



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Between mountains and frontiers: the Roman settlement system in the provinces of Germania Superior, Raetia and Noricum

Pazmany, K.

Citation

Pazmany, K. (2019, June 6). *Between mountains and frontiers: the Roman settlement system in the provinces of Germania Superior, Raetia and Noricum*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/73849>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Leiden University Non-exclusive license](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/73849>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/73849> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Pazmany, K.

Title: Between mountains and frontiers: the Roman settlement system in the provinces of Germania Superior, Raetia and Noricum

Issue Date: 2019-06-06

1. The northern Alpine Region on the eve of the Roman conquest

The focus in this chapter lies on the nature of urbanism and the character of centres during the decades prior to and immediately after the Roman conquest. The chapter is built around two themes. A first one concerns the changing ideas about the complexity and diversity of the settlement dynamics during the Late Iron Age, drawing on new archaeological evidence. A brief overview of urbanism in the pre-Roman period should provide a reference framework for discussing the impact of Roman rule on urban development in this part of the Empire. The description of the different conquests in the second section of this chapter forms just a transition to the other focus in the chapter, namely the first signs of Roman influence on the contemporary settlement system and of Roman administrative policy. The settlement system in these early years might have been much more complex than was previously thought. The question of whether the Romans arrived in an abandoned land becomes more and more debatable.

1.1 The Pre-Roman urban settlement pattern

1.1.1 The Late Iron Age: La Tène Period

The last period preceding the incorporation of the northern Alpine region into the Roman Empire is named after the archaeological Late Iron Age site of La Tène, located on the edge of Lake Neuchâtel in Switzerland. Based on the specific nature of the material culture, which stood out from the then prevailing Hallstatt culture in northwest Europe, the last five centuries BC could be recognised as a separate period. The creation of the La Tène period was thus based on typological qualities of brooches, weapons, and oriental motifs influencing the decoration of objects and art.¹⁸ For a long time the last phase of this La Tène period, roughly ranging from 150 BC to 50-30 BC, has been considered as the crucial moment for the first signs of *urbanization* in NW Europe, characterised by large defended sites, better known as *oppida*, along with indications for social differentiation, an increased level of production and market exchange.¹⁹ But this vision is changing as will be explained below.

1.1.2 New perspectives on Late Iron Age settlement dynamics

Oppida: a problematic term and an outdated approach

The Latin word *oppidum* is best known from Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* in which he applied it to multiple Late Iron Age centres in Gaul. These centres were often located on spots of natural defence within the landscape and frequently showed evidence for strong defensive structures. These could include ramparts and gates as well as ditch and wall systems or earthworks of the so-called *murus gallicus* type described by Caesar. Moreover, the enclosed area was generally very large, ranging from 15 ha up to several hundreds of hectares. The majority of these sites have been dated to the middle of the 2nd century BC or to the beginning of the Late La Tène period. Based on these common features, the term *oppidum* came within the archaeological literature to stand for a large defended hilltop site. The appearance of these *oppida* has often been explained as a new phenomenon being partly a result of socio-economic changes and shifts in trade contacts. Acquaintance with the Mediterranean lifestyle has been seen as an important stimulus for the creation of these large

¹⁸ Collis 1984, 43-44.

¹⁹ Following Collis (1975, 5.), the La Tène period is generally divided into four sub-periods: Earliest La Tène A or Ia (475 – 400 BC), Early La Tène B1 and B2 or Ib and Ic (400 -325 BC), Middle La Tène C1 and C2 or IIa and IIb (300-100 BC) and finally Late La Tène D1, D2 and D3 or III (100-60 BC; 60-30BC and 30-10 BC). However in his book of 1984 (p39), a slightly different chronological division of the Late Iron Age is given. The Late La Tène period is generally also referred to as the Gallo-Roman period. Most finds discussed in the following sections will date from around La Tène C2/D1 and D2. For a short description of all the sub periods within the La Tène period and their characteristics see: *ibid.*, 43-49.

defended centres. And so these sites have become the stereotype of Late Iron Age centres, serving as refuge, storage centre, focal point for trade and symbol of prestige and power.²⁰

However, *oppidum* has proven to be a rather problematic term for which there is no consistent definition. First of all, it appears that already in antiquity the term *oppidum* did not refer to one specific type of centre. Caesar himself applied the term not only to Gallic centres but also used it to describe the living places of others, such as the Germanic tribes of the *Suevi*. Nevertheless, archaeologically no similar sites, such as those known from Gaul, have been identified in the Suevian territory north of the Rhine.²¹ An analysis of Caesar's use of the word *oppidum* according to D. Lukas quickly shows a multitude of nuances, among which *emporium*, city and *metropolis* in addition to fortified place.²²

Secondly, G. Woolf in 1993 was one of the first to recognise the problem that also from the archaeology it was unclear what the term *oppidum* stood for and that therefore the term has wrongly been used as an analytical tool.²³ The character of many Middle and Late La Tène period settlements appears to deviate from the main features of an *oppidum*: a large fortified hilltop settlement. This implies that sites of all different character have been categorised by scholars as *oppida* based on undefined and changeable criteria. The differences in the size of the enclosed area and in the level of fortification are two good examples to show the variety within the group of sites which have been labelled as *oppida*.²⁴ For instance, researchers have been using various thresholds for the minimum size of sites they categorised as *oppida*, ranging from 50 ha to 25 ha, to only 15 ha.²⁵

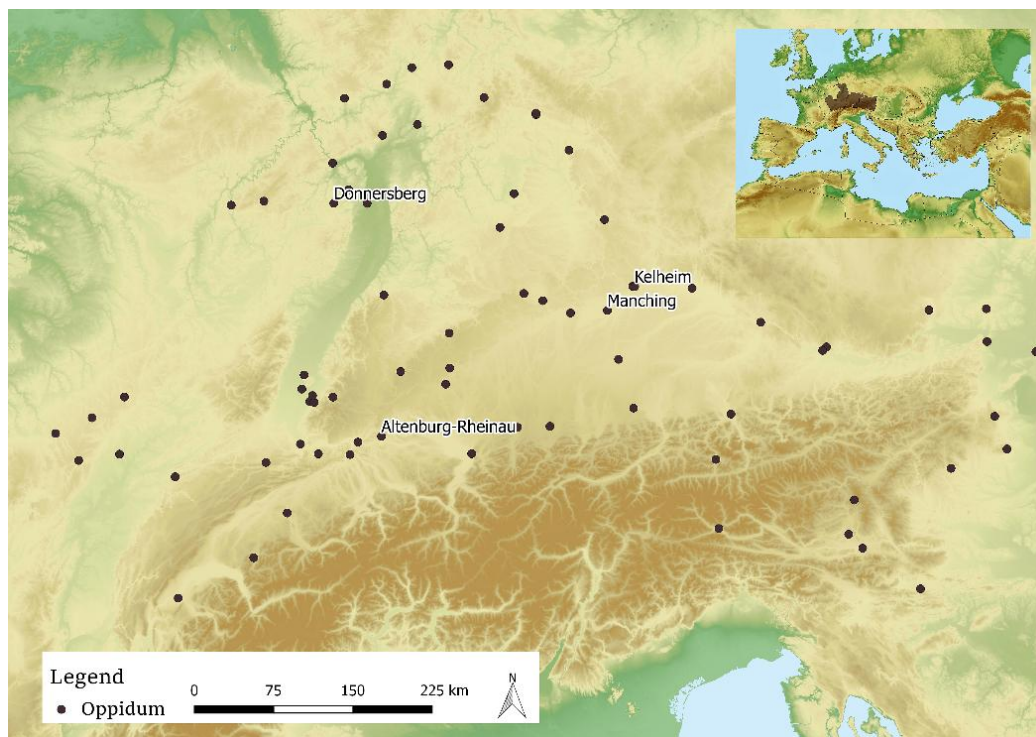


Fig.1.1: Overview of sites in the northern Alpine region referred to as *oppida* (n=57)

²⁰ Bintliff 1984, 196-198; Kuckenburg 2000, 144-147; Dürrwächter 2009, 43; Danielisová 2011, 144-145.

²¹ Salač 2014, 70. De Bello Gallico, Book IV, 5.

²² Lukas 2014, 84.

²³ Woolf 1993, 223.

²⁴ Ibid., 225.

²⁵ Ibid., 225; Kaenel 2006, 4-5; Dürrwächter 2009, 43.

Although the phenomenon is known from all over northwest Europe – stretching from Spain and Britain to the Balkans - I will illustrate the diversity of sites in the literature now referred to as *oppida* with examples mainly taken from the northern Alpine region. The following analysis is derived from 57 sites which are displayed on the map in figure 1.1. The website of the Culture 2000 funded project *Oppida: first towns north of the Alps*²⁶ has been an important reference source, in addition to the works of synthesis written by K. Bittel *et al.*²⁷, W. Dehn²⁸, R. Haeussler²⁹, U. Schaaf and A. Taylor³⁰ amongst many others.

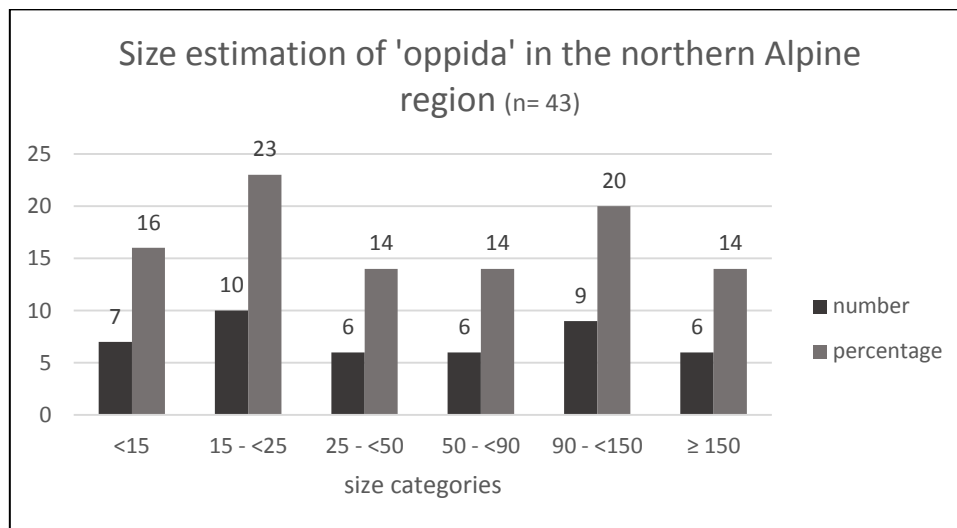


Fig. 1.2: Chart showing the division of size of *oppida* in the northern Alpine region

The size and fortification of oppida in perspective

For 43 Late Iron Age sites in the northern Alpine region, it was possible to make an estimation of the size of the enclosed area within the outermost defence structures of the sites. The chart (Fig. 1.2) displays a range of size categories from 2 ha to 650 ha. The size distribution of these Late Iron Age sites is surprisingly even. Traditionally *oppida* were considered to be large defended sites, but the chart shows that the majority remained smaller than 50 ha (61%). 39 percent did not grow above 25 ha. Nevertheless, it has to be said that a substantial number of sites (34%) were rather large with a defended area of 90 ha and more. Some sites, such as the sites of Kelheim (650 ha) and Manching (380 ha), or the *Doppelanlagen* of Altenburg-Rheinau (316 ha) and Donnersberg (240 ha) even reached an exceptional size of several hundred hectares.³¹

In addition to these differences in scale, it is also important to stress some qualitative divergences related to the size of these defended areas. The latter often did not correspond with the actual inhabited or built-up area and might therefore not be representative for the size of these centres. In the case of Kelheim, the biggest site of this kind in the entire region, it has been proposed that apart from the core area (however big that might be), most of the land was used for mining.³² Altenburg-

²⁶ Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps.

²⁷ Bittel, Kimmig and Schiek 1981.

²⁸ Dehn 1963.

²⁹ Haeussler 1994.

³⁰ Schaaf and Taylor 1975.

³¹ Kelheim: Collis 1975, 117-118. Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps. Manching: Kuckenburg 2000-151. Altenburg-Rheinau: Dehn 1963, 345-353. Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps. Donnersberg: *ibid.*-333; Collis 1975, 159.

³² 1975, 117-118.

Niederstein has a walled space of 70 ha, but the estimation for the occupied zone ranges between 5 and 10 ha.³³ Of the 380 ha site of Manching, probably only a maximum of 80 ha was inhabited.³⁴ The 170 ha defended site of Schwanberg was not intensively occupied and at Bern it has been suggested that a large part of the 140 ha site should be considered as agricultural land.³⁵ Only at some of the small defended sites, might the walled area have been completely occupied. The defended area at the Frauenberg, for example, included only 2 ha which was densely inhabited.³⁶ Nevertheless, some fallow land should still be taken into account also at smaller defended sites. Of the 15 ha at the Freinberg site, only 4 ha are considered to have been utilised for living.³⁷

In addition to size, the presence of a defensive structure seems also less important as a determining factor. H. Gerdson points out that multiple centres of the Middle and Late La Tène period which were not located on a hilltop or were not fortified have been categorised as *oppida*, amongst which the sites of Basel-Gasfabrik, Breisach or Manching (Bavaria, Germany).³⁸ The latter has often been identified as the *oppidum* of the *Vindelici*. This categorization is based chiefly on the 7 km long wall enclosing the settlement, because the site was not located on a natural elevation in the landscape. La Tène Manching was situated in the low land on a very accessible place between the rivers Paar and Danube. A better study of the site's chronology has, however, shown that the wall was a later addition. This implies that the so-called *oppidum* of Manching was in origin an open lowland settlement rather than a defended hilltop site.³⁹

This short overview illustrates that the sites referred to as *oppida* do not represent a group of sites of a specific and well-defined type.

