

CHRISTIAN PSCHIEDL, *Zoomorphe Gefäße der späten Bronze- und frühen Eisenzeit in Mitteleuropa und Oberitalien*. Freiburger Archäologische Studien 11. Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, Rahden/Westfalen 2021. 412 pages, 812 illustrations, 82 plates, 2 tables and 11 maps, hardcover, ISBN 978-3-89646-799-7, ISSN 1437-3327.

Christian Pscheidl's monograph is based on his PhD thesis '*Zoomorphe Gefäße der späten Bronze- und frühen Eisenzeit in Mitteleuropa und Oberitalien. Religionsarchäologische Untersuchungen zu tiergestaltigen Gefäßen und hohlgeformten Gefäßen*', which he submitted in 2015 at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. The book consists of 412 pages, separated into the analysis, literature, catalogue and 82 corresponding plates. The subject of the investigation is zoomorphic vessels and bird-shaped rattles in central Europe and northern Italy, dating to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages (1300–500 BC).

The publication deals with a widespread object group, which has not been summarised in a monograph so far. Although in his '*Studien zum Symbolgut der Urnenfelder- und Hallstattzeit Mitteleuropas*' (Studies on the Symbolism of the Urnfield and Hallstatt Periods of Central Europe), published in 1954, Georg Kossack dealt with animal symbolism, he also included other artefact categories such as jewellery pendants or drinking horns in his analysis in addition to vessels.¹ In 1970 Bogusław Gediga published the article '*Motowy figuralne w sztuce ludności kultury luzyckiej*', in which he presented all bird-shaped rattles and animal vessels of the Lusatian Culture known up to that time.² In contrast to Poland, only selected zoomorphic vessels from other European areas were analysed.³ However, a large-scale overview of this topic was still missing. This gap is now closed by the monograph by Pscheidl, which offers the reader a summary of all zoomorphic vessels dating from the Late Bronze Age (Bz) to the Early Iron Age in central Europe and northern Italy.

Pscheidl defines zoomorphic vessels as plastic representations of animals which are connected with or shaped as vessels.⁴ This definition establishes the connection between the bird rattles of the Lusatian Culture and animal containers, which is not implied by the title. Rattles are

hollow-shaped bird sculptures with small stones or clay balls inside. By shaking them, a rattling sound is produced. On this point Pscheidl follows the classification of Gediga, who also analysed ornithomorphic rattles together with animal vessels, but in recent years there has been a move to interpret bird rattles in correlation to other rattle types due to their large number, widespread distribution and possible use as a musical instrument.⁵ Pscheidl probably deliberately decided against a separation of the material because the similar contexts indicate a ritual connection to animal-shaped drinking vessels.⁶ Other object groups with animal motifs such as swords, razors, fibulae, chariot parts, etc. are only included for comparison with zoomorphic vessels and rattles.⁷

In the next chapter ('*2. Die Typisierung der zoomorphen Gefäße und ihre kulturhistorische und chronologische Einordnung*'), the 930 objects listed in the catalogue are subdivided according to animal species. Surprisingly, the species repertoire is very limited.⁸ There are mainly representations of birds, cattle and a hybrid composed of them – the bovine bird –, which are presented in detail in individual chapters with a concluding summary. In addition, there are smaller groups of zoomorphic vessels with representations of rams, horses, deer, pigs, so-called 'exotics' (i.e. feline predators or gryphons) and indeterminable animals.⁹

Within the species, different types of vessels appearing with this specific animal are also addressed individually. For example, *askoi* are found under the header of bird as well as under cattle and ram. Pscheidl argues that vessels and rattles are individually shaped, and similarities in appearance and technical execution exist only on a local level.¹⁰ Moreover, the ritual significance of these animals was probably more important than the vessel type used.¹¹ Pscheidl knows how to structure this very heterogeneous material by cleverly

1 KOSSACK 1954, 40–43, 56–57.

2 GEDIGA 1970. – In addition, the master's theses by SCHMEIDUCH 2012 and KUTOWSKY 2013 have to be mentioned. These three publications cover the entire eastern German region.

3 E.g. EIBNER 1973 for feeding vessels.

4 p. 15.

5 Cf. MANSCHUS 2012.

6 pp. 126, 151.

7 p. 12.

8 pp. 17–19.

9 pp. 79–84.

10 p. 17.

