26. CABALLERO, 1974, 42, fig. 12, 3.
27. ABASOLO, 1984, 9/11, fig. 3, 1.
28. NUÑEZ, 1976, 287–8, fig. 3.

29. AURRECOECHEA, 1995/96, fig. 2, 4.
30. AURRECOECHEA, 1995/96, fig. 2, 2.
31. AURRECOECHEA, 1995/96, fig. 2, 3.
32. AURRECOECHEA, 1995/96, fig. 2, 1.
33. CABALLERO, 1974, 42/44, fig. 12, 7 and CABALLERO, 1974, 42, fig. 12, 6.
34. Unpublished.
35. CABALLERO, 1974, 42, fig. 12, 5.
36. CABALLERO, 1974, 44, fig. 12, 8.
37. CABALLERO, 1974, 42, fig. 43, 4.
38. Unpublished.
39. MAJUREL *et al.* 1970/1973, fig. 19, 1.
40. It is probable that the Moroccan buckle is from early Imperial period, though Boube included it amongst belts characteristic of the Dominate period (BOUBE-PICCOT, 1994, 109, no. 187).
41. See note 16.
42. ULBERT, 1984, plate 10, no. 62.
43. ALLASON-JONES and MIKET, 1984, 194, no. 623.
44. OLDENSTEIN, 1976, 215, Tafel 76, 1010.
45. AURRECOECHEA, 1995/96, fig. 2, 7.
46. OLDENSTEIN, 1976, Tafel 59, 736.
47. PALOL, 1969, 147, fig. 25, 1.
48. PALOL, 1969, 139, fig. 25, 10.
49. CLARKE, 1979, 272–3, fig. 81.
50. LEMANT, 1985, 55, fig. 59, 27

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Militaria de Gaule méridionale, 6

Bollène (Vaucluse) et environs

M. Feugere * et G. Alfonso **

Cette notice concerne quelques mobiliers à caractère militaire, ainsi qu'un élément d'attelage, retrouvés à l'occasion des fouilles préliminaires aux travaux de construction de la ligne TGV Méditerranée en 1995 et 1996, sur les communes de Bollène, Caderousse et Lamotte-du-Rhône. Les documents de ces deux dernières communes proviennent de simples travaux de diagnostic effectués dans une phase préparatoire du tracé concerné par les travaux; ces investigations n'ont pas été suivies de

fouilles. A Bollène, en revanche, la nécropole du Pont-de-Pierre 1 a pu être fouillée. La tombe F.15, au-dessus de laquelle a été recueilli le poignard étudié ici, constitue l'un des principaux ensembles funéraires de ce site. L'étude d'ensemble étant en cours, il nous a paru intéressant de présenter dès maintenant le mobilier ci-dessous.

Bollène, Pont-de-Pierre I

Nécropole à incinération, tombe F. 15 (deuxième tiers du Ier S. de n. ère)

Poignard en fer (fig. 1), posé à la surface de la tombe us 66, phase 1; L. act. 251mm (restit. 298mm).

Cette arme de poing, à longue soie (122mm) autorisant une bonne prise en main, est caractérisée par une lame triangulaire: à partir du sommet rectiligne, où elle atteint une largeur de 38mm, la lame de section losangique comporte de deux bords régulièrement convergents, bien conservés. On pourrait hésiter sur le caractère militaire de ce poignard, si un traitement particulier de la pointe, que révèle du reste une patine différente et une parfaite conservation, ne levait le doute: la section de la lame s'amincit naturellement du haut vers le bas, au fur et à mesure de la convergence, passant ainsi de 6 à 3,5mm environ; dans les derniers centimètres, elle revient cependant à 4,5mm, s'épaississant même vers la pointe jusqu'à former une section carrée de 5,4mm de côté. Cet aménagement, destiné à éviter une trop grande fragilité de la pointe, se retrouve sur plusieurs glaives et autres armes romaines de la Saône, où il apparaît comme spécifique des productions romaines du Haut-Empire.

