Verena Jauch

SIGNED BY ATTILIUS

In a 1997 article concerning Roman inscriptions on pottery from Eschenz, canton Thurgau, Switzerland, Bettina Hedinger and the author included the few pots signed by Attilius[1]. For the research project '*Limites inter provincias – Rome's internal frontiers*' funded by Zurich's cantonal archaeology department, the author examined and identified specific pottery types according to their typology, provenance and distribution in the Roman provinces of *Raetia* and *Germania Superior*[2]. This research included the use of a portable XRF-instrument for clay body analysis. Since the appearance of the 1997 article more Attilius signed pots have been found: six examples from Zurich (cat. nos. 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 14), one jar from Thurgau (cat. no. 8), and two new findings from Oberwinther and Eschenz (May 2016). The distinctive appearance of the signed ware by Attilius plus the discovery of new examples provided the impetus to revisit the subject within the framework of the provincial frontiers research project[3].

The moulds

The number of signed pots from Attilius has doubled since the first article published in 1997. All of the currently 14 examples are shown in **figure 1** (**fig. 1,1–14**; seven previous fragments, recently discovered **fig. 1,1.2.7–10.14**)[4]. All are wheel-thrown coarse ware with organic temper. The fragments show evidence of a slowly rotating wheel in the form of marked grooves. On the base is the potter's signature in raised relief. The potter made the signature mould first, then fixed it to the wheel, after which clay was pressed into the mould and the upper walls of the pot were formed. When the clay dried to a leather hard state, the vessel could be easily removed. The mould could have been either of wood or of clay. The ceramist Johannes Weiss recommends using a clay mould since it can be quickly made and incorporates working methods familiar to the potter. Carving a mould from wood would take longer and the wood grain poses some difficulty for incising the letters[5]. The advantage of a wood mould is that it is lighter and less easily broken therefore more suited for transporting. Base moulds have yet to been found in archaeology. Because wood is only conserved in water logged contexts it is unlikely that any might be found.

Five moulds have been identified. Most common are bases from **mould 1**, used for half of the vessels (cat. nos. 1–7; **fig. 1,1–7**). Four fragments are from Oberwinterthur, the Roman *vicus Vitudurum*[6] (cat. nos. 1–3; 7) and three fragments from Ellikon, canton Zurich (cat. nos. 4–6). The latter reads ATTILIVS F around the outer rim of the base. The letters are very closely spaced and have serifs. The name Attilius and the F for *Fecit* are separated by a dot or more probable, a small upwards pointing triangle. In the centre of the base is a zoomorphic figure facing right. This figure is difficult to identify: is has a ducklike head with a beak or snout, the legs and clumsy feet are shown in profile – Their shape is uncommon for an aquatic animal –, and an upwards pointing tail. Perhaps this dinosaur like creature could be a stylized dog, a duck or a goose. The size of the mould, with a minimum diameter of 10 cm, is smaller than the pots' bases, which vary in diameter from 12.5 cm to 16 cm. On at least one example (cat. no. 6) the curved impression of the edge of the mould is visible. The small, fragmented pieces from Oberwinterthur show the]VS[followed by a dot (cat. nos. 2–3), as well as S (cat. no. 3) and once only]F] (cat. no. 7). On two sherds only the tail of the figure is visible (cat. nos. 1–2). One of these two sherds (cat. no. 1) shows a vertical rise from the base to the wall, which has been left untrimmed by the potter. Despite the fragmentary state of most of the sherds it can be assumed that the vessels were cylindrical jars.

Mould 2 appears only on a pot from Eschenz (cat. no. 8; **fig. 2**)[7]. The name ATTIIVS is written in reversed letters touching the rim. In the middle is a waterfowl with its neck curved around so the head is reaching the chest. Between the tip of the beak and the chest there is an amorphous shape, which could possilbly be a frog caught in the beak. This may indicate the unidentified bird species as a heron or a crane. Since the name is written on the very edge of the base, the mould is at least as wide as the pot itself.

Another unique mould is cat. no. 9 from Oberwinterthur (**mould 3**; **fig. 1,9**). The letters show]S F EA[, though it is not

1 Hedinger/Jauch 1997.

2 The trinational research project (Universities Zurich/Switzerland, Freiburg i. Br./Germany and Innsbruck/Austria) researches the organisation of the Roman frontier between the provinces *Raetia* and *Germania Superior* in an interdisciplinary context.