A more complex settlement system in the La Tène period

The theme of (Late) Iron Age urban dynamics has been part of the research agenda ever since the last decades of the 20th century.⁴⁰ The understanding of the wider settlement system of this era has nevertheless taken a different turn during recent years. Because of a strong research interest focused on the so-called *oppida* sites and their defended character, many other types of Late Iron Age settlements were paid little attention in previous research. The underlying assumption was that non-defended sites were inferior and subordinate to the *oppida*. This *a priori* deprived low-land and non-defended sites from performing central socio-economic or political functions.⁴¹ The previously mentioned site of Manching, however, disproves this. Nevertheless, open settlements are archaeologically less visible and thus harder to find and investigate. Recent projects, among which the *Durotriges* Project (University of Bournemouth, England), have therefore been created and have a specific interest in Late Iron Age open and rural sites, aiming for a better understanding of this society.⁴²

The papers brought together in the *Paths to Complexity. Centralisation and Urbanisation in Iron Age Europe* publication show that the debate surrounding Iron Age urbanism and the role of *oppida* is still evolving.⁴³ In general, all the contributions advocate a re-evaluation of the Iron Age urban landscape. The concept of urbanism has widened from the simple idea of emerging towns to the outcome of

³³ Ibid., 127-133.

³⁴ Lorenz and Gerdson 2004, 128.

³⁵ Bern: Collis 1975-153. Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps. Schwanberg: ibid., 102.

³⁶ Tiefengraber and Grill 2007, 156.

³⁷ Collis 1975, 78-79.

³⁸ Lorenz and Gerdson 2004, 164.

³⁹ Kuckenburg 2000, 149-169; Lorenz and Gerdson 2004, 127; Wendling 2013, 460-461; 463; 466-467; Salač 2014, 65.

⁴⁰ Bintliff 1984, 157-174.

⁴¹ Woolf 1993, 223-225; Moore *et al.* 2013, 491; Poux 2014, 157.

⁴² Russell and Cheetham 2016, 14. Website: Durotriges-project.

⁴³ Fernandez-Götz, Wendling and Winger 2014b.

complex combinations of interactive social processes and changes.⁴⁴ In this sense, the appearance of these late La Tène defended centres is no longer considered as an isolated phenomenon typical of the mid-2nd century BC. The presence of urban centres in central Europe is now dated back long before the Late Iron Age or the sites described by Caesar. These were part of processes that had started much earlier and that consisted of settlement dynamics in which both hilltop sites and low land centres alternately performed a central role.⁴⁵

A first phase can be seen in the early Iron Age (800-450 BC) with a phenomenon better known as princely seats or *Fürstensitzen*, such as at the Hohenasperg or Mont Lassois. M. Fernandez-Götz and others have suggested that the 7th century BC site of the Heuneburg is an excellent example of proto-urban and urban developments long before the start of the La Tène period. From 600 BC the site grew to about 100 ha, including a citadel, a lower town and an exterior settlement. Over time a monumental wall and gate were added. The site was densely occupied with houses and workshops whilst the exterior settlement consisted of closely spaced enclosed farmsteads.⁴⁶ Estimates for the population reach up to 5,000 inhabitants. However, the site was destroyed by fire and although it was not abandoned immediately afterwards, it is uncertain if the site was still occupied during the La Tène period.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, more and more evidence has been discovered to prove a certain degree of continuity between the early Iron Age and the later La Tène period, such as reuse of defensive structures at the site of Dünsberg and Otzenhausen for example. The rapid disappearance of these urban centres, both in the early and Late Iron Age, was probably not due to external factors but was rather inherent to the internal process, experiencing successes and failures.⁴⁸ Other sites were not abandoned. The site at the Frauenberg (Murthal, Steiermark Austria) was occupied since the Copper Age, but was continuously inhabited from the Hallstatt period to Late Antiquity. During the La Tène period, the place gained regional importance, as this is indicated by the remains of metal production and minting, in addition to the presence of several sanctuaries. Until the Flavian period, the place maintained its function as significant cult centre.⁴⁹

These earlier signs of centralisation and urbanisation have led to a revision of the traditional model. The idea of a more civilised Mediterranean region, where towns and cities had a much longer tradition, and that of a barbaric and non-urbanised temperate Europe until the Roman period is no longer accepted. J. Collis, therefore, argues now that the urban developments of both regions should be regarded as parallel but separate processes.⁵⁰

New technologies, such as GIS applications, have also encouraged the adoption of more regional and integrated approaches, in which centres did not stand alone, but participated in a local environment formed by its landscape and several different kinds of settlements. This has added a so-called supra-local notion to urbanism in which the dynamics of all sites within a certain area are analysed.⁵¹ It has also changed the ideas of the relationship between the urban space and the enclosed areas.

The case study of Bibracte (Bourgogne, France) and its hinterland as put forward by T. Moore and C. Pomroy illustrates clearly the possible dynamics between several neighbouring towns.⁵² For a long time Bibracte, identified as the central place of the *Aedui*, used to be the model *oppidum* for Gaul. More recent research in the vicinity of Bibracte has revealed a high occupation level in Sources de

⁴⁴ Salač 2014, 70.

⁴⁵ Moore *et al.* 2013, 492-493.

⁴⁶ Fernandez-Götz and Krausse 2012, 30-31.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 29-31; Smith 2014, v-vi.

⁴⁸ Danielisová 2011, 147; Fernandez-Götz, Wendling and Winger 2014a, 12.

⁴⁹ Groh and Sedlmayer 2007, 166-188.

⁵⁰ Collis 2014, 15; Fernandez-Götz, Wendling and Winger 2014a, 9; Poux 2014, 156-157.

⁵¹ Fernandez-Götz, Wendling and Winger 2014a, 6-8; Filet 2014, 26.

⁵² Moore and Pomroy 2014, 146-148.

l'Yonne, 3 km northwest of the *oppidum*. Archaeological investigations showed many structures including houses, roads, terraces and draining systems, not only very similar but also contemporaneous to the occupation in Bibracte. With its 120 ha, it is hard to consider Source de l'Yonne as a suburb of Bibracte. In contrast to previous assumptions, it is now suggested that Source de l'Yonne was not one of the subordinate artisanal outskirts of the *oppidum*, but that it possibly belonged to the same community. In this case one can speak of urbanism outside the defended area, as M. Poux named it.⁵³

Because of these new insights, large hilltop sites or large defended settlements are no longer considered as primary Iron Age towns, but rather as an exception within a more complex and wider settlement system. More recently lowland and open sites have gained much more attention and are now considered equal players within the societal developments of the 2nd and 1st centuries BC.⁵⁴ The Late Iron Age site of Roseldorf (Niederösterreich), for example, despite its wooden palisade, is considered as an open settlement. In contrast to many *oppida* with large defensive earthworks but not much interior infrastructure, the site at Roseldorf was densely occupied over its entire 38 ha. Positioned near the Danube, one of the region's most important transport arteries and on the north-south amber trade route, the centre benefited from a strategic location. Big storage rooms on the site indicate that the community living at Roseldorf was supplied with goods from elsewhere. No room for or traces of agricultural activities have so far been found on the site itself. That the centre's economy relied on trade contacts can be seen from the many coins from the *Vindelici* in Bavaria, the *Sequani* in Gaul and the *Norici* and *Taurisci* in southern Austria. The site even revealed some Late Republican coins. The combination of the seven sanctuaries and the many import goods only underline the central position this low-land site performed in the settlement network at the time.⁵⁵

A simple division between town/*oppidum* and village/farm has been proven to be no longer of relevance to the archaeological reality. Recent studies aim for more suitable definitions and categories for Iron Age sites, not using morphological features but functional aspects.⁵⁶ This kind of approach is quite recent and it is therefore not surprising that different studies generate different categories.⁵⁷ Blöck *et al.* report on a recent study on the Upper Rhine region, conducted by a tri-national research group, aiming to define the different categories of settlement that existed in this particular area.⁵⁸ Based on a combination of approximately 10 criteria (Table 1.1), this project distinguished three different types of sites: the **central place**, the **medium settlement** and the **farmstead**.

I will now continue with an attempt to shed light upon the varied nature of the Late Iron Age urban system in the northern Alpine region using this three-part division as a possible and more neutral approach. Since a detailed analysis of all Late Iron Age sites in the entire region and their dynamics would go beyond the scope of this study, only some exemplary sites will be highlighted (Fig. 1.3).

⁵³ Moore *et al.* 2013, 495-510; Moore and Ponroy 2014, 146-148; Poux 2014, 157-159.

⁵⁴ Moore and Ponroy 2014, 152; Poux 2014, 157.

⁵⁵ Holzer 2014, 124-127.

⁵⁶ Woolf 1993, 226; Filet 2014, 21-25.

⁵⁷ For the same region of the Upper Rhine, H. Wendling identified three different categories, namely large open settlements, enclosed farmsteads and defended hilltop settlements (Wendling 2006, 623-624.) Some attempts are so elaborate that the settlement typology may be more confusing than enlightening. C. Filet's classification of the Late Iron Age sites resulted in abstract types 1 to 6 (Filet 2014, 22-23.).

⁵⁸ For a description of the workgroup and the aims of the project, see: Blöck *et al.* 2012, 381-418; Blöck *et al.* 2014, 179-180. The project aims for a better understanding of the settlement dynamics in the Upper Rhine region. The area is a closed environmental chamber, surrounded by the Vosges, the Jura Mountains and the Black Forest. Since the region is today divided over the three modern countries of France, Germany and Switzerland, a need for cooperation and sharing information in order to gain a better understand of the diachronical and historical developments in this area has emerged. Earlier individual attempts were already made, for example by Wendling 2006, 622-624.

Table 1.1: Criteria on which the categories of Central Place, Medium settlement and Farmstead are based as explained by (Blöck, Bräuning, Deschler-Erb *et al.* 2014, 179-182.) XXX = very characteristic for this kind of site, XX = less frequently appearing, X = can be found at this particular type of site.

	Central place	Medium settlement	Farmstead
Topographic location			Low land
Fortification	X	X	
Unenclosed	x	x	
Enclosing ditches	X	X	XXX
Storage room	XXX		
Iron production	XXX	XX	X
Non-iron containing metal production	XXX		
Glass production	x		
Coin production	XXX		
Luxury goods	XXX	XX	X
Mediterranean imports	XXX	XX	X

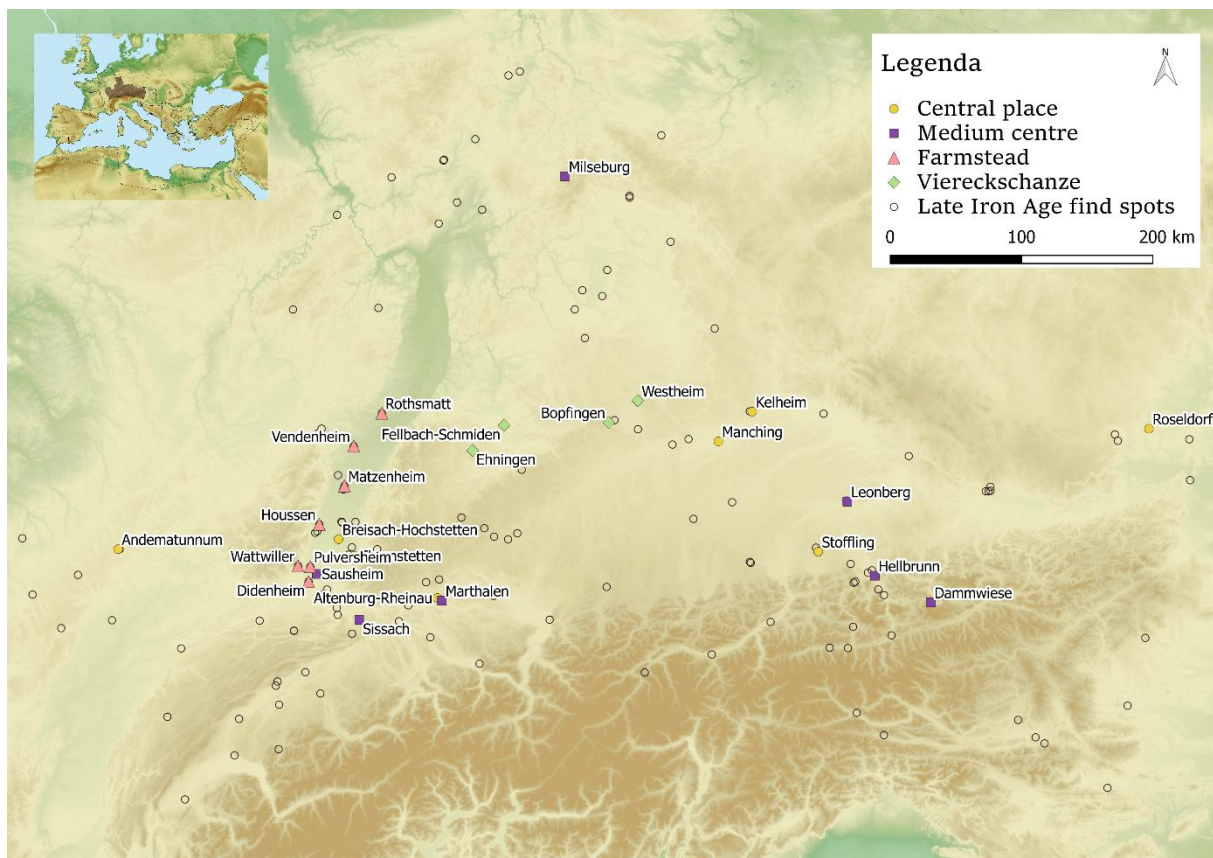


Fig. 1.3: Late Iron Age sites mentioned in the text, surrounded by a selection of many more contemporaneous sites, including the previously mentioned *oppida*

Central places

The sites that are identified by Blöck as central places were rather large and can be found both on hilltops and in valleys.⁵⁹ The two hilltop centres of Altenburg-Rheinau with their sizes of 233 ha and 85 ha respectively, the low-land settlements of Manching with 380 ha and Roseldorf with 38 ha, give a good impression of this diversity.⁶⁰ The presence of defensive structures is of less decisive importance. The majority of these central places demonstrate evidence of a wide range of different kinds of production. It is remarkable is that the processing of non-iron metal seems unique for this type of centre. At Kelheim, for example, the main occupation on site seems to have included both the mining and processing of metal and iron. Many little quarries have been found within the wall systems.⁶¹ The finds at Manching indicate a mixed economy. Evidence for wood, leather and textile processing have been found, as well as glass production. The thousands of fragments of pottery kilns and of iron slag in the south-western area of the site seem to suggest, however, that iron processing and ceramic production constituted the centre's main business. Calculations estimate an annual production intensity of 3,500 ceramic receptacles, produced in three different workshops employing about 30 people. The centre also included agricultural land. Between the houses, open spaces were created and provided with storage rooms.⁶² Granaries for winter and summer crops were found at the site of Roseldorf, too.⁶³ Furthermore, these so-called central places are characterised by large quantities of luxury and import goods.⁶⁴

The production of coins is exclusively related to these central places. Several sites in the northern Alpine region provide different kinds of evidence for minting. It is assumed that the Lingones, living in *Andemantunnum*/Langres, minted their own potin coins, of which some three hundred have been found.⁶⁵ The same is true for the *Helvetii* in Althernburg-Rheinau, where the production of both bronze and potin coins has been attested. It is assumed that the 41 known silver coins were also produced at the centre.⁶⁶ Production of local coins is also attested at Breisach-Hochstetten. The imprint of the letters TOC on the coins here might, in fact, refer to the name of a local leader.⁶⁷ A casting funnel for the production of coins was found at Ehrenstetten and in Manching more than 140 ceramic melt moulds have been collected.⁶⁸ Similar activities are assumed at Roseldorf. At the poorly preserved site of Stöffling, most traces of the settlement are eroded, but in addition to some post-holes, evidence for metal production and hundreds of coins have been found as well as a stamp associated with minting. The evidence at the site in Zurich, where a large block of melted potin coins was excavated, is less clear. This site has also been interpreted as a possible tax station which evidently would explain the presence of the coins.⁶⁹ In this regard, Late Iron Age central places could be found within all kinds of environments and were locations where a whole range of activities took place and did not solely serve a refuge function. These central places distinguished themselves from other centres mainly because of the coinage found there and the high number of import goods.

