

A photograph of three men in winter clothing standing on a snowy street, holding up large, long fur pelts. The man on the left wears a dark coat and a green hat. The man in the center wears a tan coat and a black hat. The man on the right wears a dark coat and a black hat. In the background, there are buildings, a yellow car, and colorful bunting flags.

FARMERS' TRADE AND MARKETS

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTERACTION IN THE MEDIEVAL
AND EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN COUNTRYSIDE

edited by MARIE ØDEGAARD, KJETIL LOFTSGARDEN & CLAUDIA THEUNE

RURALIA XV

We dedicate this volume to the memory of
Frode Iversen (1967-2022),
National Representative of Norway to the Ruralia association



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Rural marketplaces and fairs in medieval Luxembourg

The examples of Enelter and the Helperknapp

Christiane Bis-Worch & André Schoellen***

Abstract

This study takes up the theme of fairs and markets in the territory of the present-day Grand Duchy of Luxembourg from an archaeological point of view.

One of the case studies was the Helperknapp, an extensive, multi-layered complex with a healing spring venerated since Roman times, a medieval place of pilgrimage, a parish church serving three surrounding villages, a hermitage and in addition a probably medieval rampart fortification (hillfort) 500 m distance to the marketplace.

The other fair site, Mersch – Enelter, was located near a chapel in the open country, the origins of which date back to a 12th-century hermit.

What both have in common – and this applies to all medieval rural markets in the Grand Duchy – is that the places were visible from afar and located near old trade routes dating back to Roman times. However, the exact localisation of the numismatic finds of the Helperknapp suggests that the Roman coins refer to a spring sanctuary (offerings) from the 4th century and not necessarily to an ancient trading site. This information shows that only precise localisation of the finds, together with archaeological and geophysical investigations of the sites, can provide reliable information. This also applies to certain medieval coins found in the vicinity of the chapel, which are more related to ecclesiastical and religious activities than to trade.

The distribution map of the finds from the two case studies has made it possible to determine the exact dimensions of the marketplaces. In both cases, it has not been possible to prove a direct relationship with a settlement that may have disappeared. In the case of the Helperknapp, the few traces of construction can also be interpreted as the fairground huts known from written sources.

Finally, some of the numismatic finds give us a good idea of the extensive trade links that existed, demonstrating the supra-regional nature of these rural fairgrounds.

Keywords: *Rural fairs, geographical localisation, supra-regional trade relations.*

Résumé

Marchés ruraux et foires médiévales au Luxembourg – les exemples Enelter et le Helperknapp

La présente étude reprend le thème des foires et marchés sur le territoire de l'actuel Grand-Duché de Luxembourg d'un point de vue archéologique.

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L'un des sites étudiés est la butte-témoin du Helperknapp: vaste site multi-layer comportant dès l'antiquité une source miraculeuse, un lieu de pèlerinage, une église paroissiale ayant desservi trois villages autour, un ermitage ainsi qu'un camp retranché probablement médiéval à 500 mètres de distance de la place du marché.

L'autre site, celui de Mersch - Enelter, était situé près d'une chapelle en rase campagne dont les origines remonteraient à un ermite du XIIe siècle.

Le point commun entre ces deux sites – et cela vaut pour tous les marchés ruraux médiévaux du Grand-Duché – est que les lieux étaient visibles de loin et se trouvaient à proximité d'anciennes routes remontant à l'époque romaine. Cependant, la localisation exacte des découvertes numismatiques de l'Helperknapp suggère que les pièces de monnaie romaines se rapportent à un sanctuaire de source du 4e siècle (offrandes) et pas nécessairement à un lieu de commerce antique. Cette constatation montre que seule la localisation précise des découvertes, associée à des études archéologiques et/ou géophysiques des sites, permet d'obtenir des informations fiables. Il en va de même pour certaines pièces de monnaie médiévales trouvées aux alentours de la chapelle, qui sont davantage liées à des pratiques religieuses et ecclésiastiques qu'au commerce.

Dans les deux cas d'études, la carte de répartition des pièces trouvées a permis de déterminer les dimensions exactes de la place de marché. Mais il n'a pas été possible de prouver une relation directe avec un habitat qui a peut-être disparu. Dans le cas de Helperknapp, les quelques traces de construction peuvent également être interprétées comme les cabanes des forains connues par les sources écrites.

Finalement, les objets numismatiques trouvés nous donnent un bon aperçu des relations commerciales parfois très étendues, ce qui démontre le caractère suprarégional de ces places de foire rurales.

Mots-clés: *Foires rurales, localisation géographique, relations commerciales suprarégionales.*

Zusammenfassung

Ländliche Jahrmärkte und Messen im mittelalterlichen Luxemburg – die Beispiele Enelter und der Helperknapp

Introduction

There are numerous known rural marketplaces in Luxembourg, two of which have been studied from an archaeological point of view and will be presented here. However, if one looks at the publications on the subject, it is alarming to note that research in Luxembourg has so

Diese Studie greift das Thema ländliche Messen und Märkte auf dem Gebiet des heutigen Großherzogtums Luxemburg aus archäologischer Sicht auf.