3 My gratitude goes to M. Volken, Lausanne, for the translation support.

4 Hedinger/Jauch 1997.

5 Information given by J. Weiss, May 12, 2014.

6 Recently published with lots of remarks to the Roman *vicus* in general: Jauch 2014.

7 The item is shown only in a photograph and was not available to be drawn.

Cat.no.	Site	context	Object number	Part found*	Depiction	Date	Form	Comment	Mold number	Base diameter (cm)	Mold diameter (cm)	Find Date	Bibliography
1	Oberwinterthur, Gebhartstrasse, 2001.028	141, F6, debris	239	BS	[ ]VS, animal tail	2nd century AD pottery**	pot	tail end pointed, S sans serifs, S only lightly raised, angular junction between bottom and wall	1	13	?	October 29, 2001	unpublished
2	Oberwinterthur, Kirchhügel, 2010.089	surface find	2	BS	[ ]VS[ ] pointed tail end between V und S	–	pot burn marks	S sans serifs, V with serifs	1	15,5	min. 10	2010	unpublished
3	Oberwinterthur, Unteres Bühl, 1976.001	backyard of parcel 14	4957	BS	]VS[	stratum dated 100–120/140 AD, but also some material belonging to the second half 2nd century AD**	pot	V and S with serif, printing of the mold rim can be identified	1	14	min. 10	?	Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 3,6
4	Ellikon an der Thur, Heuler	burial mound	SLM PA 3269	5 BS	A[ ]LIVS.F duck?	–	pot	serifs with exception of the S, animal to the right, short horizontal tail, touches the lower part of the S, signs of the potter's wheel clearly visible	1	11,5	min. 10	1865	Keller 1871, 262 below, Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 3,3
5	Ellikon an der Thur, Heuler	burial mound	SLM PA 3268	6 BS	[ ]TILIVS.F duck?	–	pot	serifs, animal to the right, long tail raised between V and S, signs of the potter's wheel clearly visible	1	13	min. 9–10	1865	Keller 1871, 262 above, Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 3,4
6	Ellikon an der Thur, Heuler	burial mound	SLM PA 3270	BS	]TI[	–	pot burn marks	I with serifs, printing of the mold rim, signs of the potter's wheel clearly visible	1	ca. 13	min. 10	1865	Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 3,5
7	Oberwinterthur, Bäumlistrasse 3	pit 49, filling 50	2014.060.38	2 BS	]F[	second half 2nd century	pot	serifs	1	13,5	min. 9–10	2014	unpublished
8	Eschenz, In Höfen 2000.009.141	floor of the pottery workshop	AATG Inv. Nr. 2000.009.141	3 BS	ATTIIVS waterfowl	2nd century	pot, knobby handles?	inscription mirror-inverted along the rim, size of the mold has at least the same diameter as the bottom of the vessel	2	–	–	2000	Amt für Archäologie Thurgau (ed.), Archäologie im Thurgau 16 (Frauenfeld 2010) 153 Abb. 3,2
9	Oberwinterthur, Gebhartstrasse, 2001.028	17, F1	53	3 BS	A[ ]S FE	clay lens near a drying kiln, 2nd century**	pot	E and A linked together, serifs missing?, letters along the bottom rim, size of the mold has at least the same diameter as the bottom of the vessel, signs of being made on potter's wheel	3	9,5	9	September 13, 2001	unpublished
10	Oberwinterthur, Kastellweg 2005.052	715 (716) F43	2746	3 RS, 7 BS	ATT[.]LIV	SH 13, second half 2nd/ beginning 3rd century	bowl, knobby handles	imprint of the mold visible, signs being made on potter's wheel on the inside and outside, letters blurred, probably the vessel has been moved over the mold	4?	18	min. 9	July 7, 2008	unpublished
11	Lommis	debris	AATG Inv.Nr. 94.14.163	5 BS	ATTILIVS F	findings 1nd–4th century AD	pot	small rounded impressions in the centre of the bottom, probably of an application	4?	10,5	7,5	1994	Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 3,2
12	Kempten, 1984, Eastern part of the temple area	between 1st and 2nd planum F16a	no number	3 BS?	ATTILI[ ]	second half 1st century	pot, knobby handles	inscription upright along the rim, all letters with serifs	5 similar to 4	14; height 18	11	1984	Weber 1990, 171-176 Abb. 1; Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 5
13	Eschenz, Haus Kraft	?	AATG Inv.Nr. EZK 1990	1 BS	[ ]VS[ ]	?	pot	V and S close together, V with serifs, assessment based on the drawing	?	11	9,5	–	Hedinger/Jauch 1997, Abb. 3,1
14	Dällikon 2001.029	building E, F, 4, Pl. 1, 2. Abstich (Pos. 1)	58	BS	unreadable	dredged material near wall M84	pot	possibly part of an animal	?	–	–	2001	Horisberger 2004, 289 ST31 Abb. 412

Fig. 1. Vessels signed by Attilius
(drawings: cat. nos. 1–3, 9, 10, 14 D. Pelagatti; 4–6 J. Bucher; 7 M. Xaba; 11, 13 AATG; 12: M. Manda). – Scale 1:3.

