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Archaeology and identity in a Bavarian village – academic and local (hi)stories

THOMAS MEIER

Abstract:
In village chronicles experts are frequently asked to give their academic perspectives on the prehistory of the place. This paper starts with a discussion of how such a contribution might look like under the ethics of post-modernity. I suggest that we regard villagers (hi) stories as appropriations in their own right and side by side with academic versions. For example such academic and local (hi)stories are compared for three sites in the territory of a Bavarian village– with remarkable differences. Based on these examples mediators, modes and conditions are reflected on a more general level, which structure the appropriation of academic (hi)stories in a local public. While the category of the mediator becomes blurred between research and mediation, even mediated archaeological (hi)stories are not fully appropriated, but selected at a local level. The selection of (hi) stories on the one hand depends on the ways of making historical truth – with socially constructed authorities like school and academics being in an advantage to gain discursive power. On the other hand the narratives of discursive authorities have to meet further conditions to become appropriated locally. They need to adhere to physical places and they need to meet the general educational background, i.e. established master-narratives of "Great" history (Celts, Romans, Middle Ages, sacrificial site, watchtower).

As a local friend of mine once said, the village of Götting is unspectacular in almost every respect. It is situated in Upper Bavaria about 50 km southeast of Munich in the Mangfall valley and close to the rim of the Alps. It is here where we lay our scene for a case study on a local (non-)interaction between academic and public[1] appropriations of the past.[2]

The choice of Götting for this case study is purely personal coincidence: I came across the village for two reasons, both not related to this research: firstly,

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[1] As in this case the public I have chosen for my research is a very local village community, I am using the terms "public" and "local" quite synonymously throughout this paper. Therefore my term "local knowledge" bears hardly any reference to the local knowledge as Clifford GEERTZ (1983) has conceptualized it.

[2] An earlier version of this paper was published in 2008. For this volume I have fully re-structured, focused and translated it.

fifteen years ago I started excavating a small priory about twenty kilometres east of Götting, which quickly developed into a project on human-environmental interaction and comprised a wider survey of the former monastic holdings including – among others – the lower Mangfall valley and Götting (Meier 2004a; Meier – Schmitt 2007). Secondly, among German archaeologists, at least those interested in the Migration Period, the village of Götting is famous for a female burial of the years around 400 AD (Keller 1971). When asked for a contribution to the *Festschrift* of my academic teacher Max Martin in 2002 I decided to present to him a re-evaluation of this burial (Meier 2004b). As an unintended consequence of that publication I was asked to contribute "something" on the pre- and protohistory of Götting to a chronicle of the village some years later in 2007 (Meier 2008). It was at that moment, when I started to reflect on my perspective on my and "their" – the villagers' – archaeologies and what I assumed to be "their" perspective.

In post-modernity academic history has become multiple, it has lost its innocent claim to tell the one and only true story. Historical narratives[3] today no longer speak of truths, but of realities, perspectives and opinions of different people and groups. This is not only a matter of multi-perspectivity in the past. In our days, too, history has become manifold, there is no longer a joint history of "the" society, but the multiple and different perspectives of social groups on their pasts as for example the papers of this volume show. In itself the existence of such multiple and perspective pasts is far from new, but with post-modern ethics of plurality the plurality of (hi)stories becomes reflected and is legitimized. Non-academic perspectives on the past are no longer considered as false or fringe, but as valuable constructions in their own right and for their own groups and purposes. Their legitimacy cannot be judged against an alleged historical truth (in this point I do not agree with Bintliff this volume: 246) as such a truth itself is dismantled as a discursive construction of authority (Foucault 1971: 15–23; 1977; on the socio-historical conditions of truth Shapin 1995). The only yardstick against which the acceptability of a perspective and story can be measured is

[3] On the narratological character of history cf. White (1973; 1987); for contradiction Nünning (1999); for a survey Meuter (2011). For archaeology cf. Pluciennik (1999; 2010) and the summary by Veit (2010).

an ethical one: Whether it is respectful to and allows for other perspectives and narratives (WELSCH 1991).[4]

Such multiple (hi)stories regard different events and things as important and knit them together to different webs of (hi)stories, each of them being reasonable, conclusive and persuasive within their respective groups (cf. CONRAD – KESSEL 1994; GOETZ 2001).[5] If (hi)stories are negotiated within groups relative to their respective world-views, their concepts of reason and meaning, each of these (hi)stories is primarily meaningful to the respective group which has constructed it. In a plural, democratic society academic versions about the past are group-related narratives as well; the academic vision of the past is only one vision competing with others and fully unequipped with any heightened moral or argumentative powers (e.g. WELSCH 1991): Multiple in themselves academic narratives cannot necessarily claim to be more meaningful or important outside the academic sphere than any other story. An academic narrator selects the ingredients of her/his story according to the paradigms, measures of value and plausibilities of his peer group, s/he follows the rules of argumentation and the fashions of importance of her/his discipline and consequently her/his narrative is primarily meaningful to those sharing her/his academic perspective. As any other narrator s/he tells a story for her/his own social and intellectual group reaffirming her-/himself and her/his readers that they belong together because they are thinking in the same way and because they share the same view on the past. S/He founds a shared identity, a feeling of community fed by a shared history and tradition, which often enough constructs and legitimates the existence of the group (HOBSBAWM 1983).

In enlightenment ideology, however, academic narratives – originally in the wake of theology – were esteemed to be closer to an absolute truth due to their elaborate rules of rationality than any other narratives. They were equipped

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[4] Eszter Bánffy's paper (BÁNFFY this volume) shows the limits of post-modern plurality, if one perspective raises claims of absolute truth and tries to marginalize and rule out other perspectives. Such ethical limits at first sight seem to contradict the post-modern essence of radical plurality, but such an objection overlooks the fact that the post-modern constitution is based on an ethical concept with just this radical plurality at its core (WELSCH 1991: esp. 25, 28).

[5] These conditions of post-modern narratives are often ignored by the blunt objective of "*anything goes*", discrediting post-modernity to be another word for arbitrariness. Post-modern narratives as any other narratives have to be consistently constructed according to rules of plausibility. So it is not the narratives, which are arbitrary, nor has the claim for consistency become disputable, but the specific sets of rules are negotiable and have to prove their meaningfulness in specific contexts.

with moral authority and legal power – not the least by making them the only narratives pupils were obliged to learn in school, which roughly simultaneously became compulsory. Compulsory schooling as the educational backbone of the enlightened state has – hardly questioned anywhere – survived into post-modernity. And it is only very slowly that the exclusionary authoritative claims of academic interpretations are weakened in school and elsewhere. Still many parts of European societies attribute to academics, to their reasoning and (hi)stories the ability to judge divergent and competing (hi)stories and to make truth about the past. While in post-modernity a narrative transgressing the boundaries of its peer group should be a matter of negotiation and meaningful adaptation, we as academics frequently still withdraw to our established discursive power – and, honestly, mostly we like it as it keeps us in the favourable social position of a priesthood with special access to an arcane, true past.[6]

Returning to the case of Götting the editors of the village chronicle, in a letter to the contributors of March 15th 2007, explained that

> "[t]he celebration of the jubilee [of the 1200th anniversary of the church of Götting being mentioned for the first time] shall strengthen the consciousness of the villagers of Götting for the rich past of their hometown" ("*Die Feier des Jubiläums will das Bewusstsein der Göttinger für die reiche Vergangenheit ihres Heimatortes stärken*").

And here trouble started: Myself being an academic, an archaeologist with some interest in the Middle Ages, grown up in Munich, hardly able to speak the local Bavarian dialect and probably in the Mangfall valley not more than ten years ago for the first time – how could I say anything on the pre- and protohistory of Götting, on "the rich past of their hometown", which has any meaning or importance on the ground? Of course I could tell one or more academic stories, but why should they be printed in the village chronicle? Why only my story? How could I risk to submit the villagers of Götting to my interpretation of their past by superimposing my perspective via a printed narrative in their chronicle? Black-hearted and somewhat pointed, such an act could be described as "academic colonialism" … notwithstanding that "they" had asked me.

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[6] I am most thankful to Mark Pearce, who forwarded this view at our joint Round Table at the EAA-Meeting in The Hague in 2010.

Would it not be more appropriate to a village chronicle contributing and strengthening the local identity of the villagers of Götting that the locals themselves select, which events and places are important to them and should be passed on (cf. HODDER 1999; BEER 2010)? Initially I considered making a poll among the villagers which monuments and traditions are important to them, but soon dismissed this idea due to shortage of time and money. Instead I hoped that local legends might lead my way to those archaeological sites which receive special local importance. Moreover legends are handed on for a long time and thus not so much reflect actual opinions but are an essential part of the shared, collective memory of a place (conceptually on collective memory HALBWACHS 1925; 1950; ASSMANN 1997: esp. 29–160; 1999). I was deeply disappointed to learn that none of my contact persons[7] knew any local legends at all. Nevertheless my approach produced a fully unexpected result: I was offered a colourful miscellany of stories, which do not meet the conventional idea of a legend, but which perfectly met my purpose by pointing to selected places which are of special meaning to the local collective memory. Moreover the analyses of these stories provide much better insights into the modes of interaction and appropriation between academic and local stories than any legend could have done.