Eine der Fallstudien war der Helperknapp: eine ausgedehnte, vielschichtige Anlage mit einer seit der Römerzeit verehrten Heilquelle, einem mittelalterlichen Wallfahrtsort, einer drei umliegende Dörfer versorgenden Pfarrkirche, einer Einsiedelei und darüber hinaus einer wahrscheinlich mittelalterlichen Abschnittswallbefestigung in ca. 500m Entfernung zum Marktplatz.

Der andere Standort, Mersch – Enelter, befand sich im Umkreis einer Kapelle auf dem Land, deren Ursprünge auf einen Einsiedler aus dem zwölften Jahrhundert zurückgehen sollen.

Die Gemeinsamkeit dieser beiden Orte – und das gilt für alle mittelalterlichen ländlichen Märkte im Großherzogtum – ist, dass sie topografisch weithin sichtbar lagen und sich in der Nähe alter Handelsstraßen befanden, die bis in die Römerzeit zurückreichen. Die genaue Lokalisierung der numismatischen Funde vom Helperknapp legt jedoch nahe, dass sich die römischen Münzen auf ein Quellheiligtum (Opfergaben) aus dem 4. Jahrhundert und nicht unbedingt auf einen antiken Handelsplatz beziehen. Allein diese Erkenntnis zeigt, dass nur eine genaue Verortung der Funde zusammen mit archäologischen und geophysikalischen Untersuchungen der Fundstellen Aussagen mit Bestand erlauben. Dies gilt auch für bestimmte mittelalterliche Münzen, die im Umfeld der Kapelle gefunden wurden und eher mit kirchlich-religiösen Handlungen zu tun haben, denn mit Handel.

Die Verbreitungskarte der Fundstücke aus den beiden Fallstudien ermöglichte es, die genauen Ausmaße des Marktplatzes zu bestimmen. In beiden Fällen konnte keine direkte Verbindung zu einer möglicherweise verschwundenen Siedlung nachgewiesen werden. Im Fall von Helperknapp können die wenigen Bauspuren auch als die aus schriftlichen Quellen bekannten Hütten der Schausteller interpretiert werden.

Schließlich geben uns die Funde einen guten Einblick in die teilweise weitreichenden Handelsbeziehungen, was den überregionalen Charakter dieser ländlichen Jahrmarktplätze belegt.

Schlagwörter: *Ländliche Jahrmärkte, geographische Lage, suprarregionale Handelsbeziehungen.*

far tended to concentrate on the city of Luxembourg and has only dealt with rural markets peripherally (Pauly – Uhrmacher 2011). The present reconsideration of the topic of rural markets is therefore based on the publications of three older authors (Altschuler 1934; Mitterauer 1967; Weiller 1972, 1975, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1990, 1996a