Table 1. Catalogue of Attilius ware known til 12/2014.
* BS=bottomsherd, RS=rimsherd; ** information given by projectleader Markus Roth, KA Zurich.

Fig. 2. Pot from Eschenz, canton Thurgau, Switzerland. Waterfowl and mirror-inverted inscription ATTIIVS (photo: AATG).

certain whether the F is really a F or simply a stylized triangle pointing downwards. The triangle on other moulds seems to be an F with the lower part carved in a sloppy manner. This interpretation seems to make sense with the following E, which is ligated to the A. Despite a close relation to mould 1, the discrepancies between it and mould 3 are obvious. In comparison with the sherd from Ellikon (cat. no. 4), it shows that the A is similar in size and typography but the preceeding E appears only on sherd cat. no. 9. Due to the placement of the dot, the distance is larger between the S and the F on the sherd cat. no. 4. The diameter of mould 3 measures beween 8.5 and 9 cm, and is slightly smaller than the 10 cm diameter of mould 1. The sherd cat. no. 9 can be reconstructed as a cylindrical jar measuring 9 cm in diameter. The small space in the centre of the base was apparently not decorated.

For two bottom sherds, one from Oberwinterthur (cat. no. 10) and another from Lommis (cat. no. 11; **fig. 1,10–11**) **mould 4** was used. The author did not have the opportunity to personally examine the sherd from Lommis so the identification is based on published documents only. The Lommis sherd (cat. no. 11) presents the complete name ATTILIVS. The letters T, I, and L appear blurred and therefore not perfectly identifiable. A depression at the base's centre could possibly be the remains of an applied animal motif. This would be an unusual occurance because as seen on mould 1, the animal motif would seem to be an integral part of the mould. This could indicate the use of one mould for the signature and a second for the appplied figure[8]. The letters on the base from Oberwinterthur (cat. no. 10) are blurred and not clearly visible. The similarity of position for the single letters indicates that both were made with the same mold. The sherd (cat. no. 10) shows a curved imprint of the mould rim with a diameter of 10 cm, which is much smaller than the sherd base of 18.5 cm. The form of the vessel, a bowl, is unique among the signed examples.

Similiar to mould 4, but not identical, is the imprint on the pot from Kempten (cat. no. 12; **mould 5**; **figs. 1,12; 3–4**). The bottom shows use of at least two different molds (**fig. 1,14**)[9]. One mould clearly reads ATTILI. The bottom of the base is broken and the centre lacks an animal figure. The letters have serifs except for the cross bar of the T. Interestingly, the bottom line of the L is curved rather than straight. A second mould seems to have been used for the upside down P and affects the second T, under which is a small cross, cutting through it. Below the ILI are other letters visible (**fig. 4**). To the left of the A is an almond shaped curve next to a small V and on the right another shape, rendered illegible because of the broken area on the sherd. Apparently the first mould is marked ATTILI, with an 11 cm diameter, the edges marked by a raised rim, plus the possibility of a second mould. An alternative explanation could be that there was only one mould, which due to slippage, printed a second time on one half of the same base. This does not explain the P with the circle and all the other illegible areas. The well preserved vessel from Kempten is a cylindrical jar with knobbed handles, 18 cm in height, and closely resembles Lavez type steatite vessels.

The remaining fragmentary sherds (cat. nos. 13–14) are too small to establish a clear link with a specific mould (**fig. 1,13–14**). The fragment from Eschenz, examined only as a drawing, shows a V with serifs followed closely by an S. The imprint seems to be part of the mould rim. The subject on the Dällikon sherd (cat. no. 14) is indistinct.