11 p. 19.

incorporating ‘preliminary results’ at the end of each type section (e.g. ‘*Zwischenergebnisse zu den Vogelgefäßen – Ihre Formen sowie ihre kulturelle und chronologische Einordnung*’).¹²

The very extensive results of Pscheidl’s typification can be summarised as follows: the three most important animals are birds, cattle and bovine birds. Birds are depicted not only as vessels but also in the form of rattles, chariots, appliqués and handles. Bird vessels appear for the first time in the Middle Bronze Age in Hungary but can only be found in central Europe in the Late Bronze Age (Hallstatt (Ha) A to D) and primarily in the western distribution area of the Lusatian Culture. The material is dominated by footed vessels, whose lemon-shaped bodies start to disappear in Ha B. For Italy, some ornithomorphic *askoi* are known from the eastern Mediterranean area. Bird rattles strongly resemble bird vessels and, according to Pscheidl, differ mainly in the absence of a dorsal opening.¹³ Ornithomorphic rattles are also mainly represented from Ha A onwards in the Lusatian Culture and its Iron Age successors the Billendorf and Görz groups. Pscheidl recognises a clear increase in the material for the transition period between Ha B and C (8th–7th century BC). Bird rattles were also widespread beyond their area of origin. The author interprets this as an expression of the influence of the Lusatian Culture on more southern regions in Ha B and C. The very few clay or bronze ritual chariots with birds can generally be divided into two groups: in the Late Bronze Age, chariots usually feature a cauldron in their centre (e.g. Acholshausen, Germany); from the beginning of the Iron Age onwards, the vessel is replaced by an animal.

Ornithomorphic appliqués and handles are among the oldest animal representations on vessels in central Europe but were widely established only in the course of Bz D and Ha A.¹⁴ Bird appliqués primarily occur on bowls made of clay or metal and can be observed from the Late Bronze to the end of the Early Iron Age. Likewise, handles with bird protomes are widespread. These usually feature schematic representations of the bird’s head at the end of the handle. Although there is a distribution focus of bronze scoops in southern Germany in Ha C, the range of vessels made of metal or clay with bird’s head handles is large and, with the exception of Austria, represented in all central European countries as well as in northern Italy.

The second most common animals are cattle, which cannot be explicitly categorized as male or female individuals.¹⁵ Again, there is a Middle Bronze Age antecedent in the Terramare Culture of northern Italy, where vessels with horned handles are part of the pottery repertoire. Strikingly, the pottery repertoire consists of only a few types like cattle vessels, cattle protome vessels and handles with horns or cattle heads. Rattles do not appear in the spectrum.

Pscheidl describes the development of cattle vessels as follows: in Bz D, cattle vessels occur mainly in the Lusatian cultural area. These pots are hollow-shaped animals with an opening in their back. In the course of Ha A, the bodies become more lemon-like, and bipedal cattle are increasingly depicted (e.g. Vösendorf, Austria). Simultaneously, the first cattle protome vessels develop in the Tisza region around Lăpuș, Romania in Bz D and start spreading along the Danube. The transition between the two vessel forms in the Late Bronze Age appears fluid and is somewhat confusing for the reader. For example, the difference between vessels with a single cattle protome, lemon-shaped body and foot (cf. Malá Bělá, Czech Republic), the contemporaneous special form of cattle vessels with two legs (cf. Vösendorf, Austria) and cattle vessels with four legs (cf. Troubsko, Czech Republic; all Fig. 39) is not immediately apparent. In Ha C2, the bovine protome vessels evolve as a distinctive pottery type in the eastern Hallstatt area. They are clearly recognisable in the repertoire, due to the multiple appearances of the animal heads. Bovine protome vessels are mainly distributed in Austria, Slovenia and western Hungary. With the end of the Eastern Hallstatt Culture in Ha D1/2, this pottery type disappears.

In northern Italy, in addition to vessels with horn handles, there are only bovine *askoi*. *Askoi* are attested for the Early Iron Age Villanova Culture in particular. Pscheidl points out that for this region, the vessel form was adopted from the eastern Mediterranean region and transformed from birds to cattle.¹⁶ Bovine birds are mixed creatures, usually executed as horned birds, and emerge in southern Scandinavia, large parts of central Europe and northern Italy.¹⁷ Very occasionally they are connected with vessels, but depicted as motifs e.g. in Ha A2 bronze spouts (Denmark) or in Drago fibulae.

Besides a very small number of bovine bird vessels (n=7) and bovine bird chariots (n=5), this hybrid is mainly depicted on the end of the handle of bronze vessels. Pscheidl

¹² pp. 29–31.