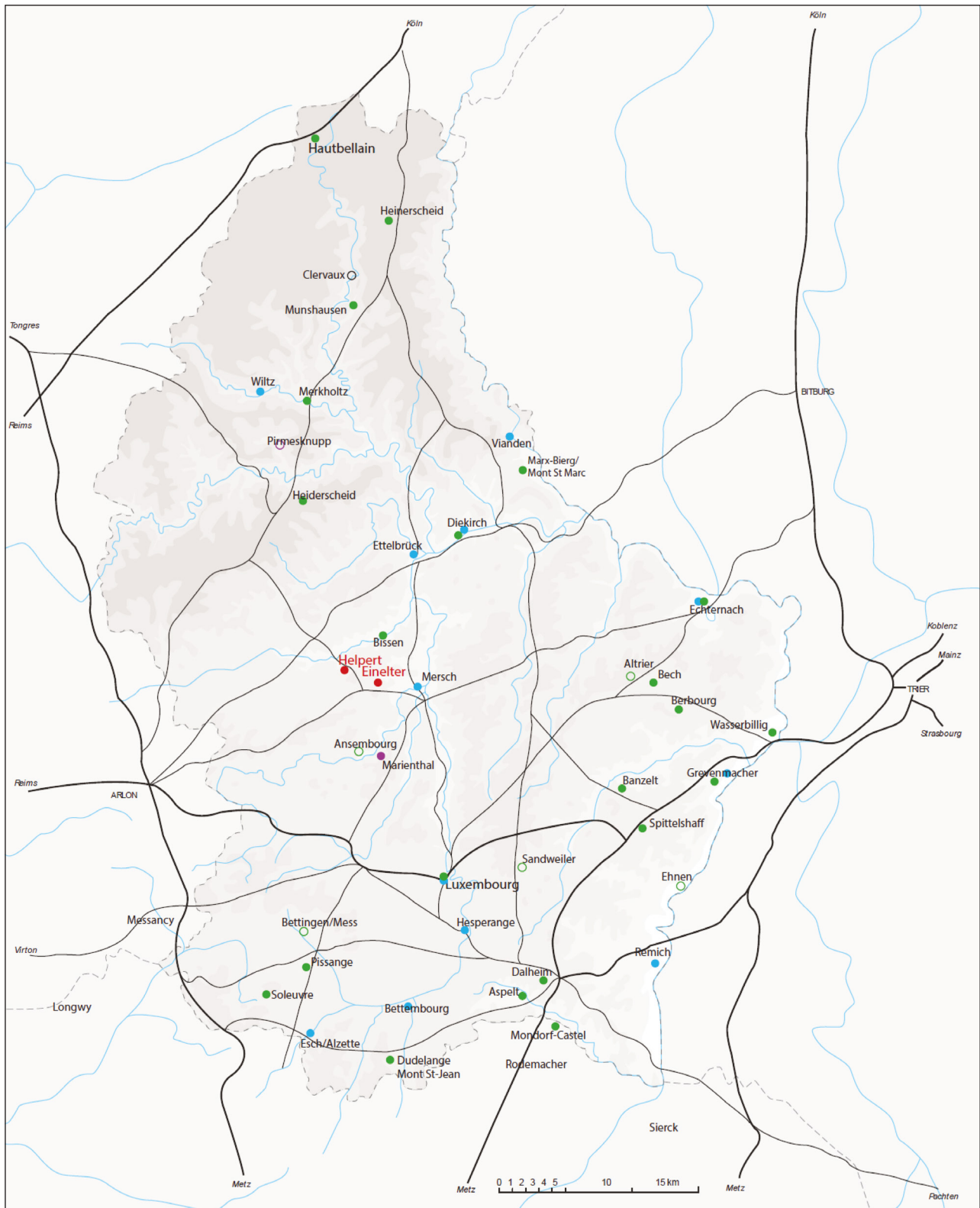


Fig. 1. Distribution map of currently known medieval rural markets. The close relationship to the former Roman road network (black lines) and watercourses is striking. Red – the case studies of Enelter and the Helperknapp, green – rural marketplaces outside settlements, blue – marketplaces inside of settlements or towns, purple – markets with monastic background, empty circle – uncertain/only one mention (© INRA map: A. Schoellen and C. Bis-Worch based on Altschuler 1934, plan basis J. Krier and V. Biwer).

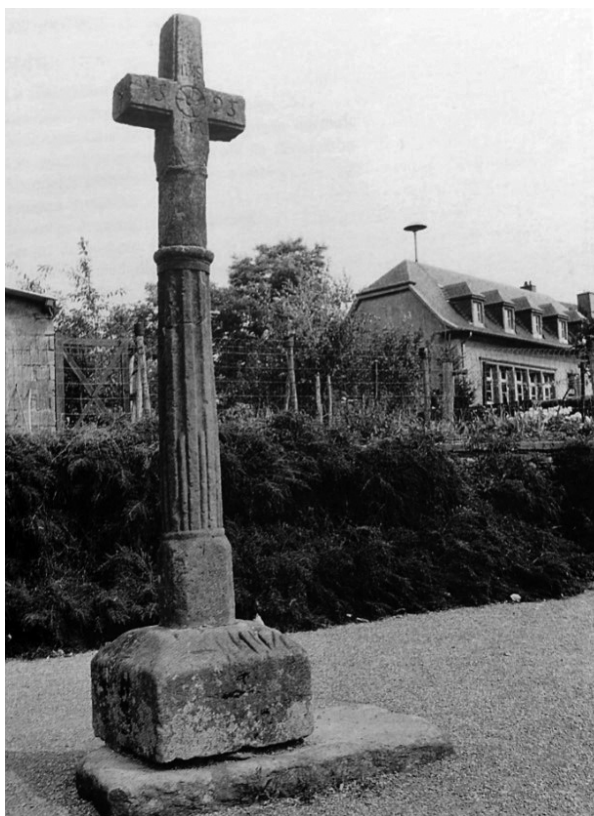


Fig. 2. An historical photo of the market cross of Hautbellain . The market has been historically documented since 1253. Visible is the year '1595' as well as two hooks on the side of the crossbar, on which the judge's sword was hung on market days. Also noteworthy are the grinding grooves on the base, the origin and meaning of which are hotly debated (© Weiller T. III 1996a, frontispiece).

and b) and to a large extent on the experience of André Schoellen (co-author), who has been interested in rural marketplaces all his life and has recorded and studied them in the course of compiling the archaeological map of Luxembourg (Schoellen 2013).

Historical written documents are an important basis for recording markets and fairs; the so-called *Weistümer* provide information about the organisation and technical legal procedure of the fairs, the goods and the trade relations.

Around 22 markets located outside the settlements are documented for the area of present-day Luxembourg in the period between the 12th century and the invasion of the French Revolutionary troops in 1795 (Altschuler 1934). Some of them, however, were located at the foot of a castle, at the gates of a monastery or close to a village. There are also at least 17 markets within villages (Fig. 1).

Altschuler (1934) and Mitterauer (1967) presume that some of the rural markets could well be of older origin and have their roots in Roman or even pre-Roman times. From the 12th century onwards, market rights appear

particularly in connection with the granting of town rights. These markets and fairs were located either directly within and/or in the immediate vicinity of the towns. One of the fairs that still exists today and is best known beyond the city limits is the so-called *Schobermesse*, which was founded in 1340 by Count John the Blind and takes place every year at the gates of Luxembourg City (Pauly 1990).