Dating of the vessels

The pot from Kempten appears to come from the oldest context (cat. no. 12). Found in rubble deposited before the construction of a two roomed stone hall in vincinity to the temple and the court wall of the so called 'bathhouse', the pot was dated by G. Weber to the second half of the 1st century AD. In the western quarter of the *Vicus Vitudurum,* the fragment cat. no. 3 was found in the parcel 14's backyard in a level dating from around 100–120/140 AD. According to M. Roth, who worked on the excavation of this area, this level also produced later pottery from the second half of the 2nd century AD. Recently a fragment was found in Oberwinterthur in a pit filled with material from the second half of the 2nd century[10]. Another fragment from Oberwinterthur was found among 2nd century pottery (cat. no. 1). A third pot from the same site came from the middle of a clay lens associated with a drying kiln, probably dating from the late 2nd century (cat. no. 9)[11]. The bowl (cat. no 10) from the Kastellweg

[8] This was certainly not the case with mould 1 following the assessment taken by J. Weiss May 12, 2014.

[9] By kind permission of the museum Kempten. Special thanks go to G. Weber and P. Pfister for the drawings and for lending the pot for further examination.

[10] Excavation 2014.060 unpublished. Material was reviewed by the author.

[11] Information given by the project leader M. Roth, KA Zurich, June 30, 2014.

site in Oberwinterthur, was found in rubble dating from the second half of the 2nd century to the early 3rd century. No dating evidence is available for the fragment from Dällikon (cat. no. 14), the base from Lommis (cat. no. 11) and the fragment from Eschenz (cat. no. 13). Three fragments (cat. nos. 4–6) were recovered in 1865 from a burial mound in Ellikon. Aside from the three signature pots, there was a fourth filled with cremated bones and nails, and deposited in the middle of the mound[12]. Furthermore other vessels used for cremations have been mentioned there. It might even be possible that the person buried in this mound is the potter Attilius himself? The site lies near the main eastern Roman road from Oberwinterthur[13]. Since the archaeolgical records of the excavation and the site itself are vague, it may even be possible that the three pots from the same mould are part of a lost shipment? The most important archaeological context is from the site at Eschenz, where the pot cat. no. 8 was found on the floor of a pottery workshop[14]. Producing stamped *mortaria* the workshop was active during the first half of the 2nd century[15]. Finally, the Kempten pot has been dated early to the second half of the 1st century, the other fragments signed by Attilius date to the 2nd century, particulary to the second half of the 2nd century.

Fig. 3. Pot from Kempten, Germany (photo: M. Bachmann, KA ZH).

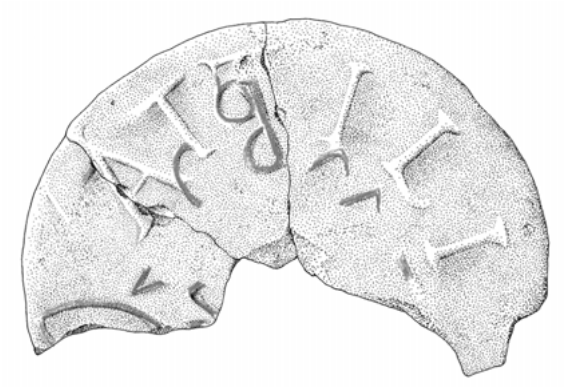

Fig. 4. Pot from Kempten, Germany. Base with two different moulds: ATTILI and unidentified (drawing: M. Manda, modified by V. Jauch).

The name Attilius

In 1990 G. Weber provided some information about the history of the name Attilius. He interpreted the Attili[on sherd cat. no. 12 as the genitive of Attilius. While this is entirely possible, the pot bottom is broken off just after this point so the missing section may have contained a]VS. As seen on the examples using mould 1 (cat. nos. 4–5) there is space between the I and the V. Concerning the origin of the name, G. Weber presented evidence of two grave inscriptions from the province of *Raetia*[16]. The name Atilus has been used in various modifications as a cognomen or a family name *(Gentilname)* especially in the *Gallia Cisalpina* and the western adjacent provincial regions including *Hispania*[17]. The cognomen Attilius seemed to be typical for native Raetians or individuals from the neighbouring Celtic regions: from the cognomen the pseudo family name *(Pseudogentilnomen)* Attil(i)us originated[18]. A grave inscription from Augsburg (Germany) names a Iuli(a) Attili(a)[19]. From the two Germanic provinces, A. Kakoschke referred to the cognomen Attilus ten times, and to Attius six times[20]; with 33 examples the gentilnomen Attius was much more common, as well as Atilius with 13 mentions and Attilius, mentioned only once[21]. Atilius as an italian gentilnomen can be read on a grave inscription in Raetian Alburg (Ldkr. Straubing) for the veteran T. Atili[us][22]. Search results on the electronic data base Clauss give evidence for Attilius mainly from the *Belgica*, signatures on ceramic as well as a grave inscription for an Attilius Regulus[23]. More common was the name Attillus with 85 inscriptions, mostly on ceramic. Attius as a gentilname is represented in Swit-