I will start my case study with three places in the vicinity of Götting. They show quite different (non-)interactions between academics and locals. Though a case study they will allow for more general questions to be asked: Most prominent in shaping (hi)stories of Götting is one figure – Karl Braßler. He paradigmatically sheds light on the opalescent concept of the "mediator". But while he died in the 1960s his narratives are still highly influential today – leading to considerations on the modes and conditions for establishing successful narratives. Among the modes the authoritative power of school and the established connection of academic writing and truth seem to be of great importance. As a detailed analysis of academic-public-knowledge flows for one of the places demonstrates, these modes of truth-making – even when married together – are far from being successful, if their narratives do not meet further conditions: (hi)stories seem to need places to be attached to and they equally need to meet a broader educational background to be meaningful. Their transformations between archaeologists and

[7] My local informants were the editors and the local contributors to the chronicle KLÖCKER – FUCHS (2008), whom I asked at the editorial meeting of November 22nd 2007.

the locals can be understood as appropriations of academic narratives to local frames of meaning, as acts of making meaning.

As Alexander Gramsch has remarked on a draft of this paper, I myself seem to rely more on academic narratives, being more interested in their public appropriations than in a feedback of public narratives into academia. On the one hand he is right! Being an academic I am wearing these glasses and looking on the world through them. In each of the case studies I will first deliver the archaeological perspective, followed by an analysis of the local (hi)stories. However, writing an academic paper, I am not giving a plain account of local perspectives, but I am instantly going to analyse them according to historical plausibilities and academic rationality. In a way I am appropriating these local (hi)stories by making them objects of torture by my analytical tools. On the other hand I would have loved to find any such feedbacks, but – except for two small notes[8] – no concrete feedback came to my attention. On a more general level, however, this paper itself may of course be regarded as a feedback as has been the village chronicle of 2008 with its initiative by the villagers.

Academic and local (hi)stories

No interaction at a "Gothic" female grave

In the archaeological world of the Migration Period Götting is quite well known for a female burial, accidentally found by the villager Josef Rindele in the southwestern corner of the borough gravelpit in 1940. While removing grass sods he came across a skeleton, accompanied by a pot, a silver fibula (a second one was probably overlooked) and a bone comb (*Fig. 1*). The local historian Karl Braßler first published the finds in the local newspaper two years later (Brassler 1942) and again in a local journal and a newspaper in the late 1950s (Brassler 1957: 12f. and opposite p. 17; Brassler 1959b). These publications, however, did not help much for the popularity of the finds as the news neither impressed locally nor were they received in the scientific community. The academic interest did not change until a new publication by archaeologist Erwin Keller, later on member of

[8] Karl Brassler (1957: 8), while dealing with the barrows of Unterleiten, not only refers to archaeological finds but also to local knowledge as it is stored in the old field name of the site (cf. *infra*).
Steffan – Uenze (2003: 138f. no. 153) shortly consider a possible Roman past of the Stiegelburg, which so far had only existed in local tradition (cf. *infra*).

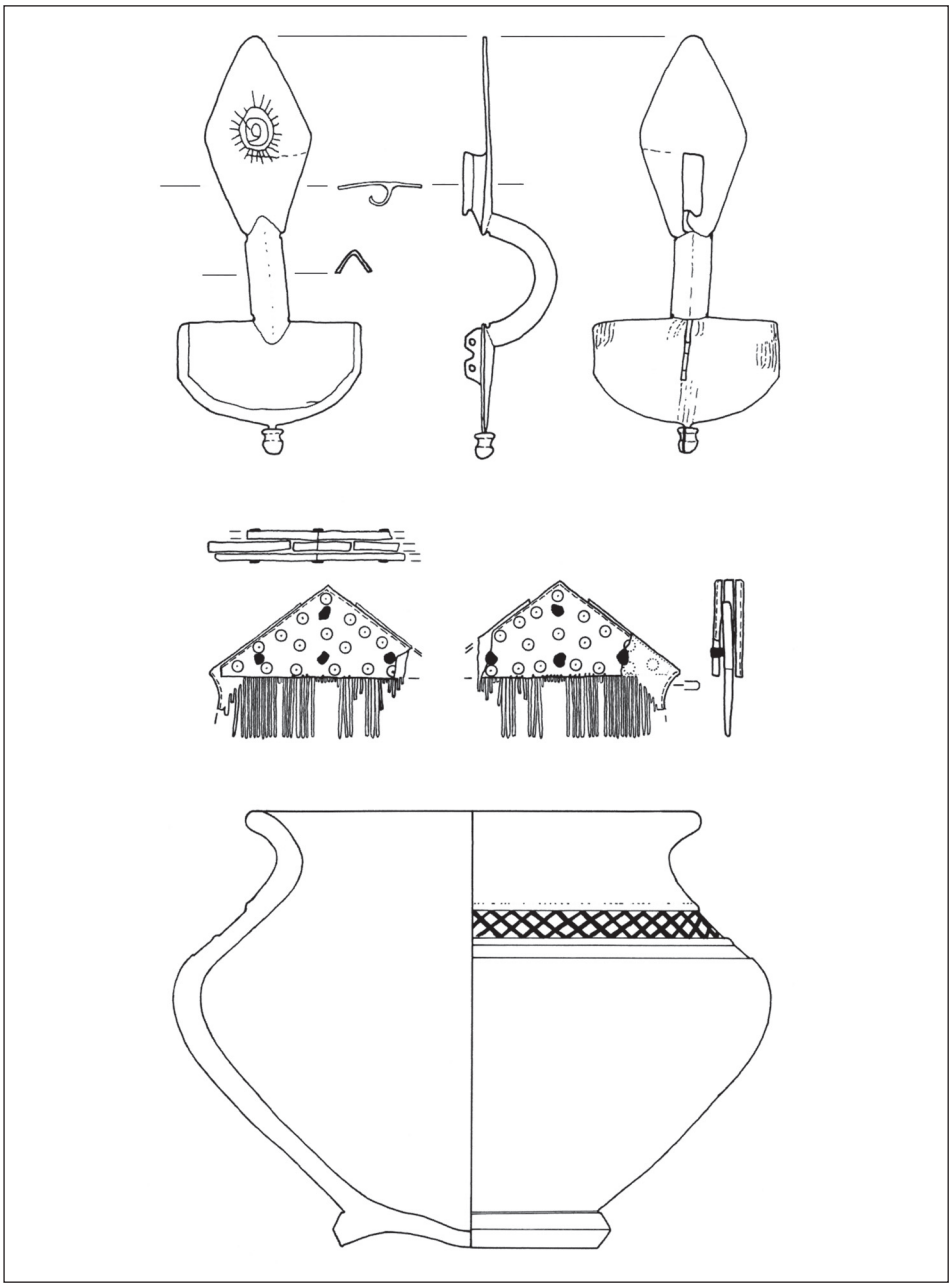

Fig. 1. Pot, fibula and comb from a female burial found close to Götting in 1940 (© Thomas Meier after KELLER ((1971) with modifications).

the Bavarian heritage board, in a regional archaeological journal (KELLER 1971). In 1988 the finds were on display at an exhibition on the Baiuvarians, officially promoted by the states of Bavaria and Upper Austria (DANNHEIMER – DOPSCH 1988: 372 no. M I.7). Obviously it was here that the actual homeland researcher Helmut Loose saw and 10 years later integrated them into his chronicle of Götting (LOOSE 1998: 7) – with some mistakes[9] and again a total lack of reception on behalf of the villagers. Even the integration of the finds in the local museum does not help this neglect of local attention.

According to the scientific convictions of his time Keller concentrated on the fibula. Being part of the traditional female costume its form seemed to be significant for specific ethnic groups, i.e. Germanic tribes known from written sources. Under this paradigm the Götting fibula perfectly matches the form attributed to the Goths. As antique authors convey that the Visigoths moved from the Crimea via northern Italy to Aquitania during the first two decades of the 5th century (in summary BIERBRAUER 1994), the Götting grave seemed to prove that not all Goths migrated via Italy but some groups passed the Alps on their northern rim (cf. KELLER 1987: 77f.), while the 1988-exhibition connected it to late Roman military presence in the region as auxiliary forces often integrated Germanic warriors (BÖHME 1988: 26–29).