¹³ pp. 35–37.

¹⁴ pp. 46–47.

¹⁵ p. 17.

¹⁶ p. 70.

¹⁷ pp. 72–79.

rightly points out that very little has changed in the state of research since Gero von Merhart's 1952 essay '*Studien über einige Gattungen von Bronzegefäßen*'¹⁸ (Studies on Some Types of Bronze Vessels): after individual representatives in Ha B (e.g. Steinkirchen, Germany), a distribution focus of bronze vessels with bovine bird handles can be identified in northern Italy from Ha C. Unlike birds and cattle, the composed bovine birds do not appear in connection with vessels in the Lusatian Culture.¹⁹

The third chapter of the monograph deals with the occurrence of zoomorphic vessels in the archaeological features and their use in sepulchral contexts ('*Zoomorphe Gefäße im Befund und ihre Verwendung im sepulkralen Kontext*'). As the title of the chapter already implies, zoomorphic vessels are primarily found in grave contexts and only exceptionally in settlements.²⁰ Accordingly, Pscheidl first examines the position of zoomorphic vessels and bird rattles in the features.²¹

Starting with the ritual chariots, followed by bird vessels and bird rattles, Pscheidl is able to show that bird representations in graves are primarily associated with drinking vessels. The particular objects are either placed near the deceased or as part of the drinking set (e.g. Liebersee, Germany).²² In addition, the article by Jan Dąbrowski '*Beiträge zur [sic!] Forschungen Lausitzer Brauchtums*' published in 2013 should be mentioned here. He deals with vessels appearing between graves in Lusatian cemeteries and interprets them as remnants of libations. In this analysis, a connection between drinking vessels and bird rattles can be proven, too.²³

This pattern is slightly modified for cattle vessels. They may also be close to the deceased or part of a plate set.²⁴ However, in most cases, they belong to a group of storage containers. The situation is different with bovine protomes, which are found on a wide variety of vessel forms (large vessel, situla, bowl). Those protome vessels are usually placed in the respective group of grave goods according to the pottery type. Pscheidl explains this phenomenon in terms of the cattle's symbolism. In his opinion, the placement of the bovine protomes is always connected with the vessel

contents – a potion. It would have been helpful for the reader to discuss the different vessel forms in more detail at this point and perhaps also to reference parallels to kraters. This would have made the connection between 'storage vessel' and 'potion' clearer. Bovine birds or horned handles occur very frequently on scoops. In the grave, they are mainly found in the vicinity of large vessels, which possibly contained drinking liquids.²⁵

Where cemeteries or burial groups have been completely investigated (e.g. Hallstatt and Statzendorf, Austria), no concentrations of graves with zoomorphic vessels can be detected.²⁶

During the study period from Bz D to Ha D3, zoomorphic vessels and bird rattles occur sporadically in settlement contexts. In settlements, zoomorphic vessels are usually shattered. Pscheidl puts forward two explanations for this: they could be faulty vessels that were discarded or misinterpreted finds.²⁷ The appearance of bird rattles in settlement contexts seems to differ between their main distribution area (Lusatian Culture) and other regions. For the rattles outside the Lusatian Culture, Pscheidl assumes that these objects were brought into the settlements via exchange. Due to different sepulchral concepts, they were not used as grave goods. In the Lusatian Culture, most bird rattles were found in the Late Iron Age settlements of Komorow and Biskupin, Poland. In general, the number of ornithomorphic rattles in graves decreases strongly in Ha D. It is possible that the deposition of rattles in settlements maps changes in rites towards the end of the Lusatian Culture.

Finally, Pscheidl comes to the following conclusion: the zoomorphic vessels and bird rattles occur in burials but are neither personal equipment of the dead nor a status symbol. They are positioned in the grave as part of a drinking set. No concentrations or segregations from other graves are evident within the burial sites. For the Eastern and Western Hallstatt Circle as well as parts of the Villanova Culture, a close connection between extraordinarily 'richly' furnished burials and the occurrence of zoomorphic vessels can be attested. This is in striking contrast to the burial rite of the Lusatian Culture, where a 'social elite' is not represented in

18 MERHART 1952.

19 pp. 75–77.

20 This obviously does not apply to the Terramare Culture as Pscheidl has explicitly excluded it from the analysis.

21 Unfortunately, due to the many old finds and unpublished grave complexes, the overall data base is extremely limited.

22 pp. 104–105.