⁵⁹ Blöck *et al.* 2014, 181.

⁶⁰ Altenbrug-Rheinau and Manching: Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps. Roseldorf: Holzer 2014, 124-127.

⁶¹ Collis 1975, 117-118.

⁶² Kuckenburg 2000, 156; 162-165.

⁶³ Holzer 2014, 125-126.

⁶⁴ See section 1.1.3. Contacts between north and south

⁶⁵ Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps.

⁶⁶ Fischer 2004, 127-128.

⁶⁷ Blöck *et al.* 2014, 181-190.

⁶⁸ Ehrenstetten: *ibid.*, 181-190. Manching: Kuckenburg 2000, 162-165.

⁶⁹ Fischer 2004, 129.

Medium settlements

The medium centres described by Blöck are much more difficult to distinguish, because of the lack of clear unique aspects. These places tended to be unfortified, although at Leonberg a rampart defined the site's northern edge.⁷⁰ Furthermore, these settlements show a wide variation of crafts, amongst which ceramic production seems most common. Sausheim and Sissach are two such open settlements that fit this profile. At the latter, a minimum of twelve kilns indicate a reasonable level of production of fine wares.⁷¹ At Dammwiese, in addition to ceramic production, evidence has also been found for iron processing and salt mining.⁷² Evidence of iron production was also attested spread between the 30 round huts of the Milseburg site.⁷³ Coins and amphorae have proven to be rather exceptional finds at these medium settlements.⁷⁴ Marthalen is an example of a site where fragments of amphorae have been found.⁷⁵

Farmsteads or rural foci

Blöck's third kind of settlement is defined by its small size and is often framed by ditches. They appeared exclusively in the valleys and are generally interpreted as farmsteads.⁷⁶ The sites of Vendenheim, Housen and Wattwiller are only a few examples. The ditches of the farmstead at Pulversheim enclosed an area of 3,600 m², the one at Didenheim an area of 1,235 m². The buildings inside the ditches are usually storage rooms and residential houses. At Diddenheim, for example, in the western and southern area of the enclosure, both underground silos and above ground storage rooms were found. The buildings, including the living houses, are generally relatively large, indicating the level of agricultural activity and the wealth of the inhabitants (Fig. 1.4). At the site of Pulversheim, a sherd of a Dressel 1 amphora was even found, a rather rare find at this kind of site. In general, not many traces of craft production can be attested at these farmsteads, with the exception of some iron production. At Matzenheim, for example, remains of a kiln for iron processing were found.⁷⁷

The description of these farmsteads corresponds closely with the characteristics of archaeological structures better known as *Viereckschanzen*: relatively small areas enclosed by ditches. From the late 19th and early 20th century onwards two interpretations for this kind of site – mainly occurring in southern Germany – arose. P. Reinecke's suggestion that they were estates or farmsteads was superseded by F. Drexel's interpretation of cult places and sanctuaries.⁷⁸ Despite the fact that more than 300 of these features are known, little attention was paid to these rural sites until the end of the last century. The first large-scale excavations of such *Viereckschanzen* took place in the 1980s. The results contradicted Drexel's theory that these places served primarily religious functions. Excavations of the 100 m x 90 m large enclosure of Westheim revealed postholes of several large buildings. The site of Bopfingen-Flochberg became the exemplary *Viereckschanze*. Its complex occupation history entailed an early La Tène enclosure that preceded the 50 m x 50 m large Late Iron Age enclosure. Remains of several buildings of various sizes could be related to living, work and storage activities within the enclosed zone.⁷⁹ At least seven, but probably more, floor plans of buildings varying in size from 8 m x 5 m to 2.6 m x 2.9 m came out the excavation of the 81 m x 82 m

⁷⁰ Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps.

⁷¹ Blöck *et al.* 2014, 181-190. For Sissach see also: Collis 1975, 156.

⁷² 1975, 79-80.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁷⁴ Blöck *et al.* 2014, 181.

⁷⁵ Fischer 2004, 128.

⁷⁶ Blöck *et al.* 2014, 181.

⁷⁷ Wendling 2006, 623-624; Blöck *et al.* 2012, 386.

⁷⁸ The phenomenon of *Viereckschanzen* occurs generally in the area between the river Rhine in the west and the river Inn, and between the river Main in the north and the Alps in the south (Wieland 1999b, 12.).

⁷⁹ Krause 1999, 81; 84; 84-87; Wieland 1999b, 11-12.

large *Viereckschanze* of Ehningen.⁸⁰ Evidence for cult practices does exist at these sites, such as the cult statue that was found in Fellbach-Schmiden. Today, these *Viereckschanzen* are considered to be the *aedificia privata* or the *loci tutissimi* known from texts by Caesar and Velleius Paterculus, and interpreted as farms or sheltered places.⁸¹ Provided with cult places, wells, storage rooms, houses and even some possible workshops for crafts, it is assumed that some of these places might have served as central focal points for a wider rural area. What is certain is that these sites formed an important element within the wider Late Iron Age settlement system, but more archaeological investigation is needed in order to gain a better understanding of their nature and functioning.⁸²

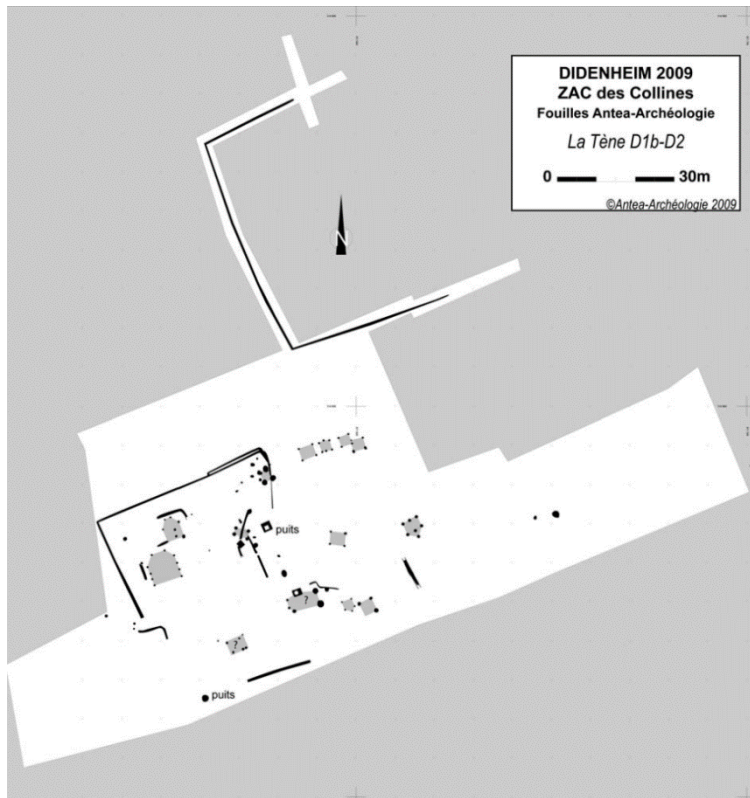


Fig. 1.4: Map of the farmstead of Didenheim (France)⁸³

To sum up, this categorisation of central places, medium settlements and farmsteads or rural *foci* also has its imperfections. In order to analyse the settlement pattern in this way, much more highly specific and detailed data are required which are not always accessible for every site. In addition, not every site is easily assigned to a certain category. However, even with all its blanks, the overview above demonstrates that the settlement system and dynamics in the Late Iron Age were much more complex than previously thought under the *oppida* model. The character of the Late Iron Age sites was clearly much more diverse, both in terms of their appearance and the different roles they performed.

1.1.3 Contacts across the Alps

As has already been mentioned, many Late Iron age sites show remains of long-distance contacts with the Mediterranean region, often including amphorae. The foundation of the Roman town of *Aquileia* in northern Italy in 181 BC is considered as an important event for the contacts between Rome, the Italian Peninsula and especially the eastern Alpine region. The expectation is that the

⁸⁰ 1999a, 163-175.

⁸¹ Caesar, *The Gallic War* 1.5.2

⁸² Wieland 1999b, 15; 1999a, 271-273; 1999c, 79-80.

⁸³ Blöck *et al.* 2012, 387.

contacts with the Norican tribes in particular will have increased from that point onwards.⁸⁴ The Noricans were a group of Celtic tribes living in the region of modern Carinthia (Kärnten, Austria), such as the *Alauni*, *Ambisontes*, *Ambidravi* and the *Norici*, to name but a few (Fig. 1.6). It is even suggested that they organised themselves into a kingdom, better known as the *Regnum Noricum* with *Noreia* as its capital. The town is not located, but it is described by Strabo as being two 2,200 *stadia* away from *Aquileia*.⁸⁵ Names of certain kings have survived on coins, but exactly how these tribes were governed is not well understood.

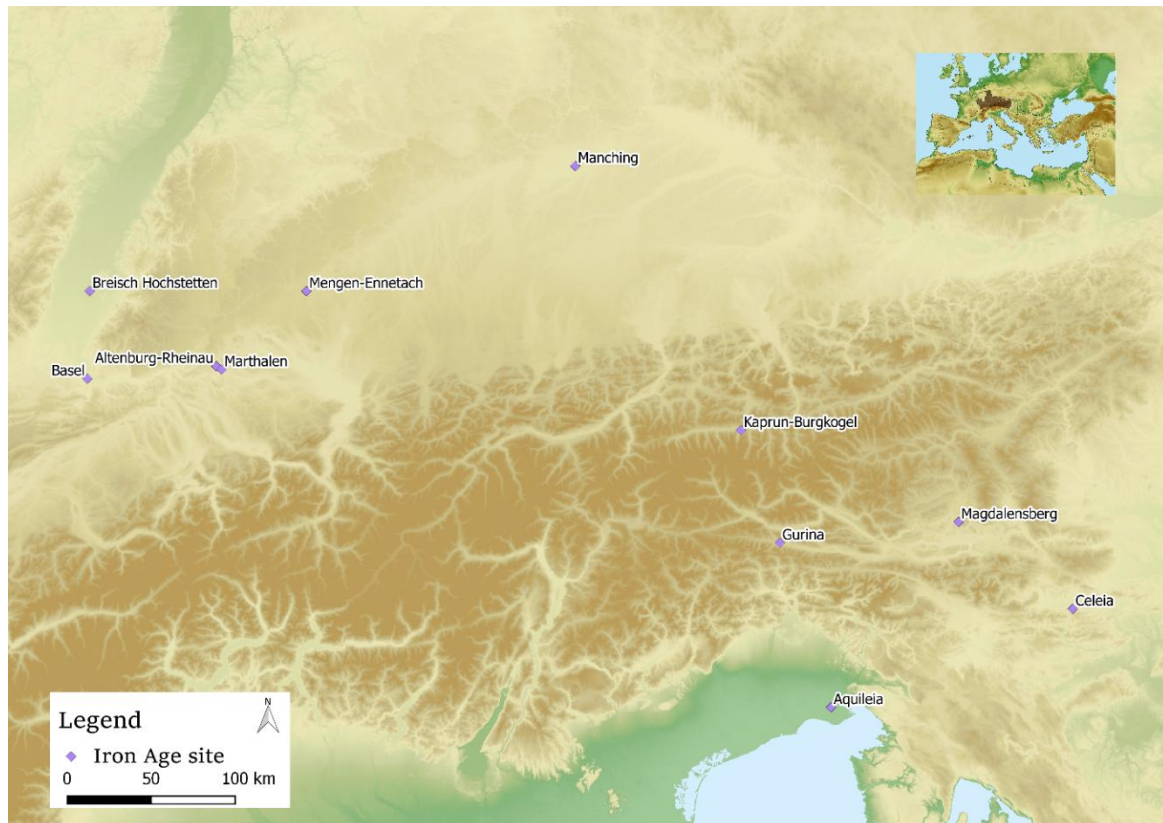


Fig. 1.5: Late Iron Age sites with evidence of trade contacts with the Italian Peninsula

From 170 BC a relationship of *hospitium publicum* is assumed to have been established between Rome and the Norican king Cincibilus, involving a political and economic treaty between both parties.⁸⁶ Such a relationship of *hospitium* provided a mechanism by which outsiders might have found protection, support, lodging, guidance and friendship in a foreign community.⁸⁷ This *hospitium* allowed the Romans to control the region through good relationships and trade contacts. A large part

⁸⁴ Konrad 2012, 27.