On est donc bien en présence d'une arme de facture militaire; bien que ce poignard se distingue de la facture classique du *pugio*, à bords sinusoides et poignée métallique, on connaît des armes de même aspect général, et notamment des poignards ou épées très courtes à lame triangulaire. C'est le cas de quelques poignards trouvés au Nord des Alpes: un exemplaire (L. 315mm) trouvé dans le puits d'une villa de Barbing en Bavière;¹ un autre (L. 395mm) provenant d'une tombe de Wehringen (RFA), associé à avec une épée à pommeau évidé et un coutelas;² un autre enfin (L. 235mm) dans une insula d'Augst.³ Une autre découverte de la Saône, conservée à Mâcon et longue de 464mm, montre que l'on pouvait rechercher, peut-être pour certaines utilisations spécifiques, des lames triangulaires de toutes tailles;⁴ cette dernière épée trouve un bon parallèle dans le dépôt de Künzing.⁵ Notons ici que les découvertes de Wehringen et Künzing datent du IIIe S., période à laquelle S. Martin-Kilcher tend également à attribuer, par comparaison, le poignard d'Augst; non daté, le poignard de Bollène peut donc éventuellement être associé à la tombe de la fin du Ier siècle, mais le modèle est également connu deux siècles plus tard.

Il reste un mot à dire de la torsion de la pointe de cette arme, qui forme avec le reste de la lame un angle d'environ 100°; on n'observe aucune autre déformation. Les armes romaines étant très rares dans les tombes de la Gaule (on citera ici le seul poignard actuellement connu en contexte funéraire, celui de Curel dans les Alpes-de-Hte-

BOLLENE
Pont-de-Pierre 1
tombe F.15

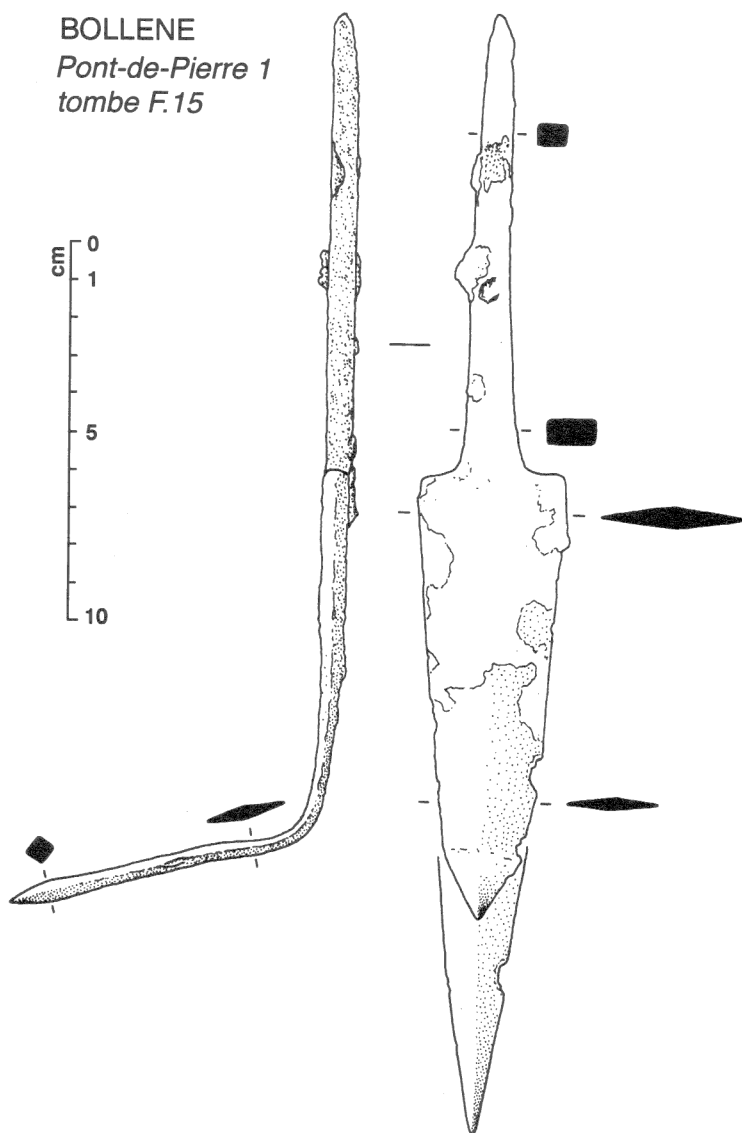


Fig.1: Poignard de Bollène, tombe F15 de la nécropole de «Pont-de-Pierre».

Pce⁶), on n'a répertorié pour le moment qu'un seul cas d'épée volontairement tordue comme on le faisait à l'époque de l'Indépendance: il s'agit d'un glaive de Charnay-les-Chalon retrouvé au XIXe s. dans une incinération du Haut-Empire.⁷ Ailleurs, par exemple chez les Trévires ou encore dans l'actuelle Slovénie, il n'est pas rare que les armes romaines soient ployées tout comme les épées gauloises des tombes antérieures. Dans ce contexte, et compte tenu de la faible déformation du poignard de Bollène, il semble qu'on doive plutôt considérer la torsion comme accidentelle. Cette découverte ne peut donc servir à enrichir le dossier des éventuelles continuités entre les pratiques funéraires indigènes et celles du Haut-Empire.