12 F. Keller, Anz. Schweizer. Altkde. 1868–1879 (1880), 261–263.
13 V. Jauch, Von Oberwinterthur nach Pfyn. Archäologische Velotour. Faltblatt der KA Zurich 1999; ead., Das römische Winterthur. In: Archäologie im Kanton Zürich (2003/05) 173–217; Zürcher Denkmalpflege 5, 1966/67, 48; Jahrb. SGU 27, 1935, 51.
14 Information from H. Brem January 23, 2014.
15 S. Benguerel et al. in: Tasgetium I. Das römische Eschenz. Arch. Thurgau 17 (Weinfelden 2011) 204–205.
16 Weber 1990, 174; F. Wagner, Ber. RGK 37/38, 1956/57, Nr. 32 and 123.
17 Weber 1990, 174 Anm. 9.
18 Kakoschke 2009, 126.
19 Ibid. 125 CN 66.
20 Ibid. 125–126.
21 Id. 2006, 89–93.
22 Id. 2009, 39 GN 18. EDCS-31100196.
23 EDCS-10600959.

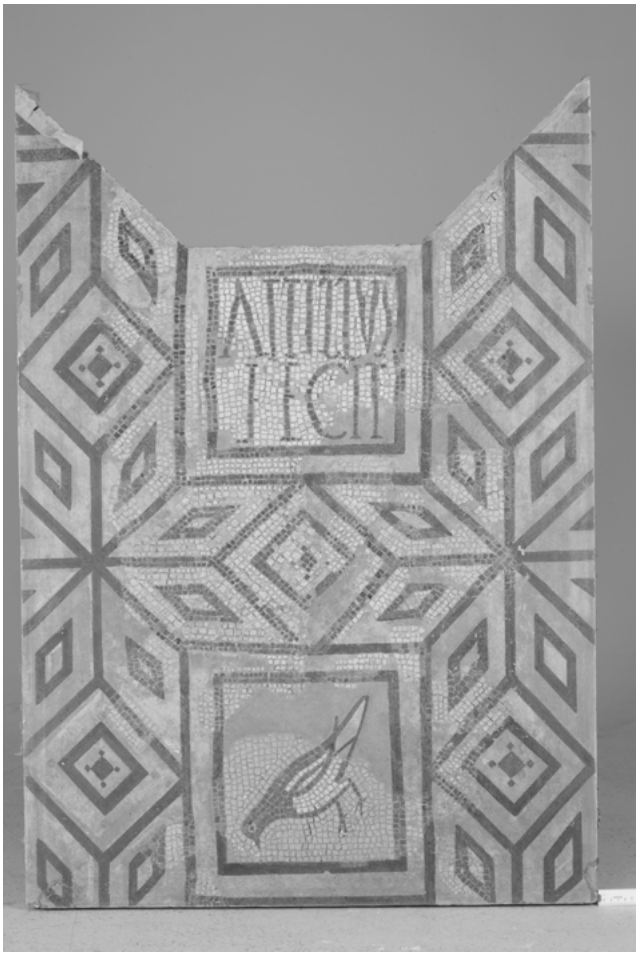

Fig. 5. Mosaic with the signature *Attillus Fecit*. Villa in Oberweningen, Canton Zurich (photo: M. Bachmann, KA ZH).

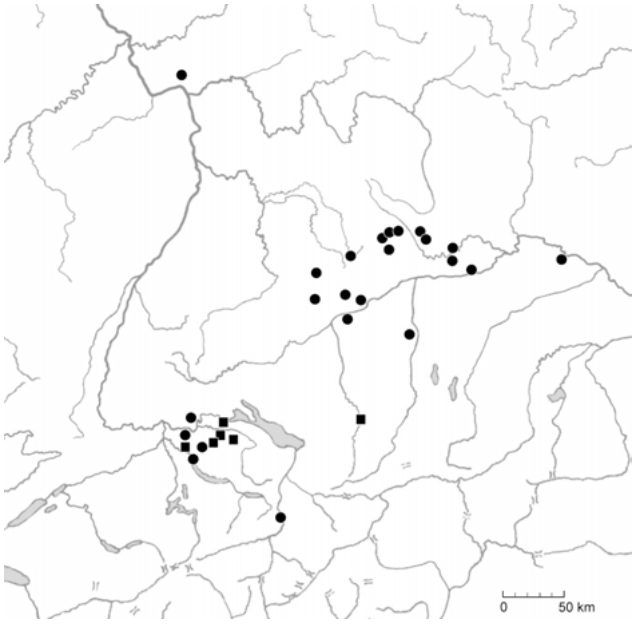

Fig. 6. Distribution map of ceramic pots that imitate steatite pots according to Weber 1990, plus sites of wheel-made pottery in the Northeast-Switzerland (dots) and sites of Attilius ware (squares) (design: M. Moser, KA ZH).