23 DĄBROWSKI 2013, 147.

24 pp. 118–119.

25 pp. 122–123.

26 pp. 124–125.

27 As an example of misinterpretation, he mentions the site Podzemlj in Slovenia, a hilltop settlement with a tumulus field in front of it – and missing excavation documentation. Consequently, the zoomorphic objects from Podzemlj cannot be assigned to any feature, nor can they be assigned with certainty to the settlement or burial area: p. 383.

the burial context. Pscheidl suggests that membership in this elite could be expressed in the grave by a bird rattle.²⁸

Using the example of Iron Age elite burials (Nové Košariská, Slovakia; Gemeinlebarn and Langlebarn, Austria; and Acholshausen, Germany), Pscheidl proves a 'libation with religious significance'.²⁹ He further argues that the zoomorphic vessels next to the deceased symbolise a close connection between the deceased and 'the one [...] whom the animals ultimately symbolise'. At this point, Pscheidl anticipates and refers to a line of arguments, which he does not present until several chapters later ('6. *Interpretation*' and '7. *Der soziokulturelle Stellenwert der zoomorphen Gefäße*'). This is unfortunately too fast for the reader and not comprehensible from the preceding text.

After two short chapters on decorations on zoomorphic vessels ('4. *Verzierungen*' and a supraregional comparison with Greece and *Asia Minor* ('5. *Überregionale Vergleiche*'), Pscheidl moves on to the interpretation of the symbolism of the individual animals. One of the most important pictorial sources for the analysis are the friezes depicted on Hallstatt period situlae, which show various scenes of a feast performed by the social elite.³⁰ In what follows, the relevant passages for the interpretation of the zoomorphic vessels are briefly presented. Pscheidl first refers to the throne scene on the situlae of Vače and Magdalenska Gora: two men are sitting on thrones, one behind the other. The man in the back is holding a sceptre with one or two birds' heads in his hand. The man in front is being handed a bowl by a woman – the so-called '*Trankspenderin*'.³¹ Here the bird motif is probably connected to a claim to power. On the same situla from Magdalenska Gora, in the second frieze, the man in front, clearly recognisable by his clothing, is holding the sceptre. Most probably in the situla festival, the leadership, represented by the bird sceptre, is handed over from one man to his successor.³² A clearer connection between bird and potion is found twice on the situla of Providence: in both cases a bird is sitting on the rim of a cauldron, standing between two flute players and pugilists respectively. In addition, single birds are also found sitting on sacrificial animals. Pscheidl agrees with the interpretation proposed by Christoph Huth, who understands the bird as a symbol of the sacredness of an action.³³

The results of Pscheidl's explanations of the situla celebration can be summarised as follows: the situla celebration is also about a change of leadership, which is connected with a complex libation. Based on the appearance of the 'sacred' bird in various scenes, Pscheidl assumes that the bird is the symbol of a deity. The bird sceptre symbolises the fact that the leader has not only secular but also religious power. Based on this information, zoomorphic vessels in burial contexts are part of a religiously motivated libation performed at the funeral.³⁴

A cross-regional comparison of zoomorphic vessels and bird rattles proves the selection of a few animal species (bird, cattle, bovine bird, horse, ram and indeterminate). They mostly appear on vessel forms typical of the different areas, suggesting a uniform understanding of their symbolism. In some cases, the animals are also depicted together on objects such as drawbar chariots (bird and bovine bird e.g. Potsdam Eiche, Germany) or are associated with each other in plate sets (horned cups and cattle protome vessels from Pommerkogel near Kleinklein, Austria). Interestingly, there is no connection between the treatment of the deceased's body and zoomorphic vessels. The change from cremation to inhumation has no influence on the use of zoomorphic vessels in the burial context.

Individual object groups such as bird rattles, zoomorphic vessels with a lemon-shaped body and cattle protome vessels have a long tradition of interpretation. Bird rattles are a common burial object in the Lusatian Culture and occur disproportionately often in children's burials. This and their rattling sound have been the main argument for interpreting them as toys. Outside the Lusatian Culture, bird rattles are often found in women's burials. Pscheidl rightly points out that the combination of rattling and bird symbolism appears not only on rattles but also, e.g. on chariots (e.g. Glasinac, Bosnia and Herzegovina), on bronze pendants or even on crescent moon fibulae (e.g. Hallstatt, Austria).³⁵ Accordingly, he does not interpret bird rattles as toys. Pscheidl assumes for bird rattles that they are a symbol of libations. Thus, the children who were buried with them belonged to the upper social class. He assumes that children were not yet allowed to perform the entire ritual because of their age or were not yet full members of the society of the time and therefore received a clay rattle as a grave good.³⁶ His argumentation is coherent in itself, but it is only one

²⁸ p. 126.