Caderousse, *Camp Redon*

F. 233-234, sond. 2

Fragment de boucle à décor émaillé (fig. 2, 1; fig. 3). L. act. 32mm

Restes d'une petite boucle plate, en D, autrefois articulée par une charnière jouant sur un axe, dont subsiste une attache. Une sorte d'ergot correspondait à cette attache vers l'intérieur de la boucle. Cinq motifs estampés en creux, sur les huit qui devaient exister à l'origine, ornent la face externe de la boucle. La forme générale est caractéristique des boucles, à vrai dire de formes très variées, que l'on attribue au *cingulum* du soldat romain du Haut-Empire. Les modèles à décor en creux (logettes d'émail), comme cet exemplaire, ne sont pas courants. Certains d'entre eux ont conservé des parcelles d'émail;⁸ on les date en général des années 70 à 120 ap. J.-C., d'après la technique décorative qui apparaît à cette époque. Une boucle à triangles imbriqués apparaît à Vindonissa, parmi le mobilier du camp légionnaire:⁹ elle est donc antérieure à l'abandon définitif du camp survenu en 101 de n. ère. La forme des logettes de boucle de Caderousse nous semble correspondre aux motifs à bords crénelés que l'on trouve sur les premiers objets émaillés, comme les fibules, à partir de l'époque de Néron-

CADEROUSSE
Camp-Redon

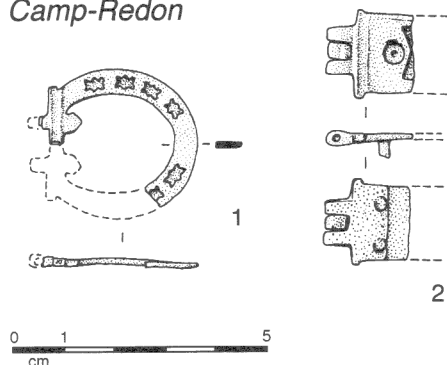


Fig. 2: Caderousse, «Camp-Redon»

Vespasien. Sous Hadrien, on commence à utiliser des décors émaillés plus sophistiqués, faisant intervenir des plages colorées de surface plus importante à l'intérieur desquelles on parvient à juxtaposer des teintes différentes ou des sections de millefiori; les rares boucles émaillées décorées selon ces procédés se retrouvent en effet dans des contextes plus tardifs, comme à Eining-Unterfeld, camp occupé de 169 à 179 de notre ère.¹⁰ La boucle de Caderousse peut donc être considérée comme un élément précoce dans la série, peu nombreuse, des boucles militaires à décor émaillé.

Fragment d'applique articulée (fig. 2, 2; fig. 3). L. act. 17mm, larg. 17mm.

Extrémité d'une applique articulée (charnière) ayant conservé au revers deux petits ergots de fixation, sans doute sur une lanière de cuir. L'objet, étroit, était décoré sur la face supérieure d'alvéoles évidemment destinées à un décor émaillé: on observe encore un petit cercle et deux triangles affrontés par leurs pointes.

Des objets articulés se rencontrant dans le domaine du harnais ou parmi les diverses pièces de ceinture,¹¹ cette applique peut fort bien avoir été associée à la boucle ci-dessus, ce que semble confirmer la patine très particulière (brun clair) et la technique décorative. Dans ce cas, on peut donc la dater comme ci-dessus des dernières décennies du Ier s. de notre ère.



Fig. 3: Caderousse, «Camp-Redon» (ph. L. Damelet).



Fig. 4: Lamotte du Rhône, «La Bâtie»: attache latérale de joug (ph. L. Damelet).

Lamotte-du-Rh., La Bâtie

B120-121, sond. 32

Fragment d'applique latérale de joug, en bronze (fig. 4 et 5); L. act. 58 mm.

Partie d'un objet complexe comportant une figurine de panthère couchée, la tête tournée à g., dont les pattes antérieures s'appuient sur un médaillon circulaire, en position verticale, marqué d'un aigle aux ailes déployées en fort relief. L'arrière-train de la panthère repose sur une sorte de sphère écrasée, reliée à l'arrière du médaillon par une forte tige coudée à angle droit, apparemment brisée d'un côté.