When re-evaluating the grave I have tried to show that it can be dated quite precisely to the years around 400 AD (MEIER 2004b), but an ethnic interpretation in the sense of migrating peoples today seems out of date as it is obviously guided by the national-folkish ideas of the late 19th century and is only applicable to the age of nationalism (cf. BRATHER 2000; but BIERBRAUER 2004). I do not want to delve into the depths and shelves of ethnic interpretation in archaeology, but remarkably enough those people who buried the woman close to today's village of Götting did so in quite an unusual fashion: seemingly they regarded her as a stranger, not fitting into the local identity and requiring other habits than usual, and in some way associated her – correctly or not – with those Balkan tribes called "Goths" (for a detailed discussion cf. MEIER 2004b).

What makes Götting quite famous in the archaeological world, however, until today did not make its way into the common knowledge of the villagers – despite its publication and reception by local historians Braßler and Loose.

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[9] The fibula is said to be of bronze (instead of silver) and the comb he thinks to be of wood (instead of bone).

Probably the woman from the gravel pit was not alone as a wider "Gothic" presence may be reflected in the place name of Götting. The name is recorded for the first time as *Cotingas* in 776/83 (Bitterauf 1905: 104f. no. 83; Wallner 1950: 78). Usually it is construed from a mythical founder of the village called **Coto*, a personal name otherwise completely unknown. Would it not be equally or even more plausible to derive the place name from the "Goths" (cf. Gotthard 1849: 6f. [but not mentioning Götting]; Finsterwalder 1952: 41)? In this case the identity – self-concept and/or external perception – of the woman from the 1940 grave and her kinsmen would be at the beginning of the local identity of today's Götting and would have been written into the collective memory of the place by its very name. It is this Gothic interpretation of the place name, which Helmut Loose adopted in his popular chronicle of Götting (Loose 1998: 7f.) – but as the woman's grave remained without consequences on a local level: Reading the name of their place the villagers widely follow the *Coto*-hypothesis instead of an allegedly "Gothic ancestress".

Lost interaction at the Hallstatt barrows of Unterleiten

Only in oblique light and favourable soil conditions do the shallow remains of some barrows east of the hamlet of Unterleiten, which is an administrative part of Götting, become visible from the air (*Fig. 2*). According to an air photograph originally there were at least twelve barrows of which only nine were still visible in 1886 (Weber 1886: 7f.) and four in 1921 (Reinecke 1924: 94), while by 1957/59 all of them had disappeared (Brassler 1957: 8; 1959a: 46f. no. 15). At least for eight of the barrows there is some information from old excavations: the finds are few and not very outstanding dating to Hallstatt D1 (Kossack 1959: 28, 191f. no. 153 pl. 112; Steffan – Uenze 2003: 135–138 no. 150 pl. 50.5–8, 52–53, 55.1–2). Groups of barrows like those at Unterleiten were quite common in southern Germany during the Hallstatt period and some of them are very well preserved until today and/or excellently excavated. From an archaeological point of view the barrows of Unterleiten are by no means exceptional.

This archaeological evaluation seems to correspond to a lack of local meaning of the site. In the course of my research, however, I have come across a "real" legend connected to these barrows: In the late 1950s, i.e. approximately a generation after the last barrows had disappeared, Karl Braßler still knew the old field name "*Im Schatz*" ("In the treasure") (Brassler 1957: 8; 1959a:

Fig. 2. Air photograph of a small group of Hallstatt-barrows east of the hamlet of Unterleiten (© Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege-Luftbilddokumentation, Aufnahmedatum 01.12.89, Foto Otto Braasch, Archiv-Nr. 8136/033, Dia 6028-19).

46f. no. 15).[10] In Unterleiten he was told that at the place where the barrows once stood there is still buried a golden chest in which a sultan was interred (Brassler 1959a: 49). Field name and legend most probably correspond to each other and we might reasonably assume that both are based on prehistoric metal objects, which are regularly found in such barrows. As most of them are made from copper alloys it is a usual confusion to take them for gold and thus exorbitantly exaggerate the "treasures" to be found in burial mounds. Maybe it was the common knowledge of "treasures" and bones in barrows, which was at the core of the field name and legend at Unterleiten, maybe it was a reflection of the early archaeological research in some of the Unterleiten mounds. In any way the treasure-motif appropriates and transforms a typical archaeological source into a local story giving meaning to a site and making it a place (Tuan 1977). Remarkably enough a homeland researcher like Braßler, interested in almost everything in his small world of the lower Mangfall valley, draws on the legend and the field name to illustrate an old knowledge about the burial mounds and

[10] Today this field name is lost and the area is called "Rosssteig" ("Steed track").

the grave goods within, thus mirroring a public appropriation back into academic interest.

It remains unexplained how the sultan found his way into the barrows of Unterleiten. Two ways come to my mind – the second with kind help of my colleagues and a glass of wine: Perhaps the sultan reflects the fears with the Great Turkish war and second siege of Vienna in 1683. These events happened far to the southeast of Bavaria, but the Bavarian Elector Max II Emanuel and his troops took part in the Imperial army relieving Vienna in October 1683. After their victorious return the soldiers might have spread rumours of the formidable treasures of the Turks making the "sultan" a kind of synonym for the owner of a really great treasure – and thus burying him in a barrow at Unterleiten. Or the sultan is simply a synonym for a heathen as burial mounds usually were regarded to be of pre-Christian date (which most of them are from an archaeological point of view as well).

Transformative interaction at the Stiegelburg

The Stiegelburg hillfort is situated on a spur of the Irschenberg southwest of Unterstaudhausen, another hamlet in the vicinity of Götting (*Fig. 3*). The core of the site is quite small, measuring no more than 20 m in length. It is slightly elevated against the outer keep in the south and west towards which it is demarcated by a wall and a ditch. The outer wall and ditch are today mostly levelled by agriculture and forestry. Written sources regarding the Stiegelburg are missing, as are archaeological excavations.[11] Our knowledge is merely based on some strayfinds of Middle Bronze Age and Urnfield pottery (16th–11th century BC) and some medieval sherds (12th–14th century AD) (Archive of the Bavarian Heritage Board). All of the prehistoric pottery is secondarily burnt and accompanied by heavily burnt and highly fragmented animal bones (Weber 1909: 167; Brassler 1957: 9f; 1959a: 56 no. 31, 69, 77 bottom right, 80 no. 36; Steffan – Uenze 2003: 138f. no. 153 pl. 41.6, 8–10).

Archaeologically the Stiegelburg is one of some hundred pre- and protohistoric hillforts in Bavaria (cf. Leidorf – Ettel 1999). The finds indicate that the site – as in many other cases – was reused and restructured in different periods. The

[11] With some academic arrogance I do not consider the excavations to be archaeological, which Karl Braßler planned for in a newspaper article in 1943 and which were obviously conducted some time before his next article in 1950. Further information about these digs is missing.

Fig. 3. The area of the Stiegelburg at the foot of the Irschenberg southwest of Unterstaudhausen (© Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege-Luftbilddokumentation, Aufnahmedatum 14.04.86, Foto Otto Braasch, Archiv-Nr. 8136/068, Dia 4344-25).

burnt pottery and animal bones suggest that once in prehistory the Stiegelburg might have been a place for burning sacrifices (*Brandopferplatz*) which is a type of sanctuary quite well known in Southern Germany and the Alps from the Bronze Age to Roman times (Weiss 1997; Gleirscher 2002). Like the barrows of Unterleiten the Stiegelburg is quite ordinary from an academic point of view – at least on the basis of the actual almost non-existent state of research.

This unflattering academic evaluation is opposed by the local meaning of the Stiegelburg. Among the villagers of Götting it is the most prominent archaeological site to be mentioned, it enjoys great interest and is well anchored in a detailed collective memory. According to my local informants[12] the place name "*Burg*" indicates a (medieval) castle, which corresponds to the walls and ditches on site. But long before the castle there was a Celtic sanctuary; its age is indicated by

[12] Cf. *supra* footnote 7.

the adjacent field structures of the ridge and furrow type. Roman coins hint at a watchtower. Finally the stones of the medieval castle were used to build either the church of Westerham or the castle of Pullach, both in neighbouring villages (cf. GIESE 2006: 14).

The graphical counterpart of this knowledge is a mural by Antje Mayer in the assembly hall of the school in Götting made in 1969 (*Fig. 4*). It is titled "Celtoroman fortification around the birth of Christ" ("*Keltoromanische Befestigung um die Zeitenwende*") and shows a *murus gallicus* as a typical Celtic wall with warriors in typical Celtic clothes. On the left hand side the wall is already finished, on the right hand side it is still under construction, which, on first sight, gives the impression of a tower. In the background there are amongst other things, a megalithic tomb and long, small fields, probably ridge and furrow. In front of the wall there are some prehistoric pins, a fibula, a knife and an axe, all of them dating to the Bronze Age.[13] The fortification is unnamed, but quite obviously it is intended to be the Stiegelburg.