²⁹ p. 127.

³⁰ LUCKE, FREY 1962. – HUTH 2003.

³¹ p. 141.

³² Cf. HUTH 2003, 160–220.

³³ p. 144.

³⁴ On the significance of the libation in Lusatian Culture, cf. MIERZWIŃSKI 2012, 137–146.

³⁵ p. 148.

³⁶ p. 149.

possibility among many. For example, Pscheidl negates the fact that the representation of an upper class in the burial is not common for the Late Bronze Age in the Lusatian Culture. Furthermore, in the vast majority of burials, there are pieces of crockery that can be used for drinks (primarily cups and bowls). Accordingly, a libation cannot be associated with a social elite. It seems to be a part of the Lusatian burial ritual, which includes all deceased individuals of a group – thus also children. Furthermore, Pscheidl fails to explain the sporadic occurrence of rattles in adult graves.

Similarly to bird rattles, zoomorphic vessels with a lemon-shaped body are usually interpreted as a vessel type used exclusively for children. According to an article by Clemens Eibner published in 1973, they are mainly known as feeding vessels (*'Sauggefäße'*).³⁷ This pottery type, which may also be animal-shaped, has one or more discharge warts in addition to the lemon-shaped body. Eibner interpreted them as a vessel type for feeding infants and very young children. Pscheidl summarises the common points of the discussion around feeding vessels well, but suggests a use comparable to a rhyton.³⁸ He suspects that this vessel type was primarily used for libations in the burial ritual. Again, the lack of completed rites of passage might require the addition of a zoomorphic vessel with a lemon-shaped body in burials for children belonging to the social elite.

However, recently there have been new arguments for their use as a feeding aid for infants and young children: Katharina Rebay-Salisbury published lipid and isotope analyses showing that feeding vessels from Dietfurt and Augsburg-Haunstetten, Germany, contained milk.³⁹ These results are likely to change the previous view of the vessels with lemon-shaped bodies as connected to libation. For cattle and ram vessels, Pscheidl points to them being discussed as an expression of profane appreciation of milk and meat, and as a tractive force for wagons and ploughs.⁴⁰ There is also the thesis that the East Hallstatt bull-headed vessels are a symbol of their owner's close connection to bull breeding and cattle herds.⁴¹ Pscheidl considers this unlikely since the zoomorphic vessels are in the same burial area as drinking vessels and not together with the meat offerings. In this regard, he refers to the common depiction of cattle and birds (e.g. *situla* from Bologna Certosa, Italy), which once again suggests a similar meaning of the two animals.

There remains the final question of what exactly the individual animals could mean.⁴² Again, Pscheidl explicitly points out that without written sources, seeking the religious content is impossible. Moreover, the archaeological clues are rather limited, too. In the case of the bird, they can be summarised as follows: the bird motif appears in Bz D in central Europe and persists without interruption until the Early Iron Age. It is associated with drinking vessels and scoops in the burial ritual, which is why there could be a connection between the beverage and the bird. There is scientific consensus that they are most likely representations of waterfowl. Pscheidl rightly notes that there is no obvious connection between an alcoholic beverage and the waterfowl species. This species selection is probably supplemented by birds of prey in the Early Iron Age (cf. *situla* of Vače, Slovenia).⁴³

Pscheidl follows the interpretative tradition of Kossack as well as Huth and assumes that the birds represent a deity.⁴⁴ Based on the various depictions of bird-sun-skiffs and the travelling goddess on a pithos urn from Knossos, Pscheidl is able to show that birds are associated with cyclic, seasonal changes and more generally a 'journey'. It is striking that a change in motifs takes place in the Iron Age. While in Ha B the sun or a circular motif is still the focus of the skiff, from Ha C onwards, anthropomorphic figures are increasingly depicted (e.g. fibula from Suessula, Italy). Probably the woman handling drinking vessels known from *situla* art is illustrated.⁴⁵ The accompanying birds remain the same, however, and are a stable, pan-European element of the ritual motif canon from Bz D to Ha D.