Bien que l'objet apparaisse en Gaule du Sud pour la première fois, on peut le rapprocher de toute une série de pièces similaires interprétées, depuis une étude d'A. Radnóti, comme des appliques latérales de joug:¹² il s'agit d'un décor assurant la fixation du collier de traction à l'extrémité du bât en bois. L'objet complet comportait deux groupes symétriques, comme celui qui est conservé, reliés par une tige rectiligne derrière les médaillons et une partie en arc de cercle terminée de chaque côté par une panthère.

Sur les objets de ce type, le fauve est très souvent une panthère, suivant un choix iconographique qui lie cet objet aux décors de voitures, fréquemment empruntés au domaine bachique. Quand ils sont décorés, ce qui n'est pas toujours le cas, les médaillons peuvent porter un emblème romain, comme ici, un symbole cosmologique,¹³ une simple tête juvénile¹⁴ ou encore Attis, Jupiter Ammon, Minerve ou encore un mufle d'animal.

Il s'agit donc d'un témoin de l'utilisation d'un joug de cheval,¹⁵ lié à la traction d'un véhicule de voyage plutôt qu'utilitaire, si l'on en croit son décor. Cet objet brisé doit avoir été perdu à proximité d'une voie, peut-être à l'emplacement d'une halte ou d'une station.



Fig.5: Lamotte du Rhône, «La Bâtie»: détail du médaillon (ph. L. Damelet).

NOTES

* UMR 154 du CNRS, CDAR, 390 Av. de Perols, F 34970 Lattes.

** AFAN, I 1 rue de Lodi, 42000 Saint-Etienne.

1. PFAHL, 1986, 144. Malgré la période d'utilisation du puits (deuxième moitié du I^e s. à la première moitié du II^e s.), l'objet a été daté par G. Ulbert du I^e s.; la même attribution est reprise par S.F. Pfahl et M. Reuter en 1986.
2. NUBER, 1985, 53, fig. 34, n°4.
3. MARTIN-KILCHER, 1985, n°11.
4. FEUGÈRE, 1990, n°111.
5. ULBERT, 1974, fig. 3,1.
6. FEUGÈRE *et al.*, 1992, 101, fig. 9.
7. BAILLY, 1978.
8. Cf. Waldmössingen: ORL 61B, pl. III, 5; KILBRIDE-JONES, 1980, 186, fig. 56, 3 [Caerleon]; DESCHLER-ERB *et al.* 1991, 58 et fig. 40, n°26.
9. UNZ, DESCHLER-ERB, 1997, 1189.
10. JÜTTING, 1995, fig. 7, n°36.
11. HÜBENER, 1973, pl. 30, n°13-14.
12. RADNÓTI, 1961; «Hufeisen – D-förmige Beschläge».
13. Face d'astre: GARBSCH, 1986, 50.
14. BOUBE, 1980, n°66.
15. PALÁGYI, 1986.

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MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM A FIRE-DEPOSIT AT ARBEIA ROMAN FORT, TYNE AND WEAR

A.T. Croom

Only days after opening the latest issue of *Arma* and seeing our short report on the fragment of ring-mail from Chesters,¹ we have found a much bigger, better bit of mail....

The 1997 excavations at *Arbeia*² concentrated on a barrack block in the south-east corner of the fort that had been destroyed by fire in the late third or early fourth century (Building II). This work involved the removal of a thick fire-deposit, consisting primarily of burnt daub, with a thinner, black layer below. Within the layer of daub was

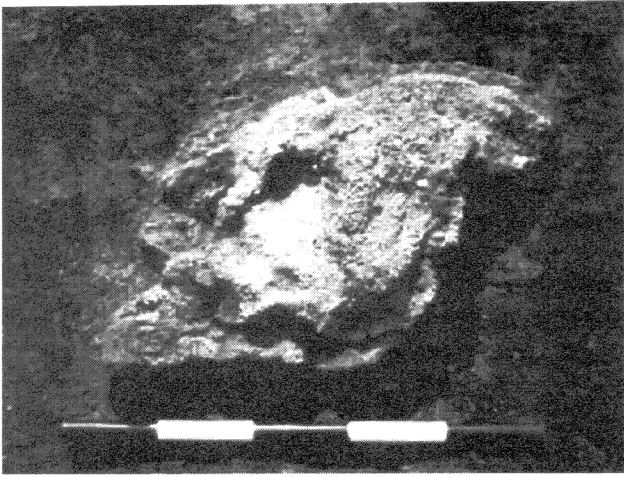


Figure 1: The mail in situ.

found a complete iron ring-mail suit (Fig.1) and a fragment of decorated copper alloy plate. As far as we know, this is the only full suit recovered from a Roman context in Britain.