Marketplaces did not necessarily have to occupy a large space in the settlement structure, as an extension in the street could suffice. Market crosses have survived in some villages and towns, such as Echternach, Wasserbillig, Larochette and Hautbellain (Fig. 2). As the market and the administration of justice were closely linked, it is not surprising that the market cross could also serve as a justice cross and vice versa (see also the contribution of Robert Salzer). The market law was limited to the respective market days and regulated when and how the market was to begin and end, what may be sold, how much tax was to be paid on the goods and the market stalls (and by and to whom) and who was responsible for observing the law within the marketplace (Altschuler 1934).

According to Altschuler (1934, 27–28), market rights were granted on the basis of various particular interests, e.g. in connection with the construction of a town wall or with religious celebrations, such as in Echternach or in Marienthal Monastery, to which many visitors were attracted on the occasions of pilgrimages, processions and other church celebrations. However, because monasteries such as Marienthal tended to be located away from existing trade routes, many of these markets disappeared shortly after they were founded. In the 14th century in particular, numerous *Weistümer* (the 'raccords de justice') broke off. Other markets – such as the *Schobermesse* or the *Helpermarkt* – became so important that they were used as reference points in court records and for payment dates.

In uncertain times, merchants either formed traveling groups and hired escorts or they received letters of safe conduct from the respective sovereign, which placed them under protection. In addition to free escort and protection from the sovereign, they were also reimbursed for any damages in the event of theft. In return, however, they were subject to the respective count's law. Several 'travel warnings' are known in connection with the city of Luxembourg, which report on thieves, highwaymen and possible kidnappings (Pauly–Uhrmacher 2011, 246).

In contrast to local markets, the locations of rural marketplaces are not always certain. Some can be deduced from the toponyms that contain the suffix market (luxbg. Maart). For example, the toponym *Kéismaart* (luxbg. 'cheese market' or 'cow market') refers to a historically unknown marketplace near Banzelt located at the foot of the so-called *Widdebierg* or directly on the old trade route towards Trier, which dated back at least to Roman times. A gallows documented on the Ferraris map

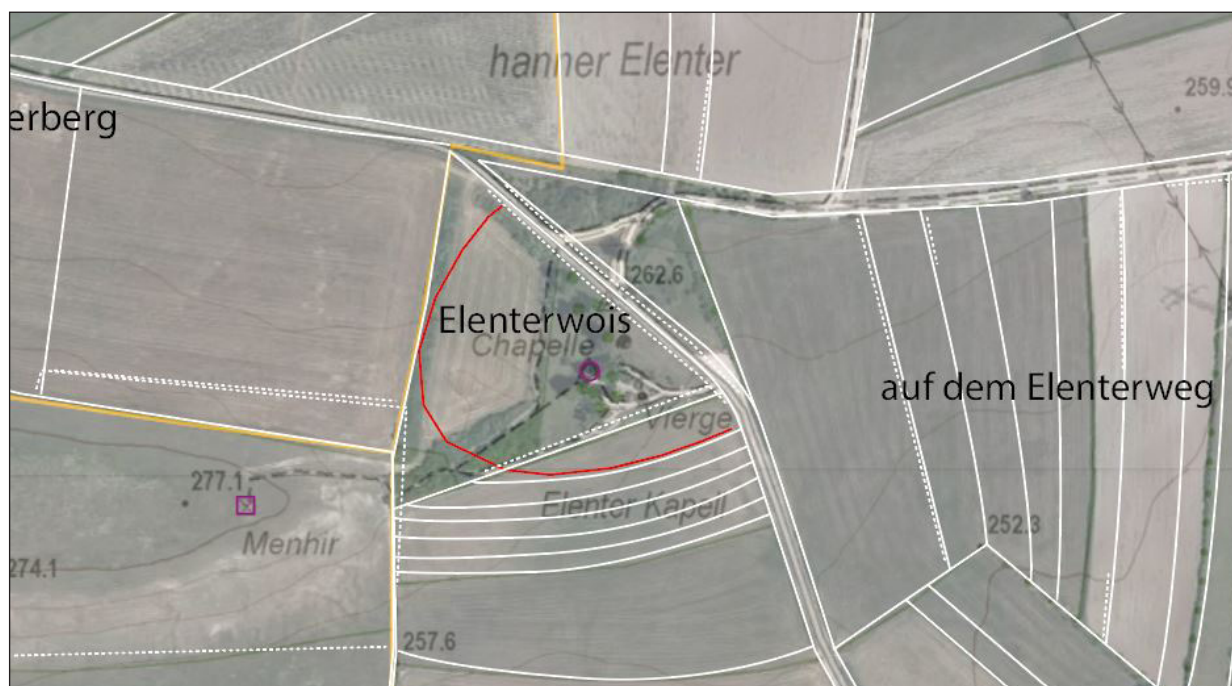


Fig. 3. The Enelter market superimposed on the digitised cadastral map from 1824 and aerial photography (the red line indicates the distribution of the finds (© aerial photography: Administration du Cadastre et de la Topographie, Luxembourg; digitisation and superimposition: Christiane Bis-Worch, INRA).

of 1778 can be mentioned as an additional landmark, at least in the 18th century. Although the time of origin, duration and significance are currently obscure due to a lack of research and historical documents, all the evidence mentioned suggests that a rural livestock market can be expected here.