Among the stories of the Stiegelburg the transfer of its stones to Westerham or Pullach appears quite legendary, not the least as this motif is rather common. Interesting enough it is this transfer of stones which we can trace back furthest: While the Westerham-version was recorded a century ago according to oral tradition of an old man (GRAF 1907: 24, 55), the Pullach-version allegedly was excerpted from old files in the first half of the 19th century (GRASSINGER 1857: 177). The "factual" credibility of these traditions is very doubtful, but what is much more interesting is the ideological connotation that a transport of stones is not only a transfer of building material: together with the stones, authority and legitimation are transferred as the material builds a bridge back to the quality and lordly rights of its old place. At the time when the stones of the Stiegelburg came to Westerham or Pullach – or when these traditions were constructed – the Stiegelburg must have been highly esteemed so that it was a benefit to connect new sites to this old place. Interestingly enough the factuality of the legendary transfer of stones is discussed (with different enthusiasm) in several studies of local history and connected to long forgotten rights of possession (GRASSINGER 1857: 177; GRAF 1907: 24; BRASSLER e.g. 1956).

The other stories of the Stiegelburg are much easier to trace back: the prehistoric sanctuary is based on the fragments of pottery and animal bones mentioned above.

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[13] Based on BRASSLER (1957: upper plate opposite p. 17; 1959a: plates on p. 55, 59 and 77).

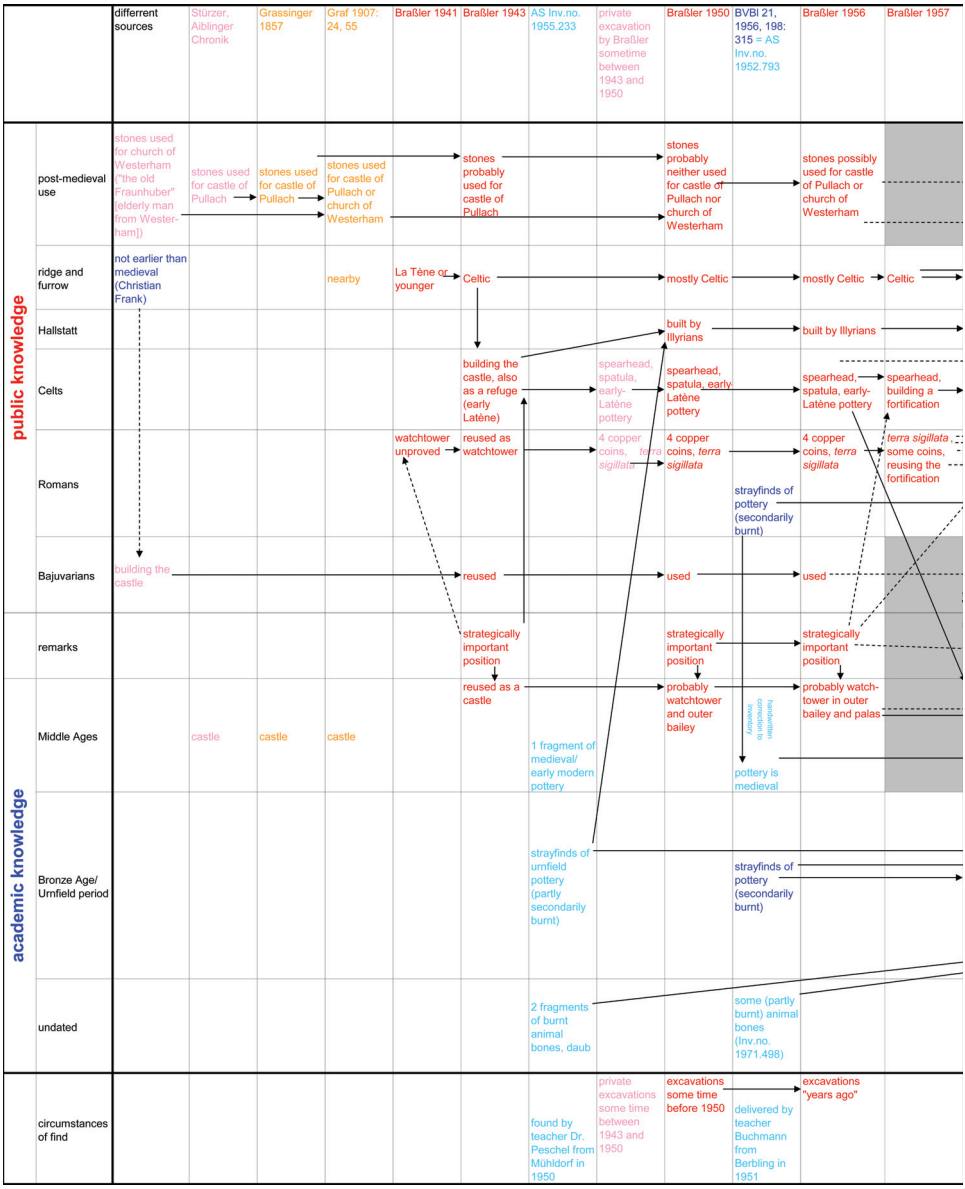
*Fig. 4. Mural by Antje Mayer (1969) in the assembly hall of the school in Götting, titled "*Keltoromanische Befestigung um die Zeitenwende*" ("Celtoroman fortification around the birth of Christ") (© Nicolas Klöcker).*

Finds of the Celtic period, however, are missing[14] but Karl Braßler argues that the neighbouring fields with ridge and furrow are Celtic and thus proof a contemporary use of the place of the Stiegelburg (BRASSLER 1956; 1959a: 75–78, 80 no. 36; again LOOSE 1998: 6). Today – after long academic discussions – the ridge and furrow fields of Southern Germany are regarded as typically medieval (SCHWARZ 1989: 199ff. esp. 199–201, 221; but FRIES 1995: 126ff. for examples from the Iron Age onwards) while neighbouring field structures are anyway inappropriate to date the walls and ditches of the Stiegelburg as the fields might be oriented along older structures. Both archaeological arguments against a Celtic sanctuary, however, did not find their way into the local knowledge.

Like the Celts the Romans, too, are Karl Braßler's product: He argues this on the basis of some fragments of pottery, which he thought to be *terra sigillata*, and some Roman coins, which are missing today (BRASSLER 1956; 1957: 10). While the pottery is now dated to the Middle Ages (Archive of the Archäologische Staatssammlung München, handwritten correction to inventory no. 1952, 793) Roman coins – taken that they were really Roman – are found in almost any context in any place and therefore without further evidence cannot prove a Roman settlement. The watchtower was cautiously considered by Karl Braßler in 1941 (BRASSLER 1941), but he was obviously more convinced of it two years later (BRASSLER 1943) while after World War II he only mentions the strategically important position of the Stiegelburg on a spur in a more general way (e.g. BRASSLER 1956).

A for now final step is the globalisation of Braßler's (hi)stories via the internet as they became part of the greatest project of shared knowledge humankind has organised so far: in the German Wikipedia there is an entry on the Stiegelburg, (re-)written by at least twenty authors, stating that the castle was probably erected by the Celts, but was surely used by the Romans and the Bajuvarians as is proved by four copper-coins, a spearhead and some fragments of pottery found during excavations. According to these opinions the medieval castle served to control a road, but it is unknown when the castle was destroyed. Some local chronicles report that the stones were used in the castle of Pullach and the small church of Westerham. The age of ridge and furrow-fields in the vicinity may be medieval or much older (http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stiegelburg [31.12.2012]). From Wikipedia this knowledge spreads into further homepages

[14] BRASSLER (1956) mentions an iron spearhead and an iron spatula from Celtic times, but soon – and *archaeologically* correctly – remarks that they could be medieval as well (BRASSLER 1959a: 69).



(e.g. http://www.bnro.de/~dfuchs/umweltgruppe/Exkursionen/berbling.html [24.3.2008]). Though this information is still clearly based on Braßler's works there are some slight changes: obviously slowly some doubts arise about the Celtic age of the Stiegelburg (and the fields nearby) while the Bronze Age items and the sanctuary got lost (as they are already missing in the school-version).