The ring-mail was found within a passage-way in a room at the end of the barrack block away from the centurion's house, which has been suggested as perhaps being a junior officer's quarters. It was in an untidy heap of irregular ridges and folds, and from the size of it, must almost certainly constitute a complete suit. The replica suits of ring-mail that belong to the re-enactment group *cohors V Gallorum*, are made of 10 and 12mm diameter links, are mid-thigh in length and have short sleeves, and make very similar sized heaps when dropped. There was daub underneath the ring-mail as well as above it, so the excavators suggest that the suit had been hanging up and only fell to the floor as the building burnt. The fired daub sealed the suit and protected it from the heavy corrosion that attacks most of the ironwork from the site (Fig.2). The links, although fused together, are grey in colour, and each individual link is visible. The links are 7mm in diameter made of c.1mm wire, but details of the form of the link closure are not yet clear.

The copper alloy fragment was found in the front room of the adjoining *contubernium*. It may possibly come

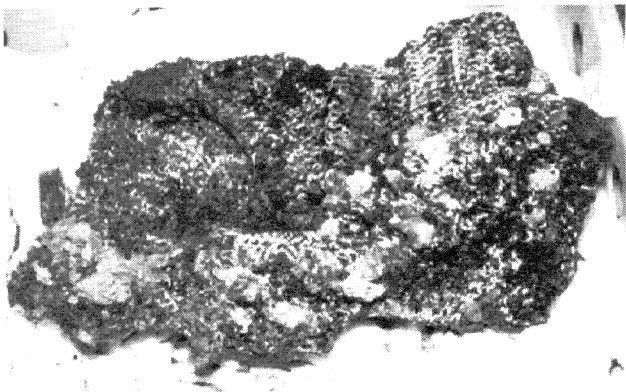


Figure 2: The mail after excavation.

from a greave, having a straight edge and a circular attachment loop. There is an embossed figure of Victory, with a stylized triangular leaf below and a hollow raised edge. The drawing (Fig.3) is only a pre-conservation sketch, and is missing details that are visible on X-ray, such as the details of her wing, an incised palm-branch in her left hand and rows of dots outlining various features such as the leaf. Both pieces are currently undergoing conservation, and a more complete report will be forthcoming in due course.

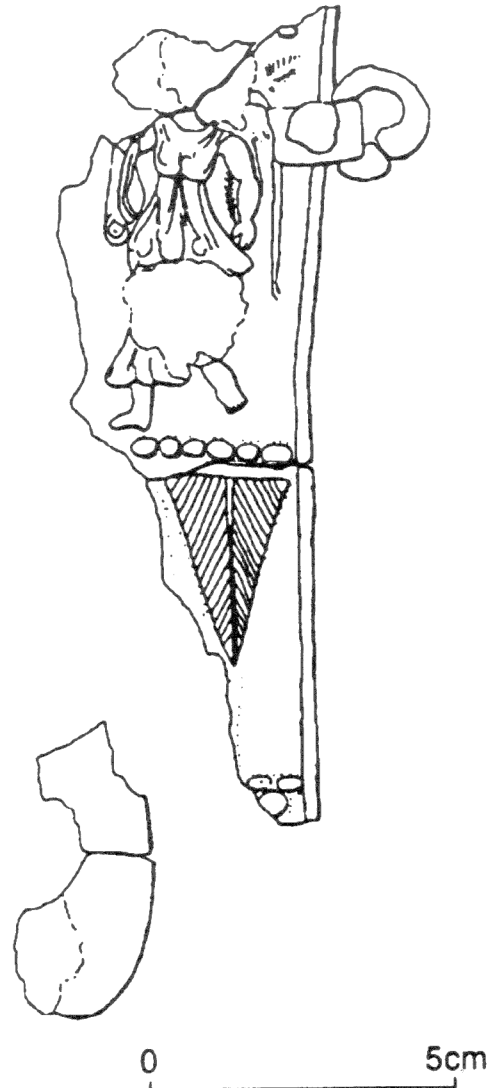


Figure 3: The copper alloy fragment.

Notes

1. 'A fragment of ring-mail from Chesters' by A.T. Croom and W.B. Griffiths, *Arma* 8, nos 1-2. With thanks to W. Griffiths.
2. Excavations are carried out by Tyne and Wear Museums, with sponsorship and volunteers from Earthwatch.

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