In fact, the location on formerly frequented Roman trade routes (cf. Fig. 1) unites all rural marketplaces in Luxembourg.

Topography also seems to play an important role, as the rural markets are either located on a prominent hill or at its foot. Visibility therefore appears to be a key feature. There are often additional landmarks nearby, be it an isolated and therefore clearly visible chapel, a cross or another special feature such as an isolated large tree.

These points also apply to the two examples of the Helperknapp and Enelter near Mersch. Systematic field survey (by André Schoellen, among others) has yielded a wealth of numismatic finds for the two case studies, covering more than half a millennium and providing fundamental insights into the periods, the exact extents and the importance of both as supra-regional trading centres.

The Enelter market

The first example is that of the so-called Enelter near Mersch, which is located close to the old road leading from Mersch to the market on the so-called Helperknapp,

only 4 km away. A monolith could have served as an additional landmark visible from afar (Fig. 3). However, it is unclear whether the stone was visible in the Middle Ages, as it was only re-erected in the 1970s – unfortunately without prior archaeological investigation. Later research was at least able to prove that the stone had not been re-erected several times (Valotteau 2002). However, it was not possible to determine when it was laid down or toppled. It is assumed that the stone was laid down out of religious fervour.

Around 1100, the place is referred to as Eineltre ('An altar'), which either refers to the stone or indicates the presence of a chapel. Its origins are indeed said to go back to St Thibaut de Provins, who lived here as a hermit for 3 years according to a document from around 1057 (Altschuler 1934, 37–39).

The distribution of finds showed that the market must have taken place in an open field immediately to the west and around this small chapel (Weiller 1989, esp. 167–170). Historical documents give us the following information about this market: in the 17th century it took place on 14 September, the day of the Exaltation of the Cross. In fiscal and legal documents, the market is mentioned as a reference point for the payment of tithes. Between 1562 and 1644, the Enelter market was guarded by 12 archers and crossbowmen from Diekirch, who helped the market bailiff to collect the stall fees and restore order in the event of disputes. In fact, this market was organised – as was generally the case in medieval