zerland by inscriptions from Augst, Geneva, Brugg and a wooden tablet from *Vindonissa*[24]. There is no evidence for the name Attiius (cat. no. 8). Further evidence underlying the gentilname Atilius as surnames is the Celtic suffix Att-, which is common in the area[25].

In the context of Samian ware production, the signatures Atillius, Atillus, Attilus and Attius were common[26]. Atillus worked as a potter of Samian ware in Trier and Rheinzabern (Germany)[27]. A graffito on a late Samian plate from Faimingen (Germany) names Attili[as the owner[28]. Another pot from Straubing belonged to a certain Atillus[29]. A producer of imitation Samian ware in Lausanne/*Lousonna*, used the name L. Att(tius) Iucundus[30].

The mosaic in the building A of the Roman *villa* in Oberweningen, canton Zurich, is signed with ATTILLUS FECIT (**fig. 5**)[31]. The mosaic has been dated to the late 2nd/early 3rd century. Concerning the fact that most of the datable ceramic evidence of Attilius belongs to the 2nd century particulary the 2nd half of the century, theoretically there could exist a link between the two Attilii. The distance between Oberweningen and Oberwinterthur is nearly 40 km so there could be an affiliation between the potter and the mosaicist. But it could also be argued that we are dealing with a popular name of the 2nd century.

Analysis and the results

The sherd cat. no. 8 was found in a pottery workshop in Eschenz, the *vicus Tasgetium*, so it could possibly be the work of a local potter. Since there are no chemical analyses of pottery from the site, the necessary evidence for proving that the potter Attilius was working there is lacking. From Oberwinterthur, the *vicus Vitudurum*, at least two local reference groups are known[32]. D. Penz, University Freiburg (Germany) took samples from 12 pots (cat. nos. 1–10; 12; 14). Two pots from Thurgau were unavailable for sampling[33].

[24] Hedinger/Jauch 1997, 78 Anm. 13–14.
[25] Ibid. 78: z.B. Augst, gravestone for Marinus Attili[, son of Cossus.
[26] Ibid. 78; C. Bémont/J.-P. Jacob (Hrsg.), La terre sigllée gallo-romaine. Doc. Arch. Française 6 (Paris 1986) 279.
[27] Atillus Pussosus, Samian potter in Trier: I. Huld-Zetsche, Trierer Reliefsigillata, Werkstatt 1. Mat. Röm.-Germ. Keramik 9 (Bonn 1972) 232; H. Ricken/Ch. Fischer, Die Bilderschüsseln der römischen Töpfer von Rheinzabern. Mat. Röm.-Germ. Keramik 7 (Bonn 1963) 346. – Samian ware from Faimingen and Pfünz: ATTILUS F on the bottom of a plate: Drexel 1911, 61 Nr. 73; ORL B 73 Pfünz Taf. 8A,9; Kakoschke 2009, 125 CN 66–67; CIL III 14115,01; CIL XI 06699,030.
[28] Kakoschke 2009, 125 CN 66; ORL B 66c Faimingen 71 Nr. 4.
[29] Kakoschke 2009, 126–127.
[30] Hedinger/Jauch 1997, 78; Th. Luginbühl, Imitation de sigillée et de potiers du Haut-Empire en Suisse Occidentale. Cahiers Arch. Romande 83 (Lausanne 2001) 276.
[31] S. Delbarre-Bärtschi, Les mosaiques. In: Horisberger 2012, 109–111 Abb. 160 Kat. 428,2.
[32] G. Thierrin-Michael in: Jauch 2014, 140–170.
[33] Sampling took place September 3, 2014 and Oktober 28, 2014. Thanks to the Kantonsarchäologie Zurich (cat. no. 1–3, 7, 9, 10, 14) and K. Schmitt-Ott, Swiss National Museum (cat. no. 4–6), H. Brem and I. Ebneter, Amt für Archäologie des Kantons Thurgau (cat. no. 8) and G.