⁸⁵ Strabo, Geography 5.1.8. Šašel Kos 2010, 87-88; 1997, 39. It is assumed that multiple places within the Norican kingdom might have been named *Noreia*. It is unclear which of these is thought to have been the kingdom's capital. The Iron Age name for the large site on the Magdalensberg was *Virunum*, the same name as the later Roman town. The Magdalensberg is therefore not considered to be a possible location for *Noreia*, although it remains controversial (Konrad 2012, 25-26.). Some scholars suggest that the town *Noreia* most likely was situated in the territory of the Taurisci (Gleirscher 2007, 106.). More precisely the site of Gracarca has been suggested as a possible capital centre (Gleirscher 2005, 108.). The territory of the kingdom presumably reached as far north as the Danube and Inn rivers. The modern region of Steiermark (region of modern Graz in Austria) is considered part of the kingdom which must have been bordered by the high mountain tops of the Dolomites and the Karawanks in the south (Kneižl 1979, 262.).

⁸⁶ 1979, 262; Šašel Kos 1997, 21-24; Scherrer 2002b, 12-13; Šašel Kos 2010, 209-210; Konrad 2012, 27.

⁸⁷ Nicols 2011, 430 and 436. Unfortunately, I have not been able to gain access to G. Dobesch's publication on the *hospitium publicum* between Rome and Noricum (Dobesch 1976.).

of the Amber route crossed the Norican Kingdom. In addition, with the inhabitants of this part of the Alpine region as their friends the Romans had secured their northern border.⁸⁸ In return, when the Noricans were attacked by the *Cimbri* and other neighbouring tribes, they received help from the Roman side.⁸⁹

One of the clearest illustrations of Roman influence and trade contacts is the Norican site located on the Magdalensberg in modern day Carinthia (Kärnten, Austria). The site is located in a region rich in all kinds of natural resources. We know from Ovidius and Pliny that the Romans had a keen interest in the so-called *ferrum Noricum*, Norican iron. Skillfully crafted Norican products were traded throughout the whole of Italy. It must be significant that a Roman centre emerged precisely in the political centre of the Noricans, in the vicinity of important iron mines. It is still an matter of debate whether a late La Tène centre existed at the Magdalensberg. A 17 ha large enclosed area with several occupation zones has been discovered and the presence of a Late Iron Age cult place has been suggested. However, more investigation is needed to provide a better understanding of Magdalensberg's earliest occupation.⁹⁰ From the mid-Augustan period onwards (35BC), if not earlier, the summit of the hill became dominated by a Roman podium temple. Gradually, a real emporium and trade centre developed on the southern slope of the hill. At the same time as the temple complex, a forum-like square was created in this zone of 110 m x 42 m in dimension. A *basilica* of 30 m x 17 m was established on the east side of the square. This *forum* was later rebuilt several times. Based on archaeological finds, wall paintings in the houses and the high number of Italian import goods, it is suggested that this place was mainly inhabited by traders, most likely from the region of Aquileia.⁹¹

Other evidence suggests that Magdalensberg was not the only Roman emporium in the region. *Gurina*, in south-west Austria, for example, had been occupied during the Hallstatt period and is interpreted as the centre of the *Ambilini*. Similar to the centre on the Magdalensberg, *Gurina* was situated in an iron ore-rich environment. It was probably the mining and the production of iron that made this centre important. Contacts with northern Italy are demonstrated by small finds, items such as fibulae but also inscriptions with Etruscan writing. Despite these early signs of trading connections between the region of Carinthia and northern Italy, the heyday of the sites of Magdalensberg and *Gurina* started only after the Roman conquest – in around 16-15 BC.⁹²

Late Iron Age trade contacts with the Italian peninsula were not restricted to the Norican territory. Elsewhere in the northern Alpine region the rivers such as the Rhône and the Rhine provided good transport routes and products were traded over long distances via smaller streams or land roads. The Late Iron Age site of Basel-Gasfabrik was located in a fluvial area of the Rhine, an excellent position for a small harbour or quay that allowed trade.⁹³ A similar topographical choice can be seen at the site of Breisach-Hochstetten.⁹⁴

Most attestations of Mediterranean import goods have been found at Late Iron Age sites described as central places in the previous section. These are most frequently amphorae sherds, or North Italian ceramics, such as Campana wares. The site of Manching, for example was strategically situated on the river Paar, which gave access to the Danube. These rivers were vital arteries that allowed the sites to flourish. In addition to the import of Italian wine and fine ware, also indications for trade with more northern regions, such as Bohemia, are found in Manching in the form of slate

⁸⁸ Sašel Kos 1997, 28-31.

⁸⁹ Winkler 1986, 7-10.

⁹⁰ Dolenz *et al.* 2009, 235-237.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 238-249.

⁹² Gamper 2009, 1-8; 2015, 270 - 274.

⁹³ Blöck *et al.* 2014, 181-190.

⁹⁴ Wendling 2006, 626.

stone and coal.⁹⁵ Similar Italian imports have been found at the big centre of Altenburg-Rheinau, as well as a *denarius* from 106 BC. It is even assumed that Italian traders were stationed here, based on lamps fueled by olive oil, a practice that was unknown in this area before the Roman period.⁹⁶ It is assumed that trading goods via these central places also reached smaller sites in the hinterland. The amphorae found in Marthalen were presumably distributed from the large centre of Altenburg-Rheinau.⁹⁷ Amphorae were also found at the Late Iron Age site of Mengen-Ennetach. It is assumed that either the community itself was directly involved in this trade or that a currently still unknown nearby central place should have existed.⁹⁸

A last example should emphasise that these trade contacts worked in both directions. The many Italian import goods found at the sites in the northern Alpine region give us a clear indication of what was brought from south to north, amongst which Italian wine and fine wares. What was traded southwards, in what shape and quantities is within most archaeological assemblages less clear. The site at Kaprun-Burkogel is therefore very informative and stresses again the importance of iron mining and production carried out during the Late La Tène period in the northern Alpine region. Here, iron bars weighing 6.54 kg, equal to exactly 20 Roman pounds, were found. This was undoubtedly a specialised production intended for the Roman market.⁹⁹

The presence of so many raw materials, such as metals or salt, will have made the region attractive to the Romans, but cannot be considered as the only reason for its incorporation. That had other underlying causes.

1.2 The Roman conquest

The Roman conquest undoubtedly had an impact on the settlement system of the Late Iron Age. The conquest of the Alpine mountains and the Danubian region are described in various ancient historiographical sources. The *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* by Caesar are very informative concerning the conquest of Gaul and the southern part of the later province of Germania Superior. In his *Annales*, Tacitus too wrote a whole chapter on the Germanic War fought during the reign of Augustus, just as Florus did. Strabo and Cassius Dio are also enlightening in view of the conquest of the Alpine region. Although history has not rendered us a complete overview of the conquest of the northern Alpine region¹⁰⁰, many modern scholars have tried to summarise and reconstruct the Roman campaigns in which the lands of the Rhine and Danube were ceded to the Roman Empire. Most of the introductory books on particular regions indeed include an overview of the most important military actions related to conquest.¹⁰¹

In what will follow a short description will be given of the main events that brought to an end to the autonomous rule of the existing Late Iron Age society described in the previous sections. Discussing the events in chronological order, we will first focus on the Gallic War, then the incorporation of the Alpine region, and finally the later developments which took place along the Rhine.

⁹⁵ Sievers 2004, 67-72; Kuckenburg 2000, 166.

⁹⁶ Fischer 2004, 128-131.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 128.

⁹⁸ Wieland 2004, 118-119.

⁹⁹ Höglinger 2004, 193.

¹⁰⁰ Mommsen 1968, 155-156; Winkler 1986, 198. Winkler emphasises that the sources dealing with the conquest of *Noricum* are very scarce and often from a later date.

¹⁰¹ Some examples: Drack 1958; Filtzinger, Plack and Cremer 1976; Baatz and Herrmann 1982; Cüppers 1990; Czysz 1995; Flutsch, Niffeler and Rossi 2002.

1.2.1 Caesar and the Gallic War

In March 58 BC, tension between the Gallic tribes resulted in an planned invasion into Gaul, led by the *Helveti*. This gave Caesar – at that time consul of *Gallia Narbonensis* – a fundamental reason to intervene. Caesar operated from the military base in *Geneva/Genève*, which around 121 BC had been conquered in a battle against the *Allobroges* in one of the first expansions westwards. The Gallic War lasted till 51-50 BC. By the end of the war, the historical narrative tells us that Gaul was an exhausted country, where the previously flourishing centres were left in ruins while its rebellious inhabitants were killed or captured and consigned to slavery. Whether or not this is true, these eight years also resulted in an expansion of Rome's territory, which now stretched from the river Rhine to the North Sea, involving the land between the Alps and the Pyrenees. After his victory, Caesar created the province of *Gallia*, which was later divided into three smaller administrative units: *Gallia Aquitania*, *Gallia Belgica*, *Gallia Lugdunensis*. The new constellation, however, caused new frictions among certain Alpine tribes, such as the *Rhaeti* and *Rauraci* who started to cause unrest. The veteran colonies *Iulia Equestris*/Nyon and *Augusta Raurica*/Augst, constituted under Ceasar and Augustus, have been considered as an attempt to demonstrate some Roman power in the region and to create a buffer between the Lake of Genève and the Jura Alps in order to protect the new province.

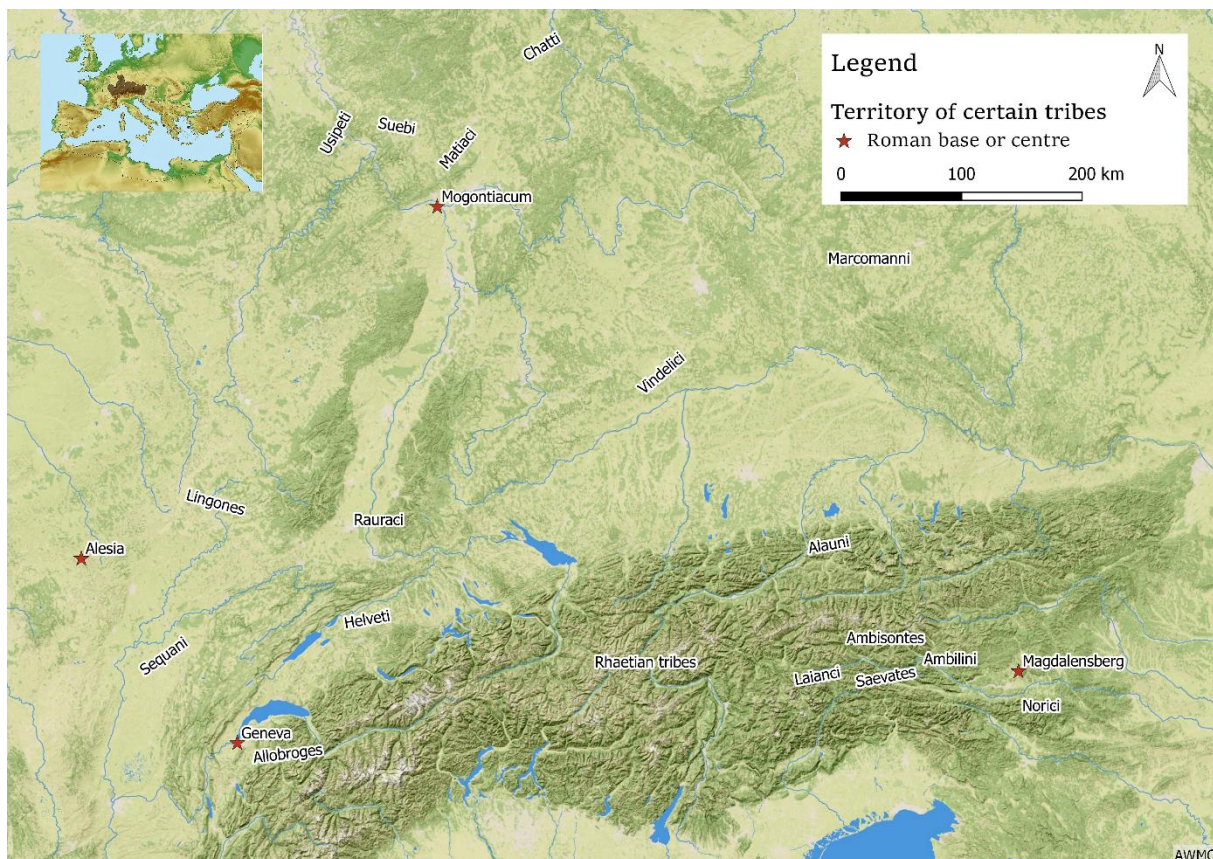


Fig. 1.6: Some important Roman (military) bases during the years of the conquest highlighted between the territory of some Iron Age tribes mentioned in the text

1.2.2 The incorporation of the northern Alpine land during the late 1st century BC

The western Alps were conquered under Augustus between 27 BC and 22 BC. It is an area that, after the Gallic and Civil Wars, had been transformed from a peripheral area into an important passage to the western territories. The Little and Great St Bernhard Passes, for example, would be the incentives for the later expansion of the road network. Under the reign of Augustus these western and southern Alps had fallen under Roman rule, but the Po valley was still not immune to possible attacks. Therefore, the whole Alpine region, stretching as far as the Danube, would need to be incorporated.