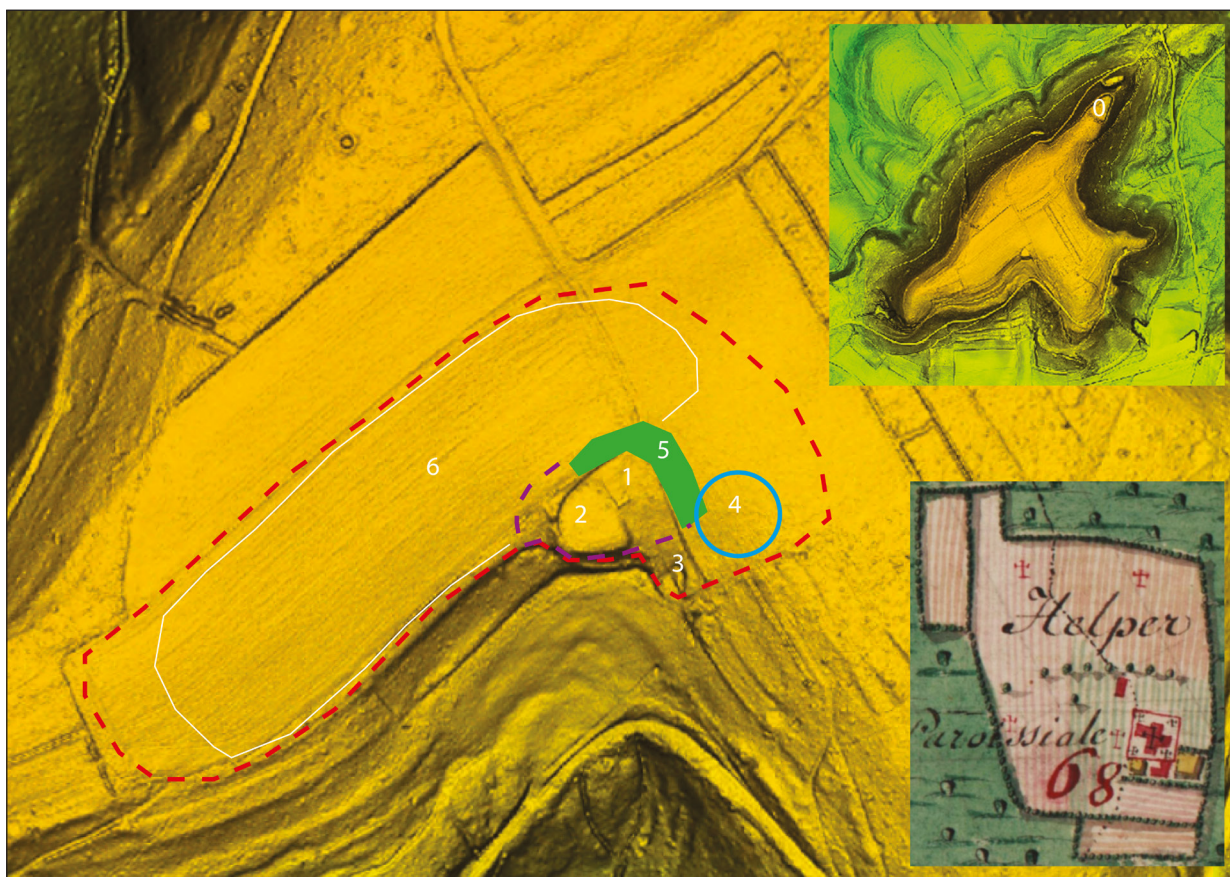


Fig. 4. The Helperknapp Zeugenberg can be clearly seen in the LiDAR image (top right); 0) hillfort, 1) 1900 chapel, 2) destroyed church and hermitage, 3) Willibrordus spring, 4) Roman spring shrine, 5) presumed settlement site or huts and 6) marketplace. Red line – study area, blue line – Roman spring shrine, purple zone – chapel area, green area – barracks/settlement, white line – concentration of marketplace finds (© LiDAR: Adm. du Cadastre et de la Topographie. Luxembourg, Layout: Christiane Bis-Worch, André Schoellen). Bottom right – Excerpt from the Ferraris map (© KBR).

and modern Luxembourg – by ‘local landlords and noble lords’, who were responsible for ensuring justice and peace during the fair.

Written documents also give us an indication of the types of goods that were traded in Enelter in the 16th and 17th centuries: ‘Cattle, horses, ewes, cows, mares, pigs’. Horses, cows and grain dominate, but Flemish cloth from the area of Malmedy (approx. 90–100 km away) and Liège (approx. 140–150 km away) is also mentioned in a document in 1627. Poultry, pottery and metal vessels appear to have been traded less frequently. Also noteworthy is the fact that in 1627 some traders also visited other markets in the region at the same time, for example in Diekirch, which is 20 km away from Enelter.

About 180 numismatic items found in the area around the chapel provide evidence of only a minor Roman presence and tend to put the focus on the period between the 12th and 19th centuries. The origins of the coins complements the historical written sources with regard to trade relations: one-third of the coins originate

from the county or duchy of Luxembourg and others are associated to Flanders, Liège, Namur and Tournai, as well as the Netherlands (Born, Kuinre, Utrecht), France (Nancy, Metz, Verdun, Strasbourg), Germany (Baden, Baden-Durlach, Frankfurt, Hanau-Lichtenberg, Hesse, Darmstadt, Cologne, Pfalz-Simmern, Sponheim, Pfalz-Zweibrücken, Stolber-Königstein, Speyer, Trier) and Austria and Switzerland (Tyrol, Basel, Chur). It is uncertain whether the discovery of numerous pennies and double pennies from the 17th century from neighbouring Lorraine points to a lost coin purse scattered by a plough or increased trading activity at the time (Weiller 1996a, 51).

The Helperknapp fair

The second investigation site is only 4 km away on the Helperknapp, a so-called *Zeugenberg* (an isolated hill representing, on a platform dismantled by erosion, the remains of the ancient relief), which can be recognised from afar as a landmark (Fig. 4, top right).

In addition to prehistoric finds, the presumed Roman spring sanctuary with the remains of a Jupiter column and the votive finds typical of temples should be mentioned, which, according to the results of the geophysical investigations by the company PZP (Fig. 4, no. 4), may have been located in the area east of the fountain and, according to the coins found there, existed between the 3rd and 4th centuries (*Posselt – Zickgraf 2019; Weiller 1972, 1977, 1983, 1990, 1996b; Schoellen 2013*).

The spring is now dedicated to St Willibrord, who brought the Echternach Abbey to its first period of prosperity in the 7th century and is said to have drunk from the spring here (*Mitterauer 1967, 263–270; Altschuler 1934, 28–29*). The discovery of two caterpillar-like symmetrical fibulae at least supports an early date. The discovery of a seal matrix with the inscription ‘S. WILLIBRORDI’ dates to the 15th century but is undoubtedly connected with the Willibrordus legend and the healing spring (*Weiller 1989, 135 and Pl. IX*).

According to another legend, Charlemagne also drank from the spring and was cured of an illness (phthisis) (*Gredt 1964, no. 124; Mitterauer 1967, 263–270; Altschuler 1934, 28–29*). According to an uncertain document, a chapel could have existed here from 816, but certainly from 974. It is dedicated to St John (Evangelist or Baptist is initially unclear). The spring and chapel became an important place of pilgrimage, to which a hermitage was added in the 18th century (*Schon 1954, 355; Thiel 1954, 114–121; Muller 2003, 439–441*).