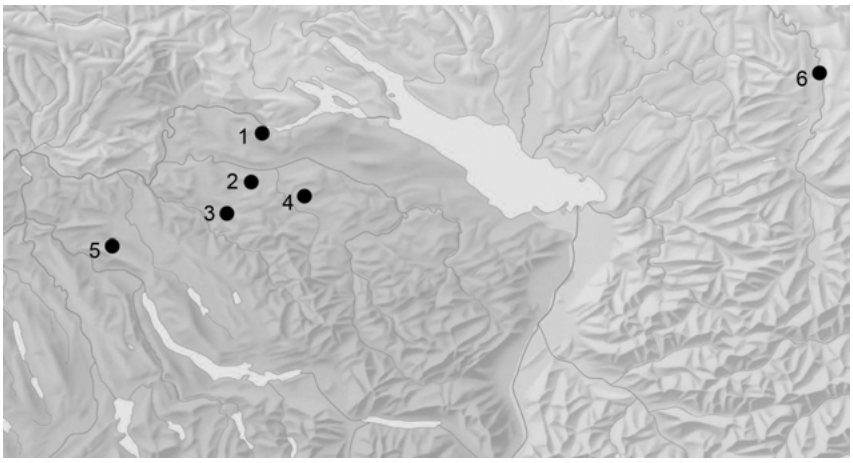

Fig. 7. Distribution map of Attilius ware (design: M. Moser, KA ZH).

The samples were taken from drilling in the broken edges, the resulting powder was pressed in tablets. The analysis was carried out with a Niton XL3t, a portable X-ray spectrometer (P-ED-RFA) from Analyticon. The analysis program can detect up to 35 elements from Magnesium (Mg) to Uran (U)[34], whose minimal detection limits ranges from ~0,5 % (Mg) down to ~5 ppm for e.g. Nb[35]. The aim of the research was to investigate the same deposits of the clay in the area on the basis of chemical similarities. Differences in the raw materials could possibly indicate different production centres. A basic question is whether the pots or their contents were negotiated and whether the potters were working in different workshops. Does an analysis of clay allow these statements about the marketplaces?

The analyses showed evidence of one larger group containing eight samples, leading to the assumption that possibly the same clay deposits could have been used[36]. Two samples do not share any similarities with the large group nor with each other[37]. Another two samples also do not appear to be from the first two groups but do have some chemical similiarities with each other[38]. The sample groups were too small to deliver a scientifically reliable response. Another problem lies in the fact that the origins of coarse wares are more difficult to determine because of the addition of grog from old pots. Depending on the quantity and the magnitude of inclusive grog, stones or other organic material in the samples, the measurement results can vary widely. Since the chemical analyses didn't help answer these questions, we will have to rely on the archaeological record to approach the topic.

Weber and P. Pfister, Museum Kempten (cat. no. 12).

34 Mg, Al, Si, P, S, Cl, K, Ca, Ti, V, Cr, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, As, Se, Rb, Sr, Y, Zr, Nb, Ag, Cd, Sn, Sb, Ba, Ce, Au, Hg, Pb, Bi, U.

35 Since the spectral lines of some elements overlap each other, variations concerning the detection limits may occur.

36 Cat. nos. 2, 3, 6–9, 12, 14.

37 Cat. nos. 1, 10.

38 Cat. nos. 4–5.

Local traditions and itinerant potters?

In Roman times potter signatures on coarse wares are uncommon. Exceptions are *mortaria*, amphorae and occasionally jugs. Though small stamps for signatures are known, the use of a signature mould for the base of a pot is unique in the Roman archaeological record. Applying a decoration to the bottom of a pot seems illogical not only because it affects the stability but also it can't be seen when the pot is set on a table. Through use, the ornament is predestined to wear down quickly. The three examples from Ellikon have strongly weathered and abraded letters and ornaments, possibly a consequence of storage and handling during the past 150 years since being excavated.

There must be a reason for Attilius to have signed the vessels with his name and an animal. Is it about the content? What was the content? The pots and the bowl do not have a large capacity, so it is hard to imagine that it could have been of primary significance. Vessels in the Museum of Valkhof in Nijmengen (NL) indicate otherwise: Two coarse ware pots contained marinated mackerels from Spain and chicken drumsticks. Another roughly tempered small pot was filled with 30 breasts of songbirds, specifically thrushs, probably imported from the Ardenns[39]. Could the Attilius ware have contained a local luxury commodity? Taking the argument one step further, the figures on the bases might possibly reflect the content. The images on mould 1 may indicate goose fat or duck foie gras or liver pâté and the pot from Eschenz may have contained frog legs or other small joints of luxury meats. This might explain the different molds showing more or less the same name. Another explanation is the working process itself: One pot was situated on the mould, drying til the clay contracted and vessel and mould could easily get separated. The potter didn't have to wait, but took another mould building up a new vessel. To explain the existence of five known moulds one may ask whether there was only one person named Attilius or maybe Attilius had employees, who