A few decades later, the Pannonian and Norican tribes, living north-east of the Alps, challenged the Romans by invading Istria.¹⁰² They failed and were defeated by Roman troops under the leadership of Drusus and Tiberius. The exact date of the incorporation of the Norican territory into the Roman Empire is disputed. Suggestions vary between 16 BC to AD 6, but 15 BC is most generally accepted.¹⁰³ Overall, few literary records concerning the defeat of the Norici have been preserved. This silence of the sources has led to the assumption that the conquest proceeded peacefully and literally, as Strabo wrote, in a campaign lasting just one summer.¹⁰⁴ Confirmation has been found in Festus' thoughtful play on words that the Norican provinces joined the Empire.¹⁰⁵ The absence of most of the Norican tribes on Augustus' *Tropaeum Alpium* might indeed imply that their defeat was not of such a heroic nature.¹⁰⁶

The narratives about the conquest of the Norican tribes contrast with the impression Cassius Dio gives us about the conquest of the *Rhaeti* and *Vindelici* who inhabited the central Alpine region. On the orders of Augustus, Drusus was sent to the Italian border and Tiberius to Gaul in order to stop the Raetian tribes from invading Roman territory. When the main troubles were solved, both leaders invaded Raetia. Whether they attacked the Raetian land on two different sides is disputed. Contrasting with C. S. Sommer's theory about a desolated country, Cassius Dio refers to a large population of men in open revolt.¹⁰⁷ Again, there is uncertainty about the finalisation of the *Raeticum Vindelicumque Bellum* in 14 BC, but it seems likely that the defeat of the *Norici* was quickly followed by the incorporation of the central Alps.¹⁰⁸ However, the rapidity with which Drusus and Tiberius conquered the rest of the Alps has raised the idea that the annexation of the Alps was the result of reactions to political developments rather than a grand strategy. The Raetian Alps were the only missing link to connect Gaul and the Rhine region with the more eastern Danubian provinces, promising an improvement of both communication as well as accessibility.¹⁰⁹

1.2.3 Expansions along the Rhine from the time of Augustus to Domitian

Directly following upon the Alpine conquest, Drusus undertook campaigns from the military base at *Mogontiacum*/Mainz (Fig. 1.6) to expand the Roman territory up to the Elbe river. In contrast to earlier attempts, some of his actions were successful. He located military units along the Meuse, Elbe and Weser. According to Florus 500 forts were distributed along the Rhine, but this might be an exaggeration.¹¹⁰ When Drusus died in 8 BC, a reasonably calm period followed lasting for almost a decade, but because of hostile tribes living in the area between the Rhine and the Elbe and the growing power of the Marcomanni in the region of Bohemia, Rome prepared for new battles. Under the lead of Tiberius, several revolts were suppressed.¹¹¹ Varus' catastrophic defeat of AD 9 in the

¹⁰² Cassius Dio, Roman History 54.20.

¹⁰³ Alföldy 1974, 52-57; Fischer 2002, 15-17.

¹⁰⁴ Strabo, Geography 5.6.207.

¹⁰⁵ Festus, 7. Alföldy 1974, 56. A similar but slightly different interpretation can be found in Banchich and Meka's translation: *when all the Alpini had been conquered, the provinces of the Norici were added*.

¹⁰⁶ Winkler 1986, 189; Konrad 2012, 30.

However, Florus' short description of the Norican War contrasts with the interpretation of that of a quiet conquest (see footnote 105 and 106): *"How savage these Alpine people were is proved by action of their women, who, when missiles failed, dashed out the brains of their children against the ground and hurled them in the faces of the Roman soldiers."* (Florus, The Norican War, Epitome of Roman History, 2.22).

¹⁰⁷ Sommer 2008b, 209-210. Cassius Dio, Roman History 54, 22.

¹⁰⁸ Heuberger 1932, 58. Alföldy 1974, 56; 299 (footnotes 11 and 19).

¹⁰⁹ Cüppers 1990, 53; Dietz and Czysz 2001, 46-47; Sommer 2008b, 220. The opposite has been suggested in the past. According to Kneißl, for example, the Alpine campaigns were the preparation for a wider expansion policy, namely to establish the Danube and the Elbe river as the borders (Kneißl 1979, 261-262.).

¹¹⁰ Florus, The German War, Epitome of Roman History, 30.26.

¹¹¹ Baatz and Herrmann 1982, 44-50.

Teutoburger wood made Augustus fear for the safety of Gaul and Rome, but again Tiberius successfully reinstalled peace.¹¹² Under the reign of the latter, Germanicus had to deal with internal revolts caused by dissatisfied soldiers.¹¹³ Because of the lack of major military successes, Tiberius put an end to the Elbe dream and reinforced the left bank of the Rhine river with auxiliary forts.

For almost thirty years little changed; it was only under the Flavian dynasty that the final battles concerning Germania were fought. The anarchy of the year of the four emperors had left many forts on the Rhine unmanned, a situation that Germanic tribes on the Lower Rhine took advantage of. One of the biggest revolts was led by the *Batavi*, and supported by other Germanic tribes, such as the *Chatti*, *Usipetes* and *Mattiaci* (Fig. 1.6). Once the temple of Jupiter in Rome burned down as a consequence of the mutinies of the civil war, inhabitants of Gaul believed that Roman rule had come to an end and they joined the *Batavi*. It was only under the reign of Vespasian that a degree of order was brought back to the region, many forts were restored and plenty of new ones were built. He also put an end to the practice of recruiting local and indigenous people in the auxiliaries, as they had proved to be unreliable. From then on soldiers from Hispania and the Danubian region were stationed along the Rhine. Nevertheless, in AD 89 Saturninus – governor of Germania Superior – did manage a revolt accompanied by Germanic allies. Domitian defeated them at Andernach and at Remagen. To avoid similar uprisings, a legion was stationed at Mainz and at Strasbourg. Domitian's recognition of the *Chatti* as *foederati* is considered to have been the final act of the expansion at the Rhine. It looks rather a poor victory weighted against the army of 30,000 to 36,000 soldiers he had assembled for the Chatti War.¹¹⁴

1.3 A gap of 50 years? New indications for continuity with the Roman period

For a long time it was believed that between the second half of the 1st century BC and the beginning of the 1st century when the first Roman centres were constructed, large parts of the northern Alpine region were abandoned. This timespan corresponds roughly with the period of the Roman conquest. Indications of a collapsing settlement pattern seemed to point in the direction of a settlement vacuum. Archaeological research has revealed discontinuity and dislocation between Late Iron Age sites and early Roman settlements in the region. The sites of Altenburg-Niedenstein, Heidetränk and Gründberg, for example, all seemed to have been spontaneously abandoned around the middle of the 1st century BC.¹¹⁵ Archaeobotanical analyses also indicated a hiatus in the use of the land. Literary sources were read in favour of the idea of a deserted land, such as Cassius Dio's words on the conquest of *Raetia*: *the land had a large population of males and seemed likely to revolt, they deported most of the strongest men of military age, leaving only enough to give the country a population, but too few to begin a revolution.*¹¹⁶ The desertion of the Late Iron Age site of Dünsberg in around 30 BC, for example, has been associated with the campaigns of Drusus.¹¹⁷ The material culture found in the archaeological layers corresponding with the early Roman period seemed to indicate a non-local population originating from areas such as Gaul, Pannonia and Italy, in itself a finding that again endorsed the idea of a desolated land.¹¹⁸

¹¹² Cassius Dio Geography, 56.18-21; Florus, The German War, Epitome of Roman History, 30. 29-39.

¹¹³ Tacitus, The Annals 1. 17, 33 and 51.

¹¹⁴ Mommsen 1968, 156-159; Baatz and Herrmann 1982, 66-83; Cüppers 1990, 64-73; Schönberger 1969, 155-159; Klee 2013, 35-44. Tacitus also describes how Domitian had bought slaves and dressed them up as captives in order to disguise his poor victory (Tacitus, *Agricola* 39).

¹¹⁵ Altenburg-niederstein: Collis 1975, 127-133. Heidetränk: Ausbüttel 2011, 397. Gründberg: Kastler 2004, 211.

¹¹⁶ Cassius Dio, Roman History 54. 22.

¹¹⁷ Ausbüttel 2011, 397. Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps.

¹¹⁸ Sommer 1990; Wolff 1996, 540; Sommer 2008b, 212-214; 215; 221.

Not everyone, however, continues to support the idea of a 50-year occupation gap. Despite the absence of archaeological evidence for Iron Age predecessors, the place names of many early Roman centres carry references to Celtic roots. *Brigantium*/Bregenz seems to refer to the tribe of the *Brigantii* and similar suggestions have been made for *Cambodunum*/Kempten, *Abodiacum*/Epfach and *Bratannium*/Gauting.¹¹⁹ In addition, the realisation has grown that the remains of this - in archaeological terms - short period of time might not have been recognised due to the use of more perishable construction materials or might be difficult to distinguish from that of earlier and following decades, leading to the false image of a hiatus in occupation.¹²⁰ The “*Transalpine Mobility and Cultural Transfer*” project hosted by the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich encompasses promising interdisciplinary research concerning the origins specifically of the population of *Raetia*. Preliminary results indicate a heterogonous population.¹²¹ Although the large Late Iron Age centres do seem to have been abandoned, more recent research has brought to light evidence of continuity in the rural population, particularly through the investigation of more rural contexts and cemeteries.¹²²

1.3.1 The site of Manching and villae as evidence for continuity

The Late Iron Age site of Manching has already been mentioned several times and can again be considered a textbook example in the light of the abandonment of flourishing sites in the northern Alpine region just before the Roman conquest. For a long time the consensus was that the site was destroyed violently, resulting in the end of the centre around the middle of the 1st century BC.¹²³ However, S. Sievers has said that, based on other examples from Bohemia, the remains of fire – mainly at Manching’s main tower - do not necessarily indicate the abandonment of the site. She has therefore suggested a much more gradual decline of the settlement, influenced by the silting of the tributary river of the Paar. The decreasing flow of the stream will eventually have led to a loss in accessibility to the site, in trade contacts, and thus in the overall attractiveness of the place in general and as a central place.¹²⁴ The presence of an early Roman villa within the area of the Late Iron Age site of Manching is today regarded as an indication of a continuous occupation, also after its decline as a major centre, but more evidence is needed to prove this.¹²⁵

There are more such villae in the vicinity of Manching whose dates of occupation argue against a long hiatus. These are the villa-sites of Eching, Manching-Seehofer, Pichl and Rockingen (Fig. 1.7).¹²⁶ At the 6 ha La Tène settlement in Eching, no traces of a sudden or violent end to the inhabitation have been found, but interestingly, in the southern area of the settlement, remains of another early Roman villa have been discovered.¹²⁷ Similar observations have been made in the region of modern Salzburg, more precisely at the sites of Hellbrunn and Loig. At Hellbrunn, a Roman villa was constructed on top of the previous Late Iron Age settlement, which was probably largely abandoned in favour of the Roman town in the valley. North-east of the *pars urbana* of the Roman villa of Loig, a

¹¹⁹ This question of continuity was one of the issues discussed at the *Transformation from military base to civilian settlement in the archaeological record* symposium held from the 23rd to the 25th of October 2014 in Innsbruck. Many early Roman places in the region often started as military base. Based on their place names, it is assumed that these bases were erected in the vicinity of Late Iron Age centres which up to present day have not yet been identified. The Iron Age centre of *Brigantium*, for example, has not yet been found and the Roman site has not revealed many Iron Age artefacts to assume place continuity. It is, of course, not inconceivable that the former Celtic remains were not recognized during older excavations.

¹²⁰ Zanier 2004, 239-241.

¹²¹ Grupe *et al.* 2015, 39-43.

¹²² Konrad 2012, 24.

¹²³ Collis 1975, 104-117; Kuckenburg 2000, 1419-169.

¹²⁴ Sievers 2004, 67 *ev.*

¹²⁵ Hüssen 2004, 77; Wendling and Winger 2014, 132-138.

¹²⁶ Hüssen 2004, 77-79.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

layer with a mixture of late La Tène material culture was found.¹²⁸ South of the Alps in Retznei (Steiermark, Austria) two spacious pre-Roman buildings were found beneath the structures of the large Roman villa site. The later villa even seems to have followed the same orientation as its predecessors.¹²⁹

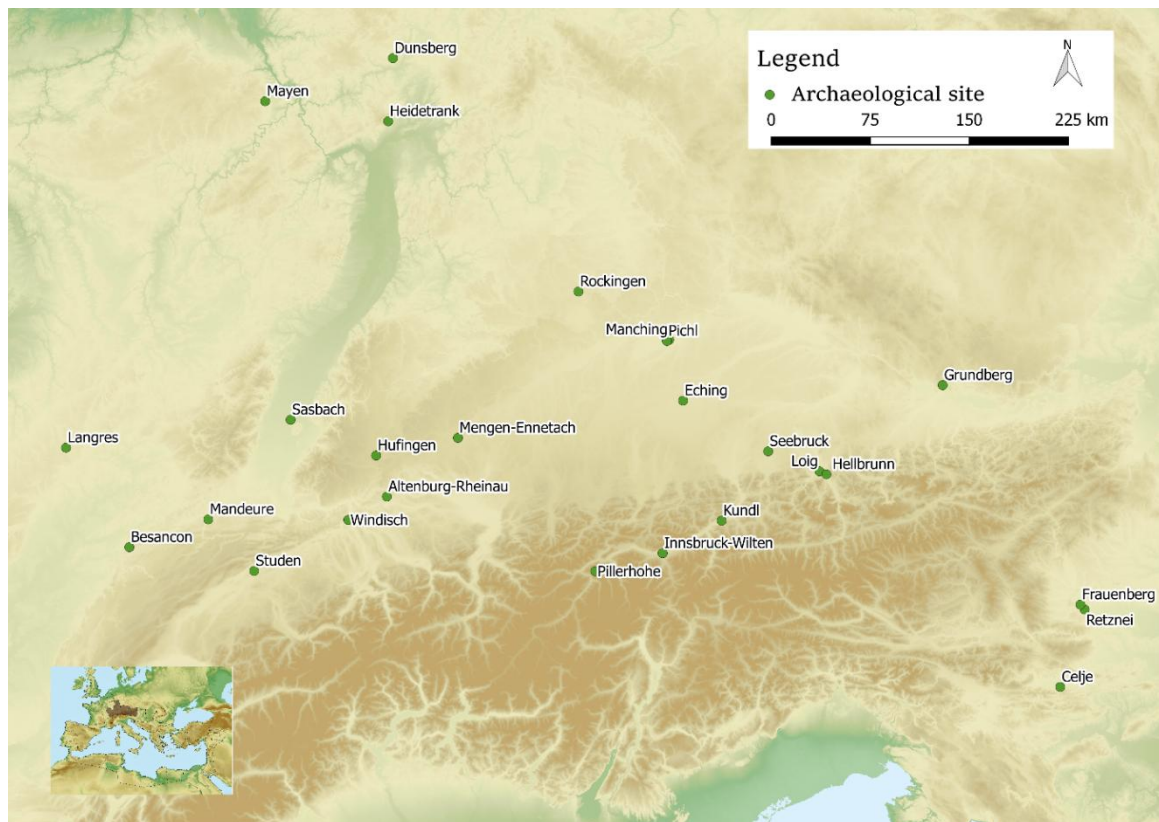


Fig. 1.7: Sites with indications for continuity between the Late Iron Age and the early Roman Period