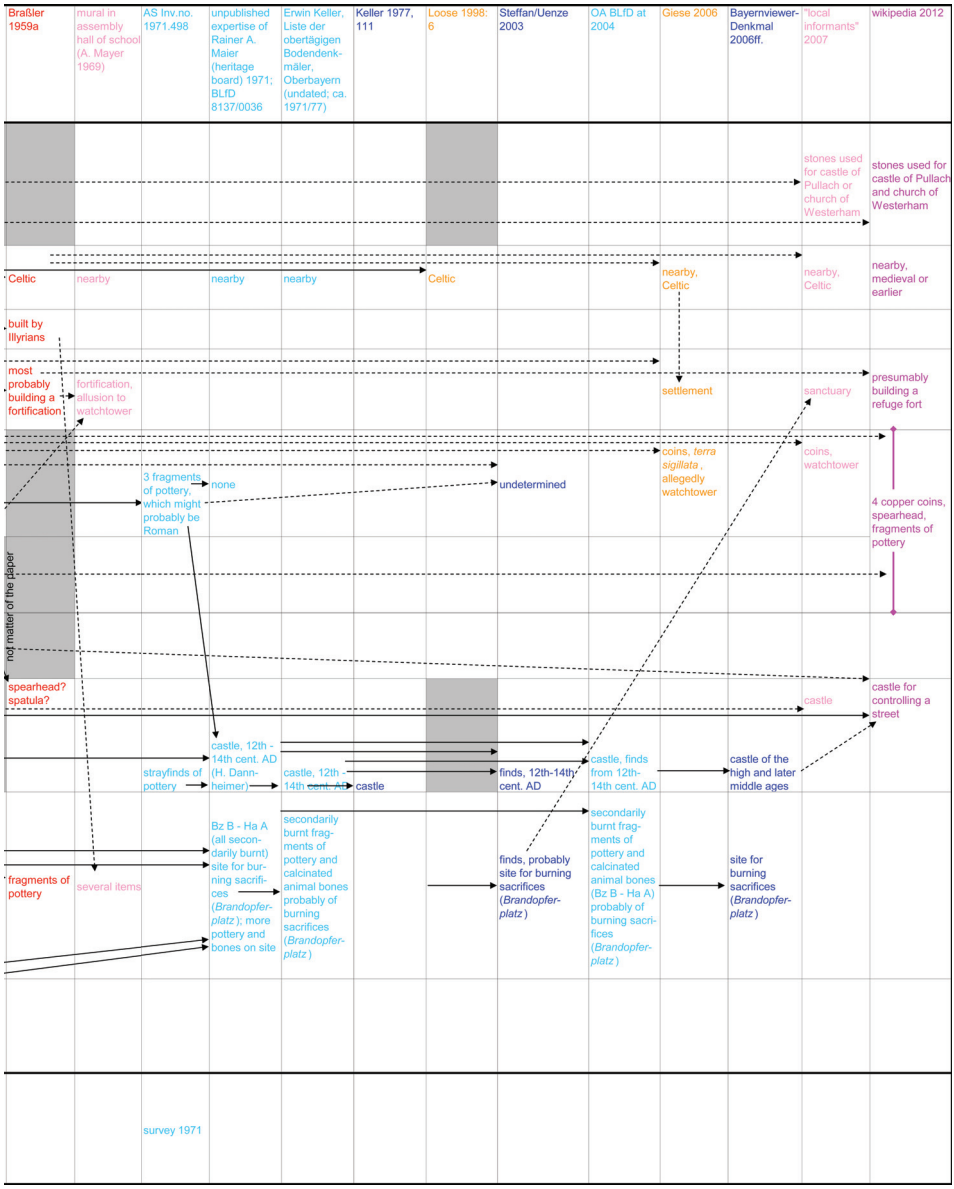


Fig. 5. Flow of knowledge on the Stiegelburg (deep blue: academic publications; light blue: academic notes in archives and files; deep red: publications by Karl Braßler; orange: local publications; light pink: unpublished local material/actions; deep pink: wikipedia; grey shading: not the matter of the paper; arrows: attested flows; broken arrows: assumed flows).

In short we may simply call the Stiegelburg-story a selection and transformation of (para)academic knowledge. But this is not very illuminating if we want to delve into the depths of academic-public-interactions. *Fig. 5* sums up the flows of knowledge around the Stiegelburg: At first glance the chart looks quite chaotic, but on closer inspection the two discourses of local knowledge (red shades) and academic knowledge (blue shades) are surprisingly clearly separated, i.e. the interaction between the two spheres is not as close as assumed.

Selective knowledge (un)flows

Local knowledge of the Stiegelburg is characterised by some long and stable traditions, i.e. a Celtic origin of the site due to the Celtic date of the nearby ridge and furrow fields, the Roman watchtower and the Baiuvarian/early medieval use, although the last point was never fleshed out in any detail. Neither of the three points is valid (any longer) in academic (hi)stories, but such disapproval is without influence. This, however, does not imply a total neglect of academic reasoning, as Braßler used a (private and illegal) excavation and thus a scientific, positivistic method to prove his assumptions of a Celtic origin of the Stiegelburg. Indeed he found objects, which he thought to be Celtic (and Roman) and thus had material witnesses in his hand. Clearly these finds demonstrate that facts are not objective but made by anticipation. Interestingly enough he does not say anything about medieval finds from his excavations, although they would be expected in high numbers, but obviously were out of his interest (and sight?). On the other hand it might be a telling coincidence that Braßler's finds are not only lost, but in the reception of his Celtic narrative the finds do not play any significant role. This also applies to the Bronze Age pottery from the site, which Braßler mentioned in his last paper (Brassler 1959a) but without traceable impact on the villagers. Even for the medieval castle, which is the undisputed common ground of local and academic knowledge, public lore is based on the – quite well preserved – material evidence on the ground, while the – admittedly unspectacular – finds do not play any significant role.

While finds – regardless of the unimpressive sherds from the Stiegelburg or the quite spectacular fibula from the "Gothic" burial – generally do not play any role in the common knowledge of the village, remarkably enough knowledge of the Roman finds has been passed on. This Roman narrative is even so suggestive that again and again it has entered the academic perception of the site: Not only were some of the private stray finds from the early 1950s regarded and published as Roman and later on in the 1970s some of the sherds again were classed as

possibly Roman – probably under the convincing influence of the finder and little knowledge of medieval pottery at that time – but even after the expertise that none of the finds are Roman (from an archaeological perspective) the latest academic publication (STEFFAN – UENZE 2003: 138f. no. 153) leaves the door ajar for a Roman past of the site.

In the academic sphere especially the Bronze Age- and Urnfield-narrative developed step by step from the determination of the pottery via the secondarily burnt status of the sherds and the animal bones to a prehistoric site for burning sacrifices (*Brandopferplatz*). This interpretation was forwarded in 1971 for the first time, but it took until 2003 before it was published. From this publication or the web-based Bayernviewer-Denkmal (www.blfd.bayern.de/denkmalerfassung/denkmalliste/bayernviewer/index.php [27.2.2013]) the sacrificial site was immediately received in Götting, as my informants already knew about it in late 2007. However, they did not receive its dating to the Bronze Age or Urnfield culture, but attributed it to the Celts. The Bronze Age, EU-commonly propagated as the first Golden Age of Europe (cf. NIKLASSON in this volume: 63), obviously misses its audience ...

Unflatteringly the chart also demonstrates that the academic formation of knowledge to a great part is happening internally for example in local files (*Ortsakten*) or inventories and often remains unpublished for decades (but this may change with the entry of the digital age into heritage management). On the one hand these different practices of publication, with the bulk of small and highly redundant articles in local newspapers and journals versus the silence of academic archives mirrors (or produces?) the different importance the Stiegelburg is attributed by the locals and by academics. On the other hand Braßler (and others) had and used the opportunity to get access to the information of the heritage board and the museums and thus to draw on unpublished academic knowledge, but did so only once in the early 1950s with the Bronze Age stray finds friends(?) of Braßler had delivered in Munich. Braßler adopted the dating of the pottery to the Middle Bronze Age to Early Urnfield culture, and according to the phenotypical classification of races (*Rassenkunde*) and ethnic-historical paradigms of the 1920s and 1930s concluded that it must have been the so called Illyrians, who first built a hillfort on the site of the Stiegelburg. In Götting[15] none of those "Illyrians" was ever acknowledged outside Braßler's writings ...

[15] Generally the Illyrians were highly *en vogue* during the 1920/30s (e.g. SEGER 1926). I am especially thankful to Karin Reichenbach for this hint!

The three examples discussed so far are quite different in matters of academic-public-interactions. They differ in matters of interest, knowledge and intensity of appropriation. They raise many questions on the conditions of appropriation and mechanisms of transformation, which I will discuss on a more general level in the second part of this paper. But – beside being situated in the vicinity of Götting – the common ground of all three examples is the central position Karl Braßler takes in current (hi)stories on Götting's pre- and protohistory. At first I will devote to him an analysis as a "typical" mediator. Or not?

Karl Braßler – Academic? Mediator? Public?