39 The vessels were exhibited in the Museum Het Valkhof in Nijmegen, NL, in September 2014.

were working for him and signing the vessels in his name? This procedure has recently been postulated for local *mortaria* manufacture during the 2nd century[40]. Maybe the potter Attilius was working in the adjacent *vici* for a while, taking advantage of local establishments when needed. Another possibility is that he could have produced his ceramics in one place either himself or with the help of one or more employees, filled them with local delicacies and sold his products in *Raetia* and the surrounding areas.

Furthermore, the form of the vessels is quite uncommon: mostly pots and one bowl with cylindrical walls and knobbed handles strongly reminiscent of Lavez type steatite vessels. These imitations are spread widely in the province of *Raetia* (**fig. 6**)[41]. The steatite vessels have been found in the *villae* from Dietikon and Neftenbach, both within the canton of Zurich. Often it is difficult to determine from the literature whether the cooking pots were handmade or wheel-thrown like the Attilius pots. Furthermore, with the same form with knobbed handles also fine tableware is known, often covered with a golden coloured clay slip. Examples of these tablewares have been found in Oberwinterthur, and were produced locally in the 2nd century[42]. A distribution map of the cooking vessels was published in 1990 by G. Weber (**fig. 6**)[43]. The distribution of the Attilius ware in the Raetian province and a bit westwards from the assumed frontier in *Germania superior* (Oberwinterthur, Dällikon) makes it obvious that we are confronted with the same tradition. The westernmost site is Dällikon, the easternmost Kempten (**fig. 7**). The others are spread over the eastern part of the canton Zurich and the canton Thurgau between Oberwinterthur and Eschenz. From the geographical point of view, someone might assume that Attilius was an itinerant potter working in the adjacent *vici* of the region where he produced the ceramics on-site. He may have brought along his own moulds or made them on the spot. As already mentioned, the three vessels from Ellikon could indicate a burial mound and be part of an arrangement with personal grave goods. Perhaps the deceased was the potter himself? Or if the pot's contents were indeed a luxury product, it may represent an offering of the deceased's favourite snack.

vreni.jauch@bd.zh.de

[40] Jauch 2014, 192–197.
[41] Weber 1990, 173–174 Abb. 2.
[42] Jauch 2014, 104 Abb. 224 Taf. 73,44; also known from the *Vicus Turicum*, Zurich. Information given by A. Schildknecht-Wyss, site Schipfe, unpublished.
[43] Weber 1990, Abb. 2. The map has undergone some modifications.

Bibliography

Drexel 1911	F. Drexel, Das Kastell Faimingen. ORL B VI Nr. 66c (Heidelberg 1911).
Hedinger/Jauch 1997	B. Hedinger/V. Jauch, Inschriften auf römischen Gefässen aus Eschenz. Arch. Schweiz 20, 1997, 77–79.
Holliger/Pfeifer 1982	Chr. Holliger/H.-R. Pfeifer, Lavez aus Vindonissa. Ges. Pro Vindonissa Jahresber. 1982, 11–64.
Horisberger 2004	B. Horisberger , Der Gutshof in Buchs und die römische Besiedlung im Furttal. Monogr. Kantonsarch. Zürich 37 (Zürich, Egg 2004).
Horisberger 2012	Id., Oberweningen und Schleinikon: Zwei römische Gutshöfe im zürcherischen Wehntal. Zürcher Arch. 30 (Zürich, Egg 2012).
Jauch 2014	V. Jauch, Vicustöpfer. Keramikproduktion im römischen Oberwinterthur. Beiträge zum römischen Oberwinterthur – Vitudurum 10. Monogr. Kantonsarch. Zürich 45 (Zürich, Egg 2014).
Kakoschke 2009	A. Kakoschke, Die Personennamen in der römischen Provinz Rätien (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York 2009).
Keller 1871	F. Keller, Inschrift an einem Aschentopfe, der in einem gallo-römischen Grabhügel zu Ellikon (Zürich) gefunden wurde. Anz. Schweizer. Altkde. 1871, 261–263.
Weber 1990	G. Weber, Ein Stempel des Attilus? RCRF Acta 27/28, 1990, 171–176.