1.3.2 Necropoleis and early Roman forts as evidence of continuity

Because of a research agenda with an increased focus on the rural character of the society during the Late La Tène period, more and more remains of Late Iron age habitation have been found, often proving continuity. Sometimes, the evidence is more indirect. Certain necropoleis in the Alpine region, for example, exhibit burial traditions that continue from the Late Iron Age into the early Roman period, such as the cemeteries of Kundl, Innsbruck-Wilten and Pillerhöhe. Here, local burial traditions were maintained, but grave finds were a mixture of indigenous and Roman style ceramic receptacles and *fibulae*. The existence of pre-Roman settlements can be presumed in the vicinity of these necropoleis.¹³⁰ Investigation of the finds belonging to the La Tène cemetery excavated near to the modern district court of Mayen provided proof of an uninterrupted burial practice from around 100 BC until the imperial period with only a small decrease in intensity at the beginning of the 1st century AD.¹³¹

Moreover, a stronger correlation than previously accepted seems to exist between early Roman forts and Late Iron Age sites. The site of Hüfingen, for example, was mainly known because of its Claudian fort. Based on pre-Roman finds, the presence of a Late Iron Age settlement was accepted but was thought to have ended in around 50 BC. Nevertheless, more recently a *fibula* was found which might

¹²⁸ Loig: Moosleitner 2004b, 179. Hellbrunn: *ibid.*, 177.

¹²⁹ Konrad 2012, 39.

¹³⁰ Lang 2004, 199-204.

¹³¹ Oesterwind 2012, 52; 72.

indicate the coexistence of the Late Iron Age site with the first Roman occupation.¹³² Also, at Mengen-Ennetach both a Claudian fort and a contemporary Late Iron Age enclosure are attested.¹³³ The early Augustan fort in Sasbach was constructed behind the Late Iron Age ramparts, giving the impression that old access roads were maintained and still in use.¹³⁴ At Windisch, occupation structures marked by a strong Roman military character were erected within the earthen and timber ramparts of the Late La Tène settlement in around 15 BC. These structures are probably the remains of an early military base that was constructed here at the time of the Alpine conquests.¹³⁵ The possible relationship between the large Late Iron Age site of Altenburg-Rheinau and the Augustan fort of Dangstetten is somewhat more subtle. Based on coins, the end of the Altenburg-Rheinau site is dated between 50 and 15 BC. Similarities within the ceramic finds and other handicraft products suggest that craftsmen who were active at Altenburg-Rheinau moved to the fort at Dangstetten, which was erected somewhere in the last decades BC and served as headquarters for the campaigns against the *Rhaetii*.¹³⁶

1.3.3 The uninterrupted use of Late Iron Age sanctuaries

A third case for continued occupation relates to Late Iron Age sanctuaries and religious places which remained in use during the Roman period, such as the sites of *Bedaium* in Seebruck and *Petinesca* in Studen.¹³⁷ This phenomenon is also clearly attested at several Roman centres with an Iron Age predecessor. In contrast to the Danube and Rhine region, the continuity question is of less relevance concerning Roman Gaul since many Iron Age sites here remained inhabited and underwent modifications of a Roman character during the decades immediately following the conquest. This means, however, that the remains of this very early Roman period are often deeply buried beneath many layers of later occupation phases, up to 4 m or 5 m in some cases. Those sites where it is possible to observe the changes that took place during and just after the conquest are rare. At the Late Iron Age centres of Besançon, Langres and Mandeure, for example, it has been possible to observe gradual changes in the lay-out of these sites, which dated to the first decades after the conquest or the reign of Augustus. Streets were constructed or realigned and monumental buildings in stone, such as gates, were erected. Overall, it appears that the urban spaces were given a new Roman structure, with the exception of the religious areas and sanctuaries. These locations were left in place, were respected and remained untouched at all three sites.¹³⁸

The continuity of sanctuaries is also known from sites elsewhere in the northern Alpine region. The 2 ha densely occupied settlement at Frauenberg (Leibnitz, Austria) owed its existence mainly to its sanctuary and shows many similarities with contemporary temples in northern France. This sacred place was erected somewhere between 180-120 BC and remained in use until the mid-Augustan period.¹³⁹ The excavators noted that the occupation underwent a minor downturn during the Augustan-Tiberian period, but nevertheless the sanctuary continued to flourish and, judging from the archaeological assemblages, Roman objects and costumes gradually became more common. It was only from the Flavian period onwards that the site received a Roman make-over and the indigenous temple was replaced by a typical Roman podium temple.¹⁴⁰ The Iron Age temple on the periphery of

¹³² Wieland 2004, 113.

¹³³ Ibid., 118-119.

¹³⁴ Website: Oppida. First towns North of the Alps.

¹³⁵ Carroll 2013, 7000-7001.

¹³⁶ Fischer 2004, 127-131; Roth-Rubi 2004, 133; Bräuning 2012, 479; 486.

¹³⁷ A more elaborate discussion of these site will follow in chapter 3.

¹³⁸ Besançon: Vaxelaire and Barral 2007, 31; Barral, Gaston and Vaxelaire 2011, 91-103. ; Langres: Barral *et al.* 2014, 367-369.; Mandeure: Thivet, Nouvel and Barral 2011, 153.

¹³⁹ Schrettle 2015, 295-296.

¹⁴⁰ Tiefengraber and Grill 2007, 156.

the Roman town in Celje (Styria, Slovenia) was kept in use till 50 AD, but was demolished when the entire town quarter was rebuilt because of the expanding centre.¹⁴¹

Sanctuaries, together with necropoleis, rural sites and forts have delivered an increased amount of evidence of habitation in the northern Alpine region before, during and just after the Roman conquest. However, as C. S. Sommer argued, the archaeological evidence does not exclude the possible transfer of different population groups into the region. According to C. S. Sommer, the archaeology does not allow precise dating of the use of the necropoleis and of the attributions of the material culture to specific peoples.¹⁴² Additionally, the habitation at many places took a different form, such as the *villa* site at the previous centre of Manching. It has to be acknowledged that the urban landscape was in transition. Finally, while the Late Iron Age settlement structures were changing, the Romans filled the landscape with the establishment of military camps and administrative centres, whereby existing structures were sometimes further developed and elsewhere ignored.

1.4 The first Roman centres

In addition to the appearance of Roman practices and culture at already existing centres, larger Roman centres were built under Roman supervision. These seem to have played a role in the early military and administrative organisation of the area. It is remarkable that most of them were abandoned not long after their creation or replaced by another centre. I will distinguish between veteran colonies, possible administrative centres and legionary and military bases.

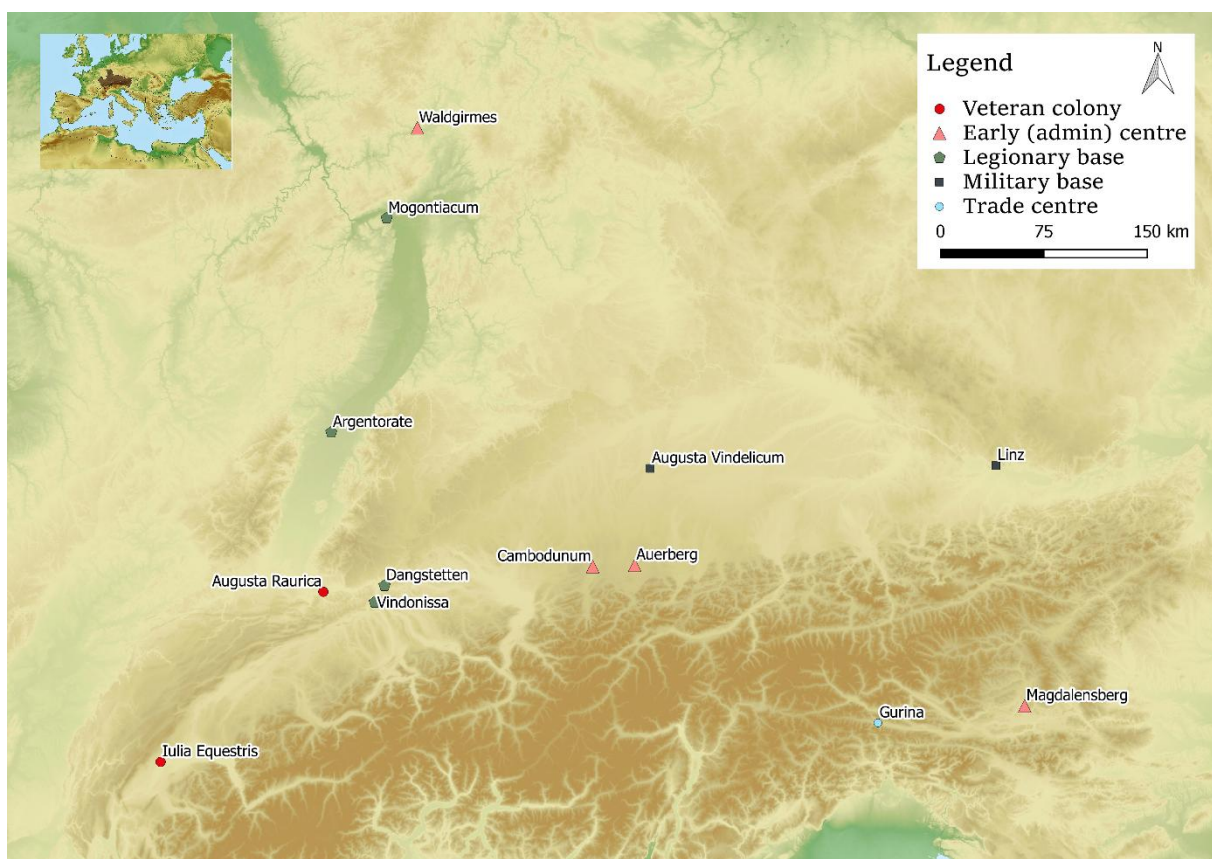


Fig. 1.8: Different kind of early Roman centres in the northern Alpine region

¹⁴¹ Schrettle 2015, 301.

¹⁴² Sommer 2008b, 211-217.

1.4.1 Veteran colonies

In the entire northern Alpine region there were only two veteran colonies, Roman centres created *ex novo* and inhabited mainly by Roman citizens and veterans, namely the *coloniae Iulia Equestris*/Nyon and *Augusta Raurica*/Augst (Fig. 1.8). Both were located at the foot of the Jura mountains, north of the Alps. For a long time the foundation of these two centres was interpreted as an attempt by the Romans to demonstrate their power and to maintain a state of peace in the newly conquered region of eastern Gaul. This vision has become outdated.¹⁴³ The presence of Roman veterans here is no longer regarded as having a military purpose, since the location of both centres was not very strategic with regard to the unrest in more northern areas of Gaul. Consequently, M. Poux has suggested a more administrative function.¹⁴⁴

1.4.2 The first administrative centres?

Apart from the two veteran *colonies*, certain other sites have revealed structures which probably belonged to some aspect of Roman infrastructure supporting the administrative organisation of the new territory north of the Alps. The trade centres of Gurina and Magdalensberg, which were mentioned earlier, both flourished for a few decades after the Roman conquest. A 40m x 25m large trade complex, consisting of 22 rooms situated around an *atrium* is the best illustration of the business that took place in Gurina. House 4 has been identified as an officer's house. Together with the many military objects that have been found on site, Gurina is considered a key point in the control over the Plöcken Pass.¹⁴⁵ At Magdalensberg a large complex 80m in length was built at the south-west side of the *forum*. After the fire of AD 14, the *forum* area rose again from the ashes with reconstruction works and the creation of a new temple domain with a Gallo-Roman temple and a temple for the imperial cult as well as a new production quarter for metal and bronze (Fig. 1.9). Graffiti show trade contact with Africa and Asia Minor. It is assumed that within the infrastructure of the Magdalensberg *emporium* governmental and administrative tasks were also fulfilled. Based on coins, both trade centres were probably abandoned by the mid-1st century AD. This might have been related to an administrative reorganisation that was taking place around that time and the recognition of five chartered towns in the area.¹⁴⁶



¹⁴³ Poux 2005, 12-14; Brunetti and Henny 2012, 79-80.

¹⁴⁴ Poux 2005, 14.

¹⁴⁵ Gamper 2009, 5-8; 2015, 274.

¹⁴⁶ Piccottini 1977, 276-289; Dolenz *et al.* 2009, 241-284; 260; Gamper 2015, 270-272.