Living himself in Götting for a long time Karl Braßler is a very chatoyant and highly problematic figure: born in 1897 he was for a short time student at the University of Munich,[16] but mainly worked as the leader of the student group of the *Deutschvölkischer Schutz- und Trutz-Bund* and the most active anti-Semite agitator and NS-propagator since 1920 (Lohalm 1970: 168). After he was arrested he returned two years later as one of the early members of the NSDAP (Lohalm 1970: 169) and took part in the *Hitler-Putsch* of 1923; later on he was member of the *Blut-Orden* honouring those who already followed Hitler in his early days. In the 1930s he led a NSDAP location group in Berlin, but moved to Götting in 1939 and for some dubious reason was dismissed by the NSDAP in 1942/43. From 1943 to 1945 he worked as a parish clerk in Götting as obviously with his dismissal from the NSDAP he did not fully fall into the party's disgrace. After World War II we find him as a private scholar and homeland researcher primarily in natural science and local history (Stahler 1956: 11; Klöcker 2008: 151f.). His engagement and vision in those years was honoured by the Cross of Merit on ribbon of the Federal Republic of Germany (Stahler 1956: 12). Although Braßler's interest was not primarily or not even to a high degree in the archaeology of the Mangfall valley, he published a tremendous lot of small notes and papers in his Götting years from 1939 to his death sometime in the 1960s.

[16] Braßler was enrolled at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität of Munich from fall term 1917 to summer term 1920 but in 1918 he was on military service for two terms and the following two terms he was suspended; there only remain fall term 1917 and summer term 1920 for an active attendance. He studied at the faculty of philosophy, which at that time comprised everything from philology, history and classical archaeology to physics, geology and botany (Personalstandsverzeichnisse der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München at epub.ub.uni-muenchen.de/view/lmu/pverz.html [27.2.2013]).

His publications are not only again and again covering almost all monuments in the vicinity, but Braßler managed successfully to place his writings in daily newspapers and local journals so that he developed an area-wide and permanent presence of his ideas and interpretations.[17]

While Braßler's role in shaping the historic traditions of Götting is quite clear it is hard to typify him. On the one hand he surely is a mediator, passing on academic knowledge – though often enough of problematic political background – to the wider public. With his predilection for publishing in local newspapers and journals he strongly emphasized his efforts to reach, to educate and to convince the public of his version of their history. It is mainly this role in which I considered him in the three examples above.

Braßler, however, did not receive his (hi)stories from "high" academic publications, but mostly constructed them himself, in many cases doing genuine research. With an academic background he obviously had some basic archaeological and historical knowledge at the level of the 1920s, which he did not update in the later years of his life.[18] The use of an excavation to prove his hypotheses on the Stiegelburg demonstrates his academic approach, as does his historical discussion on a possible reuse of the stones from the Stiegelburg at the castle of Pullach and/or the church of Westerham despite of (or due to?) the legendary structure of this tradition.

In a simple model of "academics – mediators – public" Braßler is a mediator in his own right and simultaneously takes the academic part of producing the (hi)story. Finally, regarding the greater contexts of his narratives he drew on bits and pieces of academic knowledge, appropriating them like any other member of the public for his own purposes as e.g. he took the supposedly Celtic date of the ridge and furrow fields for dating the adjacent Stiegelburg. As Michael Cremo points out for his own person (CREMO this volume) – but surely for very different agendas! – the categories of "academic", "mediator" and "public" are melting down in the person of Braßler as well. It is only a matter of the analytical perspective as to which category he is assigned.

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[17] (E.g. in the paper BRASSLER 1957) he lists 64 titles from his hand and this was not his last publication.

[18] It is surely too simple if KELLER (1971: 169 note 4) classifies Braßler as a layman in matters of archaeology in order to rule out/ignore Braßler's observations and interpretations of the "Gothic" burial.

Beyond problems of typifying a complex individual like Braßler, a more interesting aspect are the truth values assigned to his narratives on behalf of archaeologists and his fellow villagers. While archaeological receptions to his work stick to simple references to sites and finds mentioned or published for the first time in his many papers, they completely ignore the greater narratives in which Braßler had wrapped the archaeological "data" (e.g. KELLER 1971: 169; STEFFAN – UENZE 2003: 135, Nr. 150 [barrows of Unterleiten]). But it is just these narratives which are widely accepted and highly esteemed in Götting – even today. Exemplarily Helmut LOOSE (1998: 4) in the preface to his chronicle of Götting argues that he will not go into depth with the prehistory and medieval time of the village as its history up to the Thirty Years War has been extensively covered by Braßler in 1957, who "has collected with greatest diligence and meticulousness for the history of Götting" ("*der mit größtem Fleiß und Akribie für die Geschichte Göttings gesammelt hat*").

The vivid validity of Karl Braßler's version of Götting's history even half a century after his death is even more striking as this vision of the past is rooted in the very right-wing nationalistic world-view of the 1920s. It is surely not enough to explain such longevity by the lack of a more recent homeland researcher, who engaged with Götting's past with the same enthusiasm. The permanent presence of Braßler's visions of the past in local newspapers was surely an important device to set them up in the collective memory of the villagers. But Braßler was not the only one with such presence in the media and – analytically even more important – not all of his stories were received with the same enthusiasm (to say the least). Conversely we have to consider, why until recently none of the academic counter-arguments to Braßler's version made its way into local knowledge. Which historical (hi)stories or which parts of them are appropriated locally obviously not only depends on persons and media, but we have to look for further factors.

Making truth

If narratives – as I have stated in the introduction – are constructed according to rules and plausibilities of individual social groups and primarily are bearing meaning within the horizon of their groups, it calls for explanations why some narratives (or parts thereof) are more successful than others in crossing the borders between social groups, and why some gain meaning far beyond their group of origin.

Fig. 6. Sgraffito by Antje Mayer (1969) on the southern façade of Götting primary school (© Nicolas Klöcker).

The Götting examples hint to modes of truth-making as one important factor for the inter-group success of narratives.

Götting primary school (1969): The making of ordered history

The Stiegelburg-mural in the assembly hall of Götting primary school (*Fig. 4*) was painted in 1969, some years after Braßler's death. It is accompanied by a second mural on the corridor of the first floor (today the school's computer-room) depicting the Rosenheim lake with some fanciful pile-dwelling village.[19] A third sgraffito on the southern façade of the school (*Fig. 6*) depicts four scenes from the middle ages and early modern times probably starting on top with the setting up of the village in a forest by the famous **Coto,* continuing through a jousting knight – probably recalling the counts of Falkenstein as a regional noble family of the 12th century – a ransacking band of soldiers – probably from the Thirty Years War – and ending at the bottom with some bucolically grazing sheep and cows (today?).

These pictures document the local dominance of Braßler's stories, which they monumentally convert into images. Simultaneously they highlight the reception of Braßler by his fellow villagers: given that the school context of the pictures did not allow for fantastic visions, but required an academic approval of the motifs and their details, the murals illustrate the local esteem of Braßler as an honest researcher who truthfully mediates academic, reliable knowledge.

To evaluate the full impact of the murals, however, we have to consider the school context of the paintings more closely. As attending school is an obligation and school has (almost) a monopoly on the transfer of "true" knowledge and education, narratives which have successfully invaded school curricula, are armed with legal coercives (school marks), potentially decisive on the further course of life. These narratives are equipped with the highest social assertiveness

[19] The Rosenheim lake was fed by melting waters of the Inn-glacier at the end of the last glacial period. It covered the lower Mangfall valley approximately to the western end of Götting and was mostly sedimented and partly dried out ca. 10.000 BC. Karl Braßler according to the geographical knowledge of his days was convinced that the lake still existed in neolithic times and silted up during the Bronze Age, so that the first settlers of the region could build their houses only on neighbouring hills or as pile-dwelling villages at the shore of the lake – probably on the spot of later Götting where there was found a copper vessel allegedly from the Copper Age (e.g. Brassler 1950; 1957: 7; 1959a: 33f.).

and may aptly be called "ordered history". Thus school is – generally speaking – an institution to assert discursive powers (FOUCAULT 1975), to standardise behaviour and to re-produce social habitus (BOURDIEU 1967: 138f.; 1979). The position of the murals in focal points of the school building – confronting every child with Braßler's vision of the past every day – tightly binds them to the school as an authoritative institution of knowledge transfer. Though I have not attended lessons taught on local history in the school of Götting, it might be telling that Helmut Giese not only was a teacher there for almost 30 years (1976-2005) (GIESE 2008: 292), but also takes care of those parts of Braßler's archive, which are kept in the museum of nearby Bruckmühl. His short historical summary in a recent publication on the borough of Bruckmühl follows Braßler's vision of the past in every respect (GIESE 2006: 10, 14). Therefore, we might assume that Giese has taught Braßler's (hi)stories in school as well – the spoken word of the lessons and the murals mutually illustrating and explaining each other. Moreover, the materiality of the depictions on the walls emphasises their lasting validity as being literally set in stone; their permanence can be sensually experienced and their immutability becomes manifest. On this background it is little surprise that Karl Braßler's visions dominate the perception of the past in Götting until today.