The Helperknapp market is a particularly eloquent example of the exact course of such a rural market (*Altschuler 1934, 29–30, 189*): The Weistum of 14 March 1201 (1549) states that on the day before 4 May, the day of the Feast of the Holy Cross, the lords of Esch/Sauer and their retinue set out for the monastery in Useldingen and spent the night there. The monastery also had to provide the horses and food. At midday, they gathered together with the judges and aldermen from Hollenfels on the market grounds. According to an undated document (*Altschuler 1934, 189*), this was located ‘under the free oak tree’, which is remarkable in that the market was otherwise linked to the church feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross and St John’s Church was located directly next to the square. The reference to the free-standing tree underlines its (symbolic?) significance.

The market itself began with the proclamation of market rights and the circumambulation of market freedom. On the Ferraris map of 1778 (cf. Fig. 4, bottom right), the corners are each marked with a cross. Crosses made of wood or on pennants stuck into the ground are in fact also documented elsewhere (*Altschuler 1934, 54*). Market rights and market peace only applied within this area.

Supervision of the market was therefore not exercised by the Lord of Useldingen, on whose land the market

site was located, but by the lords of Hollenfels and Esch-sur-Sûre. The lords of Esch-sur-Sûre received financial compensation for the liquid goods, while the lords of Hollenfels controlled the measurements. Fines and stall fees could also be withheld. Justice was administered directly on the spot, which could lead to the imposition of the death penalty for capital offenses – although in this case an executioner had to be found; otherwise the delinquent was first taken to Hollenfels. The question arises as to whether the above-mentioned ‘free oak’ was used as a gallows.

In addition to mentioning that an identical range of goods were sold at the Enelter market, the historical written sources of the 16th century report that merchants were sent from the city of Luxembourg to inspect the goods (*Pauly – Uhrmacher 2011*), which underlines the importance of the market for the city. In addition, haberdashers, fur traders, furriers and shoemakers are mentioned (*Altschuler 1934, 29–30*).

Intensive metal detecting in the 1980s to the early 2000s recovered around 400 numismatic objects, such as coins, coin weights, computing pennies (*jetons de compte*), religious medals, crosses and crucifixes, goods seals (clothing) and the above-mentioned seal matrix. The oldest medieval coins date from the late 11th century (silver pennies from Trier) and the youngest from the early 19th century, which can easily be explained by the relocation of the fair to Finsterthal in 1832 (*Weiller 1989, 115–119*).

However, not all coins can be linked to the trade fair activities. According to A. Schoellen, this is particularly true of many small coins from the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th centuries – such as 1/12 *groschen* (Luxembourg), *angevines* (Metz), *maille tournois* (France) and pennies from the Rhine region (*Schüsselpennige* and *Hohlheller*) – which came from the area of the church and were heavily mixed with mortar remains and other demolition debris. These can rather be regarded as offertory coins, which were lost in the church and ended up in the ground with its demolition (Fig. 4, purple line) (*Schoellen 2013*). In fact, the range of finds matches that of numerous church excavations in Luxembourg, such as the chapel in the nearby castle of Useldange, the Holy Trinity Church of Vianden, Dudelange Mont St Jean, Grevenmacher and Heisdorf (partly unpublished excavations and *Weiller 1989, esp. 15–19, 1996a*).

The presence of foreign coins in the context of the church suggests that the visitors and participants of the fair also attended services in the church near the market square. A further concentration of coins (12th–14th centuries) found to the north-east of the church with other evidence (badly burnt charcoal and 13th-/14th-century greyware pottery), which could indicate the existence of one or more wooden buildings that extended over an area of 40 × 15 m

and were destroyed by fire in the 14th century (cf. Fig. 4, no.5) (Schoellen 2013). This could either be evidence of settlement activity or of the huts mentioned in the historical written sources that were erected on the occasion of the market. The second theory is indeed also supported by the investigations of Claudia Theune and Ute Scholz (see their contribution in this publication), which show there was extensive catering for market participants. Small pennies (*petits deniers*) from Flanders (13th century), which were mainly found around the chapel and the burnt area, can be linked to the Flanders cloth trade. Was it just a place of celebration or were the huts used to house those who had travelled far for the night?

Discussing the numerous numismatic finds here would be going too far. They correspond by and large to the range of finds from the Enelter but are characterised by being of special quality and as attesting quite extensive trade relations. In addition to numerous coins, jetons and coin weights, 4 gold coins are particularly noteworthy – such as a florin d’or minted in Prague under John the Blind (1336–1345/46) (he is in fact the founder of numerous markets in Luxembourg; Pauly 1990, 1997; Weiller 1989, 131, plate IX). This shows a direct link between the affiliation of the county of the time to a particular ruler and his sphere of influence. In general, however, such a find does not necessarily indicate direct trade, because it may have reached the Helperknapp via several intermediate trading stations. This may also apply to a Spanish gold coin, an escudo, which may well have reached the Helperknapp via trade with the Netherlands.