Fig. 1.9: Ground plan of the emporium at Magdalensberg¹⁴⁷

Unexpectedly, some ceramic sherds were found in Waldgirmes along the river Lahn in the late 1980's, which were later confirmed to be of Roman manufacture. It was the start of a new research project that had different outcomes than expected. The site in Waldgirmes was located farther north than any other Roman station in the vicinity, east of the Rhine in the territory the Romans tried to conquer several times in their effort to expand the Empire to the Elbe. Since the first geophysical surveys showed the outlines of a 7.7 ha enclosed area, it was assumed that an early Roman fort was constructed here to support the conquest's progress northwards. The excavations, however, revealed something else. The remains inside the timber-earth ramparts and enclosure defended with v-shaped ditches were more likely of a civil nature than military structures (Fig. 1.10). The place seems to have been dominated by a big *forum* complex, surrounded with large buildings, amongst which a meeting hall with two abscises. The streets were provided with water canals, and were built up by storage halls, *tabernae* and luxurious houses, even of the *atrium* type. Parts of at least five statues have been identified. A bronze head of a horse and the foot of a male which probably belonged to a *Reiterstandbild*. Since the emergence of the centre is dated around the middle of the last decade BC, it is assumed that one of the other statues represented Augustus. Some military barracks were found in the western outskirts of the place. The presence of the army was probably required during the confrontations with the Chatti around AD 15-16. Not long after, it is assumed that the place was abandoned.¹⁴⁸ This site is nevertheless considered nowadays as one of the first towns the Romans were constructing in so called *Germania Magna*.



Fig. 1.10: Ground plan of the Roman site at Waldgirmes¹⁴⁹

Also in Bavaria, at Auerberg in the area of the *Rhaeti*, a site with a similarly short occupation was found, which has been identified as the ancient site of *Damasia*, mentioned by Strabo.¹⁵⁰ Despite the many Roman *militaria*, no Roman fort has been discovered. However, the defence works, the canals and walls, do presume the presence of Roman soldiers. Centrally a space has been interpreted as a possible *forum*-like building. Although the houses are simple strip houses, there were latrines.

¹⁴⁷ Website: Transformation.

¹⁴⁸ Bekker 2008, 86; Zick 2006, 46-47. Website: Waldgirmes.

¹⁴⁹ Website: Waldgirmes.

¹⁵⁰ Strabo, Geography 4. 6. 8.

Remains of kilns suggest metal and glass production as well as ceramic production. Remarkably, the site was only in use from A D13/14 to AD 40.¹⁵¹

Why the site at the Auerberg was abandoned is not precisely known, but this could be related to the earliest occupation in *Cambodunum*/Kempten. The first Roman presence here is attested around AD 20. Although no Roman military fort has yet been discovered, it is likely that the site of Kempten was used for military purposes with its excellent location overlooking the Iller valley and its vicinity to the Reschen Pass. Furthermore, it is assumed that *Cambodunum* belonged to the territory of the allied tribe of the *Estiones*. In this way, *Cambodunum* had some advantages, both in the sense of security and location, compared to the site at Auerberg. Although Roman Augsburg soon became the governmental focal point of the later Rhaetian province, it is believed that during the early days the centre in Kempten fulfilled that role.¹⁵²

Over the course of the following centuries the administrative organisation of the region was consolidated with the creation of administrative provinces and self-governing communities which took over the role of these early imposed centres.

1.4.3 Legionary and other military posts

In the period of the conquest and soon thereafter, the army was of crucial importance for control and order in the region. Military posts were created everywhere. It is remarkable though that no legion was stationed in the region of the *Rhaeti* and *Vindelici* or in the territory of the Noricans until the late 2nd century AD, when the auxiliary forts of *Castra Regina*/Regensburg and *Lauriacum*/Enns were reorganised into legionary bases.¹⁵³

Foundations of a fort dated to the middle imperial period have recently been excavated in Linz (Oberösterreich). Based on finds of military objects, the earliest occupation of the fort dates a few decades earlier, which provides the basis for the generally accepted assumption that the Romans conquered the Norican territory as far as the Danube all in one go. A strong relationship between early Roman military camps and Late Iron Age settlements was mentioned earlier. Also in Linz the location of the earliest Roman military presence on the Schlossberg could be identified as a Late Iron Age settlement.¹⁵⁴

Another military post can be found in the territory of the *Vindelici*. Roman military presence at Augsburg is assumed from the time of Augustus onwards, although the earliest known timber built fort dates to the reign of Tiberius. Shortly afterwards a civilian centre of about 8 ha also appeared around the fort. The fort had a very strong strategic, central location. It was one of the only military bases in this northern area and was positioned close to the frontier at that time, just south of the Danube, at the rivers Lech and Wertach. In AD 70 a major fire destroyed the fort, which was never taken back into use. The frontier had moved northwards and the military presence had become less relevant. However, the settlement continued to develop; simple strip houses were replaced by more luxurious examples, and the centre gradually took on the appearance of a typical Roman town. Soon after it would house the seat of the provincial governor and gain municipal status. The presence of the early fort left only some traces in the overall grid of the later town.¹⁵⁵

In contrast, several legionary units were stationed under Augustus at different forts along the Rhine. In the Upper Rhine region the military base of Dangstetten is assumed to have hosted some legionary troops. The base was most likely created in around 20 BC and served as an important location for the

¹⁵¹ Czysz 1995, 417; Ulbert 2006, 32-37; Sommer 2008b, 216.

¹⁵² Czysz 1995, 200-206; Fischer 1999, 79; Weber 2000, 53.

¹⁵³ Regensburg: Bischof 2012. Enns: *ibid.*, 55-66; Ployer 2013, 28-33.

¹⁵⁴ Kandler and Vettters 1986, 86; Ployer 2016, 1-2.

¹⁵⁵ Czysz 1995, 419; Bakker 2000, 88-94; Tremmel and Pöllath 2012, 13.

conquest of Raetia and more northern regions.¹⁵⁶ The oldest remains of the double legionary fort in *Mogontiacum*/Mainz date from around the same time but continued in use until the late 3rd century AD. The camps here were of high importance, specifically during Drusus' attempts to conquer *Germania Magna*. Just as in Augsburg, a civilian settlement was located in the vicinity. The Roman site of Mainz is another example of a military base that later developed into an administrative centre of provincial importance.¹⁵⁷ Under the reign of Tiberius, two more legions were stationed in the Upper Rhine region. One at *Argentorate*/Strasbourg which had already been a military place since the campaigns of Drusus. Although the centre flourished as a local administrative centre, the fort fell into disuse somewhere between AD 70 and AD 90.¹⁵⁸ The legionary fort of *Vindonissa*/Windisch was constructed in around AD 16 and probably replaced the fort in Dangstetten. It became the main military base for the entire region during the early imperial period, including the Raetian and Norican land where, until the reign of Claudius, very few forts were erected due to a low level of threat.¹⁵⁹ The fort in Windisch hosted a legion until AD 101, after which it continued to be a flourishing civil settlement. When the unrest increased again in the fourth century, the presence of a military unit can again be perceived, but much smaller than before.¹⁶⁰

Either stationed in military bases or in centres more civilian in appearance, the presence of the army was without doubt important for the organisation of the new conquered land during these first decades. The role of the army in urban developments will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

1.5 The creation of the Roman provinces of Noricum, Raetia and Germania Superior

The interest of Rome in these newly conquered territories seems initially to have been moderate. In Noricum and Raetia and possibly also in Germania Superior political or administrative adjustments immediately after the annexation remained absent or not institutionalised to any great degree. Generally, only a few key centres were appointed. These new territories were thus not immediately transformed into administrative provinces, but for some time remained occupied land.¹⁶¹ The archaeological and epigraphic evidence for large structural changes mainly date to the reign of Claudius, almost fifty years after the initial conquest.¹⁶² The oldest milestone, for example, dates back to this period.¹⁶³

The study of the creation of the three Roman provinces of the northern Alpine region is complicated. The relevant ancient sources are rather fragmented and besides, do not clearly distinguish between the different connotations of the term province. One cannot always identify whether the author used *provincia* in the sense of occupied territory or of an administrative unit.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁶ Zanier 2004, 245-246; Roth-Rubi 2004, 133; 140.

¹⁵⁷ Baatz and Herrmann 1982, 425.

¹⁵⁸ Bedon 2001, 300; Schönberger 1969. ; Bischof 2012, 102.

¹⁵⁹ Hüssen 2004, 73-75.

¹⁶⁰ Deschler-Erb and Akeret 2011, 10; Flutsch, Niffeler and Rossi 2002, 401.

¹⁶¹ Winkler 1985, 10-12; Winkler 1986, 200.

¹⁶² Wolff 1996, 539-400.

¹⁶³ Winkler 1985, 11-12. The oldest milestone is dated to the reign of Claudius and belonged to Virunum, CIL 3, 5709.

¹⁶⁴ Bermúdez 2014; Schaub 2001, 392; Šašel Kos 2010, 211; Frei-Stolba 1976b, 316; Wesch-Klein 2008, 6-7. R. Frei-Stolba pointed out that the meaning of the term *provincia* at the end of the Late Republic was still changing. G. Wesch-Klein gives an overview of seven different nuances that are known for this specific word, which I will summarise here: 1) command area of a mandatary, 2) area of juridical responsibilities, 3) an organised geographical administrative region, led by a civilian government, 4) independent provinces governed by a *praefect*, 5) annex provinces, 6) territories defeated by war and governed by Rome, 7) newly conquered

1.5.1 Raetia

The region of Raetia was conquered during the Alpine campaign of Tiberius and Drusus. Until the '70s of last century, it was believed that the creation of the province was a Claudian act. A decade later and definitely from the 1990s on, the foundation date has been hypothesized to be earlier, to a moment somewhere during the reigns of Caligula and Tiberius.¹⁶⁵ The evidence for such an early date nevertheless remains speculative and matter of debate.

Tacitus mentions that Germanicus sent veterans who had been serving in the Rhine district to the Raetian-Vindelician land.¹⁶⁶ This is interpreted by some scholars as evidence that Raetia was an imperial province by AD 14.¹⁶⁷ Also, Velleius Paterculus writes that "*He (Tiberius) also added to our Empire as new provinces Raetia, Vindelicia, Noricum, Pannonia, and the Scordisci*".¹⁶⁸ According to A. Schaub it is clear that *provincia* is used here in the administrative sense and one can assume a Tiberian date for the creation of the province.¹⁶⁹ That just around this time also the civil centres and development in the region increased has been used as an argument for this earlier creation date. After all, Strabo names three *poleis* in the region; *Brigantium*/Bregenz, *Cambodunum*/Kempten and *Damasia*/Auerberg.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, some scholars, such as D. Faoro, do not accept this as sufficient evidence for a Tiberian foundation. He argues for a later date during the reign of Claudius.¹⁷¹ J.M. Bermúdez too, after analysing the textual evidence and investigating the appointment of a provincial *procurator*, concludes that preparations for the establishment of the province might have been undertaken by Tiberius while the real institutionalisation only occurred under the reign of Claudius.¹⁷²

What also seems to plead in favour of a Claudian establishment of the administration in this province, is the revival date of the first provincial capital. Despite the fact that the initial occupation in *Cambodunum*/Kempten dates to AD 14, the place only got the appearance of a provincial Roman governing town under Claudius. Many stone buildings, for example, date to the reign of Claudius. The city had a typical Mediterranean layout: a rectangular street plan and a forum with a palatial building which can be considered as the seat of the provincial governor. Moreover, a large terrain for the imperial cult characterised the town. Although until the Flavian period this place stayed mainly a military base, it was the only town with this appearance in the whole region till the provincial administration was transferred to Augsburg/*Augusta Vindelicum*.¹⁷³

territory which is still considered as hostile and where a Roman official is in charge of coping with the military and often also civilian violence.

¹⁶⁵ Schaub 2001, 391.

¹⁶⁶ Tacitus, Annals 1.44.

¹⁶⁷ Sommer 2008b, 217.

¹⁶⁸ Velleius Paterculus, The Roman History, 2.39.3. Original: *At Ti. Caesar quam certam Hispanis parendi confessionem extorserat parens, Illyriis Delmatisque extorsit. Raetiam autem et Vindelicos ac Noricos Pannoniamque et Scordiscos novas imperio nostro subiunxit provincias.*

¹⁶⁹ Schaub 2001, 395-397. A. Schaub compared texts written by Tacitus and Velleius Paterculus and concluded that a distinction can be seen between the different meanings of the term *provincia*. He concluded that before AD 14 no evidence exists in favor of *provincia* used to indicate an administrative district. Therefore, Raetia can only exist as a province as early as Tiberius' reign. Schaub does also accept that at the moment Velleius finished his work in AD 30, the province of Raetia was in existence.

¹⁷⁰ Strabo, Geography, 4.6.8. ; *ibid.*, 396-397; Faoro 2008, 5-7; Sommer 2008b, 217-218.

¹⁷¹ Faoro 2008.

¹⁷² Bermúdez 2014.

¹⁷³ Cysz 1995, 200-206; Fischer 1999, 79-80; Weber 2000, 53; Sommer 2008b, 217-218; Tremmel and Pöllath 2012. Recent research has demonstrated that the architecture in Roman Augsburg during these early decades was of a higher monumental level than previously thought. The position of *Cambodunum* as the only monumentalized centre in the region might have to be revised soon. For more on the architecture of Roman Augsburg: Lipps 2016, 82-83.

In summary, whether it was AD 14 or AD 45, the creation of the province of Raetia did not take place until a long time after the conquest.

1.5.2 Noricum

The ancient sources are also not explicit in their reports about the creation of the province of Noricum and the way the newly annexed land was managed consequently remains a subject of debate.¹⁷⁴ Velleius Paterculus' words (cf. above), hint at an initiation of the Roman province of Noricum under Tiberius, similar to the case of Raetia as discussed above. However, P. Kneissl amongst others, has suggested that in the case of '*Noricos*' Velleius does not refer to the creation of a province, but to the defeat of some Norican tribes.¹⁷⁵ The same source is thus interpreted differently for each province.