Calling for academia (2007): The revelation of truth

As far as written sources have survived the church of Götting was mentioned for the first time in 809, when it received some slaves and properties (BITTERAUF 1905: 253 no. 292 [wrongly attributed to the village of Gauting]; SEPP 2008: 191–194). When the 1200th anniversary of this donation approached the parish church council took the initiative to celebrate the jubilee and on that occasion aimed to produce another chronicle of the village. Soon it was decided that this volume should not be a reprint or summary of Braßler's visions of the past, as a very abridged version had been published shortly before (LOOSE 1998: 6-9; GIESE 2006). Instead the matter should be approached with "academic accuracy" (KLÖCKER – FUCHS 2008: 12). Two of the villagers became the editors: Alois Fuchs, member and long-time chair of the local parish church council, and Nicolas Klöcker, at that time student of history and German philology at Munich University. The latter, well-connected with some younger researchers in regional history, assembled a crew of academics (including myself) and academically trained locals to contribute to the volume. In a letter to the contributors of March 15th 2007 the editors defined the aims of the miscellany that it

> "shall be academically founded and simultaneously comprehensible for a multilayered readership. [...] The celebration of the jubilee shall strengthen the consciousness of the villagers of Götting for the rich past of their hometown. You fundamentally contribute to this by your paper as you make historical connections accessible to a broad public" ("*Der Sammelband soll wissenschaftlich fundiert und zugleich für eine vielschichtige Leserschaft verständlich sein.* [...] *Die Feier des Jubiläums will das Bewusstsein der Göttinger für die reiche Vergangenheit ihres Heimatortes stärken. Einen grundlegenden Beitrag leisten dabei Sie mit Ihrem Aufsatz, indem Sie historische Zusammenhänge einer breiten Öffentlichkeit zugänglich machen*").

Obviously the editors and the parish church council were well aware that history is an important means of (local) identity. It remains open as to what had fostered the parish church council's wish to put such a measure of identity formation in the hands of academics. Maybe it was Nicolas Klöcker who convinced them on basis of his academic network, maybe there was a silent desire for academic approval of the established Braßlerian (hi)stories, maybe there were finally some doubts raised about Braßler's vision of the past and even if just on the basis of their age. Implicitly, however, the parish church council adhered to a modern, enlightenment vision of a historical truth, which an academically grounded work will reveal and educate the public to understand the historical connections.

For whatever reason – in an editorial meeting I got the impression that at least some, but far from all attendants felt few doubts about Braßler's (hi)stories – academic support was wished for, the wish itself obviously was based on an ascription of sovereign interpretative authority to academia, assuming they have the power of making historical truth – and thus indeed investing them with this power. But while the ordered knowledge of school is equipped with coercives the efficacy of academic stories is based on more subtle means: they pretend to be grounded in objective, unquestionable facts, often inaccessible to laypersons, as it requires special skills and techniques to make these facts "speak" – camouflaging that it is these skills and techniques in the first place, which situationally and discursively construe those "facts" (Schapp 1953; Latour – Woolgar 1979; for archaeology cf. Karl 2010). These facts are based on and ordered in narratives according to the grand stories of our time (Lyotard 1979) and thus gain special plausibility. Formally, academic narratives are ennobled by the magic of imprinted

writtenness, often in a complicated language and fortified with footnotes. And not the least they profit from the still high reputation of academia in our societies ...

Local rejection and subversive laughter

I was deeply afraid that my academic version of the past – simply because it is academic – might be regarded as the correct, "true" story of the village's prehistory and in a worst case might end up as another mural in the school building! Fortunately enough, about one and a half years after the chronicle of Götting was published in 2008, I received a letter by a person who was interested in the history of his family and draws some connections to Götting. In a lengthy note he responded to my printed paper and frankly admitted: "My first impression: Here again a studied historian tries to tear up an assiduous layman (Mr Brasler)." ("*Mein erster Eindruck: da versucht wieder ein studierter Historiker einen fleißigen Leien [sic!] (Herrn Brasler) in Stücke zu reißen*"). Fortunately enough at a second reading his first impression changed – though he did not say in which direction ...

Apart from rejoicing that my meta-story had worked – there is nothing out there like an authoritative true past – I am deeply thankful to the writer as he has proved that academic (hi)stories are not sacrosanct *per se*, but they may be openly rejected. And they may be rejected simply because they deconstruct (hi)stories by non-academics, the reason of rejection not being founded in differing truth claims, but in questioning established authorities and social hierarchies. Even more, academics may be perceived as arrogant, because they do not take laymen's (hi)stories seriously, despite the fact that these (hi)stories might be much more relevant and meaningful outside academia.

While history might be ordered and pupils might be forced to learn it, probably with the argument that it is academically founded, none of these means and arguments necessarily creates meaning for those subordinated to the authoritative view of the past. It is a sign of post-modern plurality that such resistance against alleged authorities can be expressed openly, but the multiplicity of stories is far from new. In more authoritarian contexts, however, resistance against ordered histories and questioning of authorities in charge sought other ways. This is especially true for German pre-war-society where the official version of the past was closely linked to the dominating ideology. More generally such restrictions apply to any hierarchically structured local community, such as

the quite conservative agrarian villages of Southern Bavaria far into the 1970s, where the teacher and the parish priest were authorities not to be challenged – at least officially.

While there is a broad scale of means of resistance against forced powers and "unquestionable" hierarchies, carnivalesque laughter is an especially subtle and widespread weapon of individuals and groups subordinate to powerful authorities (e.g. BACHTIN 1965). It is likewise a means to deconstruct and – finally – to stabilize hierarchies (TURNER 1969), in our case to question the ordered version of the past and those who construct and bring it in force, but not to revolt openly and basically accept the world as it is. In the small world of Götting it might be telling that we do not know "real" legends (except the one from barrows of Unterleiten, which is forgotten today), but stories of carnivalism against those in charge of the official version of history. They are tales of intellectual resistance and challenged authorities in times where open rejection of official narratives was beyond a villager's habitus.

One of the stories deals with the then parish priest Sebastian Knabl (1902–1926), who was one of the initiators of the Historical Society of Aibling in 1902 (STAHLER 1956: 5) and well supported in his historical research by the schoolmaster and the secretary of the post office there. He dug some of the burial mounds in the vicinity of Götting, while the farmers were draining a rivulet nearby. Suddenly they called the priest to come quickly, because they had found a well preserved iron casket. When opening the casket, Knabl found a note inside "Caesar greets his friend Reverend Knabl!" – and a barrel of beer appeared from the forest nearby to have a drink together (LOOSE 2003: 80f.). In another version of the same story Knabl was digging on the Stiegelburg and the finds he was called to dig comprised lots of old pottery – until a *Banzen* (183 litres) of stout came to light. Unfortunately the government was informed, the priest was reprimanded and had to deliver all his finds to the regional museum in Munich (LOOSE 1998: 8).[20]

In a second story the local guardian of heritage (*Heimatpfleger*) – probably Karl Braßler himself – was the aim of mockery: when building a new farmhouse in the neighbouring village of Willing a rather small skeleton of a horse was

[20] In the 1998-version Loose closes this story with the line "- there Caesar laughed!" ("- *da lachte Cäsar*!"). The line remains unexplained, but probably it alludes to the topos that history itself – here personified by Caesar – does not want to be revealed, but remains hidden to those studying her traces. If this interpretation is correct, Loose would have transferred the subversion of the villagers onto history itself.

found. The guardian thought the skeleton to be of Celtic age and published it in a lengthy article in the local newspaper. Some time later, during the carnival(!) parade in a nearby town, the skeleton of the horse was mounted on the cart of Willing taking part in the parade and the farmer reported that the horse had died twenty years ago and had been interred by himself (LOOSE 2003: 82f.).

Conditions of appropriation – mechanisms of transformation

Banal to say but not everything repeatedly taught at school or let alone published academically enters the common knowledge even of well-educated contemporaries. And even the stories of the mediators – independently of their presence in the media – are received selectively: while Karl Braßler's visions of the past are dominating the perception of history in Götting in general, a closer look, such as with the analysis of the knowledge flows around the Stiegelburg, shows that by far not everything he wrote was included in the collective memory of the villagers. Clearly not all of the (hi)stories, which remain unappropriated are rejected for hierarchical reasons or become objects of subversion. Many of them are simply neglected and/or forgotten. Obviously making truth is not enough, but the appropriation of narratives is subject to further conditions, which together shed light on the mechanisms and logics of transforming the (hi)stories in the process of appropriation.

Memory and place

My academic perspective was severely struck when I realised that the famous "Gothic" burial is almost unknown to the villagers of Götting, while they highly esteem the quite ordinary and unexplored Stiegelburg. Only later I have understood that the barrows of Unterleiten not only provide a sultan and his treasure but also a possible key to this miracle: the legend of the sultan circulated until the 1950s or a little longer, a generation after the last barrows had disappeared. But another half century later nobody knew the legend any more. Correspondingly the local disinterest in the female burial of the Migration period regards a find – which is not even very spectacular in the museum display – without place. There is no monument or site in the landscape which gives a "Here" to the burial and to which its memory could be connected – as there are no barrows left to which a sultan could be ascribed any longer. On the other hand the ramparts and ditches of the Stiegelburg are (partly) well preserved and clearly visible on the ground.