The distribution of objects found that can be reliably associated with the marketplace is limited to an area that corresponds strikingly well with the area marked by crosses in the 4 corners on the Ferraris map of 1778 (Fig. 4, no. 6 and excerpt at bottom right). These crosses were usually made of wood and were only erected during the fair. They marked the legal district of the market, which was respected for 400 years.

Conclusion

The distribution of finds in both case studies enabled the determination of the exact dimensions of the marketplaces. Some coins give us a good overview of the sometimes far-reaching trade relations, which demonstrate the supra-regional character of such rural marketplaces. Other coins, however, must be considered from the point of view of nearby religious institutions (chapels, places of pilgrimage, hermitages).

In both examples, it has not been possible to prove a direct relationship to a settlement that may have disappeared. In the case of the Helperknapp, the few traces of settlement can also be interpreted as the mentioned huts of the showmen and the age of the hillfort on the northern

edge of the plateau is unfortunately still unexplored, so that we lack a chronological reference. As the Roman finds from the Helperknapp can be attributed more to religious practices in connection with a spring sanctuary, the question must be raised as to whether the roots of the Helperknapp market really go back to Roman times, as assumed by Altschuler and Mitterauer. The few finds from the Early Middle Ages also seem to relate more to the revered source and can hardly be regarded as proof of a market – even if this cannot be completely ruled out due to the general scarcity of coins in that period. Nevertheless, the coins show that the market has an older origin than its first mention at the beginning of the 14th century. While the beginning is uncertain, the cessation of the coin finds corresponds very well with the relocation of the market in 1832. As far as the origin of the various goods that were traded here is concerned, this question is not always easy to answer and is beyond the scope of this work. The coins actually only document long-distance relationships, but not whether, for example, horses and/or cattle came from regional production or were traded from far away – as is documented for other regions of Europe (Malcher 2016).

However, it is worth taking a look at the trade in so-called Flandrian cloth and especially the wool trade. As Holbach and Pauly (1990, esp. 72–75) point out, Luxembourg was one of the regions in which the textile trade played an important role. Raw materials were probably purchased, and goods sold not only at the Schobermesse in the city of Luxembourg, but also at the surrounding markets within a radius of around 50 km. There is evidence of traders in the cities of Trier, Metz and Arlon, for example, but also in the Helpermarkt (Pauly – Uhrmacher 2011, esp. 248–254). In addition, Luxembourg was part of the so-called ‘Lampartian Road’, the terrestrial long-distance trade route between England and Italy, which has been documented since the 14th century (Holbach – Pauly 1990, esp. 74 with notes).

Finally, for our study area reference should be made to the publications by Jean-Marie Yante (1995/96, 1998 esp. 392–401) and Michel Pauly and Martin Uhrmacher (2011), who approach this topic from different directions. The former focus on the informative value of the customs registers, in which are recorded the names of the traders, their goods and the frequency of their appearance in what are today the border regions with Luxembourg and can thus certainly be transferred to local conditions. The latter by contrast investigate the supply area of the city of Luxembourg, showing that various considerations can play a role in whether required goods, such as wood, were procured from local forests or, if necessary, imported via more-extended trade routes in order to conserve the local forests, e.g. for fattening livestock and as a basic supply of firewood. Overall, local markets within a radius of 20–30 km seem to have been preferred for

meeting everyday needs. The markets within a 50 km radius were used to procure and sell goods that could not be produced in the city of Luxembourg. Although long-distance trade also took place via the direct purchase and sale of individual traders and producers, the rural markets, such as the Helperknapp and Enelter, played a significant role in long-distance trade and were therefore of supra-regional importance for the population.

One question has not yet been answered satisfactorily and pursuing it would have gone beyond the scope of this work: can the finds provide information about the influence of major military events (such as the 30 Years' War) or that of wider plague epidemics? Did these markets experience a slump? At least the coin series does not seem to break off.

The finds from the two case studies testify to extensive trade relationships, which raise the question of whether this form of rural fair was really of lesser importance than the Schobermesse, which lasted several days, as Irsigler postulated in his contribution to Pauly (1990) (Irsigler 1990, 66). Rather, it looks as if the dealers were happy to use every opportunity along the way to do additional business.

The characteristics of rural fairs in Luxembourg can be summarised as follows:

- Preferred location on Roman (and other busy) roads;
- Preferred location on or at the foot of landmarks that are visible from afar, e.g. a so-called *Zeugenberg*, mountains, menhir (?), isolated trees, gallows;
- Often associated with religious sites (healing springs, chapels, churches) and religious practices (pilgrimage sites and processions);
- Annual unique event organised by local nobility and landlords;
- Could attract numerous visitors, for example in Longsdorf-Mont Saint Marc, where up to 8,000 people are recorded as having attended (Altschuler 1934, 45–46);
- Historically documented goods are livestock (horses, cattle, pigs, poultry), wine, salt, grain and textiles, as well as leather and other haberdashery;
- Merchants from far away (e.g. textiles from Liège, Malmedy, Flanders) also visit other fairs in the region;
- The coins found fit this, but the Helperknapp example also showed that this type of artefact must always be placed in the context of the find.

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