Until the reign of Claudius, the sources suggest a transition period during which the local organisation of the land was adapted to the needs of the time. Proof is found, for example, in the absence of Roman coins and the common use of Norican *oboloi* till the reign of Claudius. A similarity with the minting in towns of the eastern Empire, producing money for daily life, can be suggested. Although regarding the disputed *Regnum Noricum* as a client kingdom may be one step too far.¹⁷⁶

Furthermore, the Norican territory had only a small Roman military presence during these early years.¹⁷⁷ This has been a reason for some scholars to suggest an early foundation date for the province of Noricum. G. Alföldy, for example, has stated that we should not exclude the possibility of a procuratorial province¹⁷⁸ in the Norican territory as early as the reign of Tiberius or Caligula. This is because of the need for civil administrative bodies to support the strong economic relationship between the region and Rome and the high concentration of Roman citizens.¹⁷⁹ J. Wilkes however pleaded for a more locally empowered organisation of the territory and suggested that administrative tasks could have been delegated to local chiefs until a more stable situation was reached under the reign of Tiberius.¹⁸⁰ More evidence exists for the assumption that local tribes were organised in administrative units. In the so-called meeting hall of the possible governor's residence at the site of Magdalensberg thirteen shrines were found which were dedicated to the three women of the Augustan family (Livia, Julia and Julia). Because of the thirteen shrines, some have suggested the existence of four more unknown tribes, but this is no longer widely believed. Nevertheless, the discovery of this meeting hall, has led to the suggestion that the Norican region was organised by a federation of Norican tribes, organised in *civitates peregrinae* and supervised by a military *praefectus civitatum*.¹⁸¹ In any event, these possible *civitates* must have disappeared again after the reforms led by Claudius.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁴ Winkler 1986, 203; Fischer 2002, 18.

¹⁷⁵ Alföldy 1974, 62-63; Kneißl 1979, 267. P. Kneißl suggest that Raetia and Pannonia are mentioned as two province names, whilst the others, amongst which the *Norici*, should be interpreted as tribe names. In this particular case, Kneißl thinks that Velleius refers to the conquest of some Norican tribes who lived somewhere between the Norican kingdom and Raetia.

¹⁷⁶ 1979, 269; Dembski 2005, 1003-1004. In contrast, the production of the Norican *tetradrachmen* stopped quickly after the conquest and under the Roman influence.

¹⁷⁷ Kneißl 1979, 267; Winkler 1986, 2010.

¹⁷⁸ Wesch-Klein 2008, 10-13. A *procuratorial province* was a province from which the governor was appointed by the emperor rather than by the senate which was the case of the senatorial or proconsular provinces (lead by a *praefect* or proconsul instead of a *quaestor* or *procurator*).

¹⁷⁹ Alföldy 1974, 62-63.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 65; Kneißl 1979, 267; Winkler 1986, 200; Wilkes 1996, 580-581; Šašel Kos 2010, 211-214.

¹⁸¹ Kneißl 1979, 271. This assumption is based on a similar organisation of the fourteen tribes of the Alpes Cottiae who were under the authority of a *praefectus civitatum*, known from an inscription (CIL 5, 7231).

¹⁸² Wilkes 1996, 572-573; Šašel Kos 1997, 40-41; Fischer 2002, 19; Šašel Kos 2010, 211-215.

Under Claudius, major administrative reorganisation took place in the Norican region which has left more clear archaeological and epigraphical traces.¹⁸³ The earliest epigraphical attestation of a *procurator Augusti Norici*, for example, dates from this time and proves that Noricum was by then a proconsular province.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, we will learn in the next chapter that five centres in the Norican territory were granted municipal status by Claudius. It has been suggested that the possible *civitates peregrinae* known from the shrines at Magdalensberg were assigned to the territories of these five new Claudian towns. Table. 1.2 shows M. Sašel Kos's attempt to identify which tribes could have been subjected to which Claudian *municipium*. Evidently, this suggestion remains open for discussion since not all tribes could be precisely located.¹⁸⁵ Also, one can observe a rather intentional reorganisation of the urban centres. Pre-Roman settlements were abandoned in favour of these five towns, such as in the area of Roman Salzburg (Fig. 1.11).¹⁸⁶ It is furthermore assumed that around this period the governor's seat was moved from the site at the Magdalensberg to the Roman town of *Virunum*.¹⁸⁷ Finally also the iron mines in the region became imperial properties, as did other Alpine resources such as salt mines, woods and quarries.¹⁸⁸

In general, one can say that most epigraphical and archaeological evidence regarding the time of foundation of the province of Noricum suggests a Claudian date. This includes the recognition of new municipal centres, the reorganisation of the local inhabitants, and the possible first confirmed presence of a Roman provincial governor.¹⁸⁹

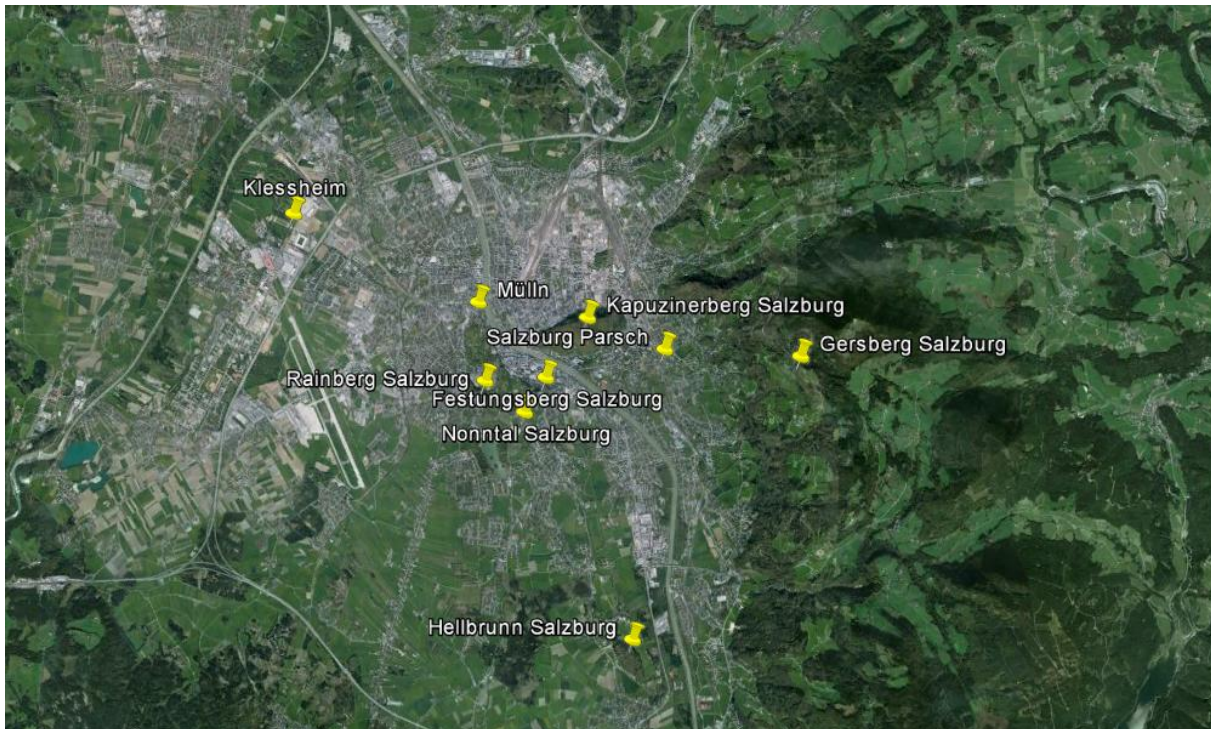


Fig. 1.11: Some find spots of Pre-Roman settlements in the vicinity of Salzburg. Most of these places were no longer intensively inhabited after the foundation of the *municipium Claudium Iuvavum*, after Dopsch 2010.

¹⁸³ Fischer 2002, 18; Kneiβl 1979, 265.

¹⁸⁴ Website: Transformation. (Städtische Siedlungen in Noricum - City Settlements in Noricum).

¹⁸⁵ Wilkes 1996, 580-581; Fischer 2002, 19; Scherrer 2002b, 32-33; Šašel Kos 2010, 214-215.

¹⁸⁶ Straube 1996, 186; Dopsch 2010, 10-13.

¹⁸⁷ Straube 1996, 187; Piccottini 2002, 104.

¹⁸⁸ Winkler 1986, 215; Konrad 2012, 31. While there were first imperial slaves deployed, this responsibility was later handed over to tenants (*conductores ferrariarum noricarum*), mainly originating from Aquileia. Based on coins from Hadrian, called *MET(alla) Nor(ica)*, it is clear that the exploitation of the mountain resources had gone back to state officials.

¹⁸⁹ Wilkes 1996, 576; Šašel Kos 1997, 40; Šašel Kos 2010, 211-214.

Table.1.2: Sašel Kos' interpretation of the Norican tribes supervised by the Roman towns from the time of Claudius.	
Claudian <i>municipia</i>	Subjected Norican tribes
Virunum	Norici, Ambilini
Teurnia	Ambidravi, Elveti
Aguntum	Laianci, Saevates
Celeia	Uperaci, Ambisavi
Juvavum	Ambisontes, Alauni

1.5.3 Germania Superior

Setting aside the disputed existence of a *provincia Germania*, the creation of the two provinces of Germania Superior and Germania Inferior is traditionally dated around the end of the 1st century. Generally, a date between AD 82 and 92, during the reign of Domitian, is assumed.¹⁹⁰ H. Schonberger situated the most likely moment somewhere soon after the war against the *Chatti* in AD 85 and at the latest after the revolt of Saturninus in AD 89.¹⁹¹ The words *Germania Capta* on Domitian's coins are one type of evidence, the clear distinction made between the two provinces in inscriptions and in diploma's from around AD 90-98 is another.¹⁹² Recently, however, F. Ausbüttel has suggested a controversially early date: between AD 10 and AD 14. He suggested that, since there is no indication for a common commander for the troops stationed in the two military districts of the Low and the High Rhine, one should assume that both areas were headed by an imperial legate.¹⁹³

In any event, the first clear structural changes in the organisation of the territory occurring in the archaeological records date mainly to the reign of Domitian. It is from that moment onwards, until the late 2nd century, that peace in the area could be maintained and the contours of the northern border of the Empire, along the Higher Rhine, became stable.¹⁹⁴ The appearance of institutional bodies related to civil life becoming visible in the epigraphical records of the late 1st century, such as *civitates*. Inhabitants of the *territoria* of legionary and auxiliary forts started their own local governance.¹⁹⁵ Some imperial estates are known from the area between the Rhine and the Danube, enclosed by the modern Neckar region, the Schwabian Alb and the Black Forest. Tacitus referred to this district as the *Agri Decumates*.¹⁹⁶ He is the only author using this term and left us in uncertainty about the meaning of it. Some translated it as 'ten lands', but others are not afraid to call it rather 'waste'-land or the Helvetian dessert. This in origin Helvetian territory was conquered and made a buffer zone between the 'Roman' and the 'barbarian' world. Although some scholars have interpreted it as the land of the ten cantons, others imagine it as imperial domains where tenants could cultivate for a tenth of the yield. We know for sure known that such an imperial estate existed around *Summelocenna*/Rottenburg.¹⁹⁷

1.6 Conclusion

¹⁹⁰ Mommsen 1968, 156-159; Jones 1973, 87; Baatz and Herrmann 1982, 71-83; Cüppers 1990, 70-73; Klee 2013, 58.

¹⁹¹ Schönberger 1969, 159.

¹⁹² Ausbüttel 2011, 395-400.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 395-400.

¹⁹⁴ Klee 2013, 58.

¹⁹⁵ Pelham 1911, 193-197.

¹⁹⁶ Tacitus, *Germania*, 29.

¹⁹⁷ CIL 13, 6365. Pelham 1911, 189; Mommsen 1968, 159-161; Schönberger 1969, 161; Hind 1984.

The northern Alpine region provided a varied landscape, marked by mountainous or hilly regions, fertile valleys and many rivers, in which different settlement patterns could develop over time, reflecting social processes of power and of centralisation.

Influenced by sites such as the Heuneberg, the first (proto-)urban settlements in temperate Europe are dated to the Early Iron Age. More recent archaeological research has shown that from this period onwards developments towards a more complex societal organisation started to take place.

Previously the large defended hilltop sites of the mid-2nd century BC, better known as *oppida*, were considered the first towns north of the Alps, but these sites are now seen as just one externalization of much broader processes of urban development. Archaeological research conducted over the last few decades has revealed a rather complex and dynamic urban network for this period, consisting of both open and defended sites, and centres located on hill tops as well as in low-land areas. There is a growing realisation that the importance of the so-called *oppida* sites was overestimated and that the overall society was mainly rural. Despite the large amount of knowledge gained from researching the big Late Iron Age centres, many mysteries about this period might still be buried in rural centres, villages and farmsteads.

There is no doubt that major changes occurred during the last half of the 1st century BC. Many central places seem to have lost their attractiveness and big parts of the northern Alpine region became incorporated into the Roman Empire. The population density in the region probably decreased during this period. Although heavily disputed by some, recent studies have tried to demonstrate continuity in the occupation between the Late Iron Age and the early Roman period. Early Roman *villae* have been found at several late La Tène settlements. Also cemeteries indicate a continuous use, strongly indicating that also the communities remained. In addition, a relation between early Roman forts and Late Iron Age sites seems to exist. A change in the settlement pattern of the late 1st century BC is nevertheless undeniable.

The impact of the Roman conquest during the following decades seems generally rather moderate. Some centres were established for military and administrative purposes. Very fascinating are the civil centres which were created, such as the site of Waldgirmes in *Germania Magna*, the sites of the Auerberg and Kempten in the *Raetian* territory and the governmental complex at the trade centre on the Magdalensberg in the heart of the earlier *Regnum Noricum*. None of these centres remained when Roman rule finally gained a more concrete shape and the administrative provinces were initiated.

It is not clear from the literary sources which emperor was responsible for the appointment of the provinces of Raetia and Noricum. For both provinces it is most likely that initial plans were made under the reign of Tiberius and that by the time of Claudius these administrative units were already functioning. Recently, AD 14 has been suggested as the foundation year for the province of Germania Superior, which differs from the more traditional assumption that it was realized by Domitian. Increasing municipal and administrative developments can be observed in all three provinces soon after their creation. These developments relate to the construction of stone built infrastructures in Raetian centres, the granting of municipal rights to communities in Noricum and the establishment of imperial domains. Similar tendencies could be observed on sites in Germania Superior.

Whether or not the creation of administrative municipal units under the Roman Empire encouraged an increased level of urbanism will be considered in the following chapters.