These observations neatly correspond to Katja HROBAT VIRLOGET's (in press) research on the conceptualisation of space in a Slovenian village: stereotypical folk interpretations of the past are attached to specific places in space, i.e. the landscape reflects the local past or more generally the past is an aspect of the landscape as stories of the past make places in the living world of the village. Turned into a negative perspective this might imply that there is no memory without place. If (hi)stories are the cultural form to appropriate the environment and turn it into a life world (ASSMANN 1999: 309; INGOLD 2000: 132–151) then it is rather logical that (hi)stories without places are lost, that they will disappear as there is nothing left which needs to be or can be appropriated as a life world.

On an abstract level Maurice HALBWACHS (1925: esp. chap. 4) has demonstrated that memory is localised in space and time, as such localisations are necessary conditions to order memories. Thus memory needs place – individually and collectively (ASSMANN 1997: 39, 59f.). But while such placing of memories has been widely researched recently (e.g. ASSMANN 1999: esp. chap. 2.5; cf. Pierre Nora's concept of *Les lieux de mémoire*) very little attention has been paid to the conditions, which qualify sites to become places of memory, and to the consequences for memory, if their place in the landscape disappears. The case of Götting indicates that fundamental alterations to a place like e.g. the ploughing down of the barrows of Unterleiten cuts off memories formerly connected to the site and cedes them to oblivion.

In turn this observation implies that not every site is appropriate to become a reference for memory. As neither the meadow of the now invisible barrows nor the slightly sunken site of the former gravel pit, where the "Gothic" burial had been found, acted as local centres of memories, such sites obviously need further properties which provide the potential to attach memory to them. To say the least, sites probably need perceivable physical features to potentially turn them into places.

Regarding such conditions it seems plausible that public (hi)stories – as observed at the Stiegelburg – are attached to the visible features of a monument in place instead of the finds, while academic reasoning brings the finds centre stage as witnesses of chronology, social, economic and religious interpretation – even in the case of a medieval castle where ditches and walls are preserved until today.

It is not only memories which might lose their locations but places as well can lose the memories attached to them: if I correctly derive the place name of Götting from the Goths instead of a legendary **Coto* this place name is a neat

example of transforming local identity into collective knowledge and memorising it in the landscape.[21] But as identities change a place name might lose its original reference and stays in space like a functionless relict. Now it needs new (hi)stories to attach new meaning to the name and newly appropriate it (ASSMANN 1999: 308ff.). In our case the name of /Götting/ was open for new interpretations, e.g. for an academic (hi)story assuming a legendary founder in the name of the village, placing it in the centre of a para-American settler myth of expansion and colonisation. Once the new interpretation has settled in the collective memory it is hopeless (even academically) to reactivate the old meaning and nexus even if a reference – e.g. a burial of eastern Germanic tradition – comes to light.

Educational background

While matters of place may explain the need for (hi)stories, their survival or neglect, they hardly contribute to our understanding of the mechanisms whereby some narratives are highly resilient in public knowledge (Celts and Romans), some are quickly appropriated (sacrificial sites) while others are rejected ("Illyrians", Bronze Age and Urnfield culture). Strikingly the Celts and Romans are parts of the German educational background at a very broad level at least from the late 19th century onwards. With these two buzzwords Braßler's narratives met a well-established education, to which they could be connected. Quite differently the Bronze Age, the Urnfield culture and the ethnic-historical Illyrians are parts of highly specialised academic education until today. Thus a sacrificial site of those periods is a problem as its dating is meaningless due to a lack of background and thus cannot be connected to any previous public knowledge. But a sacrificial site in itself perfectly meets the established enlightenment image of prehistoric savages driven by religion. Pragmatically the sacrificial site is associated with the closest possible isle of knowledge, which are the Celts, and thus gains a position in space and time of the local history and identity. It can be appropriated to the collective knowledge as now it has meaning. In a similar way the sultan and his formidable treasure might have been buried in the barrows of Unterleiten.

The accuracy of fit to previous knowledge and established narratives not only governs which new elements are appropriated and integrated, but might also be responsible for the rejection of negative information. The Celts and the Romans

[21] Cf. ASSMANN (1999: 305) regards the place name as a sign which inscribes the place into collective memory.

are obviously fitting so well into the public (pre-)knowledge and supposedly have such an important position in the identity of the village that neither the loss of the pieces of evidence (i.e. finds) nor academic deconstructions can harm them in any way. Quite to the contrary, the Romans on the Stiegelburg seem to serve academic convictions as well as archaeologists again and again are posing the question of Roman presence at the site despite any positive indicator – and in striking contrast to the total neglect of the Celts in the academic agenda.

Taking the educational background as a main factor of selection, which elements of the past are appropriated and arranged in narratives, may point to the ordered knowledge of school as a central filter of the past. At a closer look, however, school education merely prepares a background, which provides basic ideas of "Celts" and "Romans" and a "religious past". The concretisation of these ideas, to inspire them with meaning and plausibility and to fill this background with life are functions of social groups in and far beyond school. While school certainly re-produces general features of a common habitus knitting together and structuring a society, it is the socialisation in specific groups which substantiates the individual habitus, and which provides specific orders of meaning and plausibility (Bourdieu 1979). The (analytical construct of) "villagers of Götting" forms one such social group with specific demands on their common past.

Wrapping up the paper

By means of three examples from the village of Götting I have attempted to look more generally at academic-public-interactions. As any analysis driven by a case study the result to some degree depends on the more or less fortunate coincidences of the case under scrutiny. The case of Götting may have emphasized features which would be less important in other cases, and it certainly has its blind spots compared to the field of academic-public-interactions in general. Nevertheless it has allowed for some general conclusions.

The simple model of "academia – mediator – public", which Elisabeth Niklasson and myself had in mind, when calling for papers for our EAA-session in Helsinki (Meier – Niklasson 2012: 73), surely does not work. In accordance with Michael Cremo's self-report (Cremo this volume) what we call a mediator is not just mediating between academia and the public, but frequently is doing research her-/himself with an academic background and/or in an academic format, typifying the alleged mediator among academics. And even more importantly the so called mediators do not aim at an objective transfer of knowledge *sine ira et*

studio to the public, but they select and compose narratives according to their own agendas – as Diane Scherzler makes clear for the mass media (SCHERZLER this volume).

Taking my start in post-modern theory and the ethics of plurality and multiperspective constructions of group-specific (hi)stories, I have argued that narratives about the past are primarily plausible for, and bear meaning, within the social group who created the narrative. On this basis public appropriations and transformations of academic narratives are attempts to make archaeologists' narratives meaningful outside the sphere of their origin but for "the" public or – regarding the manifoldness of society – for other social groups. In this paper I have especially emphasized narratives' function in constructing group identities at the village level. Among other benefits these (hi)stories equip sites with narrative meanings, anchor them in a deep past with a flow of tradition into the present and thus turn sites into places and convert the environment into a life world (INGOLD 2000).

Considering the conditions of appropriation and especially the necessity for narratives to meet a general educational background, it is too simple a say that the public does not care about archaeologists' (hi)stories, but picks out the cherries. Quite on the contrary – also bearing in mind the great success of archaeology in exhibitions and media quotas – I would argue that there is tremendous public interest in archaeology and a constant endeavour to connect it to public knowledge – probably with the constraint that history and the ideals of education are a bourgeois project and thus bear strong social restrictions. On a local level (hi)storic appropriations are a two-fold striving to make academic narratives meaningful in the framework of local places, monuments and traditions and – as John Bintliff argues (BINTLIFF this volume: 245f.) – to connect locality to "great" and national history.

In the tradition of modernity for many meaning is still based on truth. This concept lends special weight to academic narratives, as academia for historical reasons is still regarded to have a very intimate affair with an objectified truth. On this background academics and their narrative products are attributed high social authority; they are deemed to be able to test or evaluate the truth of history. Now and then it may be public expectation that archaeologists are called to legitimize local (hi)stories, but more often it is archaeology as a set of techniques and methods, which is employed locally. It is just this idea of archaeology making truth which drove Karl Braßler and many of his fellow homeland researchers from the 19th century onwards to conduct local digs in proof of their visions of

the past – which the digs mostly fulfilled as long as they were not analysed by professional archaeologists.

Such public appropriations of archaeological methods may raise severe tensions with academically trained archaeologists. Leaving aside the legal problem of private digs, such tensions usually concern interpretation. In local reception those who conducted the dig – mostly with great personal and sometimes monetary effort – usually revealed the truth about the local past. With their appropriation of archaeological, scientific methods they simultaneously have gained the authority of academia. Academic counter arguments can easily give rise to a whiff of arrogance, become objects of authoritarian critique and be rejected for anti-hierarchical, subversive reasons.

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