Cattle appear as a motif already in the Neolithic (e.g. Çatal Hüyük, Turkey), but archaeologically no direct connection in terms of content can be established with the Late Bronze Age vessels in central Europe. In the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages, primarily domestic cattle breeds were represented (cf. cow-calf vessel Hallstatt, Austria). These are mainly protome vessels deposited in splendid burials. Cone neck and collar neck vessels are typical for the eastern Hallstatt area, but bowls or *situlae* can also be found. In *situla* art, cattle are depicted several times as sacrificial animals, usually accompanied by birds (e.g. *situla* from Bologna Certosa, Italy). However, Pscheidl does not interpret the zoomorphic vessels with representations of cattle as an indication of meat offerings or food but rather sees a connection

³⁷ EIBNER 1973.

³⁸ p. 12.

³⁹ REBAY-SALISBURY et al. 2021.

⁴⁰ RADDATZ 1982, 150–151.

⁴¹ KAUS 1988–1989.

⁴² pp. 151–164.

⁴³ p. 152.

⁴⁴ p. 152. – KOSSACK 1990, 91. – HUTH 2003, 288.

⁴⁵ pp. 153–155.

to the libation ritual, and thus to the bird motif, too.⁴⁶ He argues for this interpretation primarily by pointing to the position of cattle vessels and bovine protome vessels in the burial within the pottery set. Based on his interpretation of the bird motif, Pscheidl also explains the cattle representations as epiphanies of a deity associated with the libation ritual. In the Iron Age, the cattle symbol was only used by the social elite. So far no simple graves with cattle vessels have been found.

In the Late Bronze Age, sporadic representations of the bovine bird appear, which does not exist in nature.⁴⁷ The fantastic creature does not emphasise the power and strength of cattle but can rather be described as a horned bird. Bovine birds occur in connection with vessels almost exclusively in the form of bronze scoops included in burials. After analysing the other object types with bovine birds (especially fibulae and drawbar chariots), Pscheidl concludes that it is an independent epiphany of a deity and not just a combined image of birds and cattle.⁴⁸ The scoops indicate a connection in terms of content between bovine birds and the libation ritual depicted in the Iron Age situla art.

The conclusion takes the form of a *'Zusammenfassung und Ergebnisse'* in which Pscheidl presents all relevant points of his analysis. In a nutshell, zoomorphic vessels and the main motifs of birds, cattle and bovine birds are an important component of Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age burial practices in central Europe and northern Italy. The fact that the depicted animals remain unchanged from Bz D to Ha D suggests a continuity in the rites performed. Accordingly, the feast of the social elites of the Hallstatt and Villanova cultures, which are illustrated on situlae, has its origins in the Late Bronze Age. Zoomorphic vessels are the material expression of the same religious ideas of the Lusatian, Villanova, and Hallstatt cultures.

In his publication, Pscheidl presents a very good overview of a subject that until now has only been dealt with in parts and, for the first time since Kossack, creates a comprehensive and supra-regional database. By dividing the monograph into two main parts, *'Typisierung'* and *'Zoomorphe Gefäße im Befund'*, Pscheidl succeeds in structuring the large and heterogeneous quantity of objects and condensing them to the important points. The comparisons with other image carriers are very brief and therefore require a great deal of background knowledge on the reader's part about the most diverse artefacts with animal motifs in central

Europe and Italy. Pscheidl makes up for this deficit with short summaries of each described object group. Thus, it should be easy for less informed readers to acquire an overview. It is particularly positive that even very small and special vessel types such as four-legged birds, two-legged cattle, or animal vessels with lemon-shaped bodies are included.

A minor point of criticism relates to the thematic digressions on animal protome vessels of the Gáva Culture⁴⁹ and on vessels with animal carvings from Tumulus 5 of Feichtboden-Fischau, Austria.⁵⁰ These sections, while unquestionably very informative, disrupt the logical structure of the monograph. It is difficult to comprehend why these features were explicitly excluded from the analysis because of their age or decor (incised animals) and yet are considered in such detail. The author could have used the objects as a comparison in shorter sections within the text, as he did, for example, with other exceptional artefacts (e.g. Strettweg chariot, Austria).⁵¹

Christian Pscheidl has undoubtedly written a future standard book. The reader can not only get to grips comprehensively with the subject but is also able to look up individual animal species or the features/situations in which they were found. The author is to be congratulated on this outstanding achievement.

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⁴⁶ pp. 157–159.

⁴⁷ pp. 160–162.

⁴⁸ p. 162.

⁴⁹ p. 52.

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