

SUMMARY

Information about prehistoric settlement processes can only be obtained by the analysis of all known settlements belonging to the period being studied. While the ‚Herrenhöfe‘ (‐chiefly sites‐) and the ‚Fürstensitze‘ (‐princely residences‐) of the Hallstatt period are the most characteristic because they are the most prominent and best-known types of settlement⁵³¹, these fortified settlements are actually the exception⁵³² and should certainly not be considered representative for the analysis and evaluation of settlement behaviours⁵³³. These can only be clarified on the basis of small-scale, detailed investigations using all sources and the subsequent synchronisation of the individual regions.

It would be advantageous to investigate a settlement model that took into account the contemporaneous settlements in the selected area of study, so making statements possible regarding settlement density and settlement structure. Such an analysis is, however, not practicable because of methodological difficulties. The basis for such a study would have

to be an exact dating of all settlement sites that could yield information showing which settlements existed at which point in time, and especially which settlements existed either concurrently or successively. The possibility of such a dating is not only problematic because of the difficulties related to an accurate chronological classification of the majority of ceramic finds; in epochs that permit a finer dating on the basis of more exact chronological schemes, it is also not usually possible to know which settlements existed concurrently. Even a ‐continuous‐ fibula spectrum, extending over many decades or even centuries, is not necessarily synonymous with continuous settlement, since here too, settlement interruptions from a few years or even decades are always possible. Information about the approximate degree of settlement of a landscape can best be obtained by studies of natural science⁵³⁴.

For the study area, there is a paucity of analyses of this type, so that although – taking the population density map as a starting-point (Abb.30) – a relatively dense population can be generally determined, this can-

⁵³¹ PARZINGER 1991, 26.

⁵³² The significance of the so-called ‐princely residences‐ as ‐normal or special form‐ of settlement in the Hallstatt period, at least in parts of Bavaria, has still not been satisfactorily clarified.

⁵³³ The general restriction to (fortified) hilltop settlements in the study of settlement behaviours and in order to create a regional classification (PARZINGER 1991), cannot – even with a little comprehensible index with rather tendentious or arbitrary decisions between the indexed settlement types and datings (ibid. Fig.19) – lead to success.

⁵³⁴ The substantiated dense settlement and associated open landscape in the Hallstatt period is fundamentally compatible with the pollen-analytically and malaco-zoologically determined anthropogenic landscape changes and less so with the dense findspot picture (M. HILGART/M. KNIPPING/L. REISCH/K. H. RIEDER/M. TRAPPE, *Der Talraum der Altmühl bei Kinding während der älteren Eisenzeit [Hallstattzeit]. Untersuchungen zur Archäologie und Paläoökologie einer vorgeschichtlich dicht besiedelten Kleinlandschaft. Mitt. Fränk. Geogr. Ges.* 46, 1999, 128 Fig.1) which must by no means be attributed only to contemporaneously existing settlements.

not be evaluated as contemporaneous or, to be precise, continuous.

One may assume that the landscape in the Hallstatt period was no longer dense, virgin forest characterised by distantly isolated settlements. On the other hand, it is probably not the case that all non-forested areas were settled; rather, these were just as often the result of periodic settlement shifts, because of which, after one settlement was abandoned – most commonly because of the exhaustion of ground used as farmland – new fields and settlement areas would be opened.

The study area, which is located both geographically and “culturally” on the periphery of the core areas of Hallstatt culture in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, was influenced by developments in these regions, as can be seen in “fashion trends” (dependant on find material) as well as in social and economic aspects. Because of its “peripheral position”, these processes do not always occur synchronously, but also after some delay; for example, this appears to be the case in the reception of fibula styles. It remains open to question whether or not the settlement forms also reflect a sociological change. The so-called “princely residence” on the Marienberg is an exception in the study area (if, according to Kimmig’s criteria, it can be considered one at all); even the very common “Herrenhöfe” – which should therefore not be treated as suitable substitutes for the much rarer (in Baden-Württemberg) “princely residences” – must not necessarily be re-

garded as the sign of a far-reaching sociological differentiation within the settlement typology. The only well-documented representative of this settlement form in the study area⁵³⁵ shows no evidence for that aspect; it most likely demonstrates, with its ditch-and-palisade defences, the wish of (a segment) of the Hallstatt era population for a spatial and symbolic demarcation.

Through the use of a Geographic Information System – a tool suited in many ways to the field of settlement research – it is shown that the large burial mounds presented time and again as evidence for the outstanding importance of the area around the Marienberg (and found, besides, at other locations in the study area), and also generally the distribution of the Hallstatt tombs in the study area, are not suitable for settlement analysis. It must be clearly emphasised that, fundamentally, the distribution of tombs and the evaluation of their preferred locations permit no conclusions to be drawn about small-scale settlement events. Their significance in this context is limited to the analysis of large areas, as shown elsewhere in exemplary fashion for Bavarian-Schwabia⁵³⁶.

That prehistoric individuals were particularly dependent upon their environment is hardly a new insight. Through the results of the analysis presented, the dimensions of this dependence – and above all, the ability to optimally exploit environmental preconditions – are clearly described and made com-

⁵³⁵ According to the evidence of GIS-supported environmental investigations, it is likely that many of the rectangular ditched enclosures revealed in the field of work by aerial photography should not be spoken of as Hallstatt era settlements.

⁵³⁶ HENNIG/LUCIANU 2000.

prehensible. Whether the postulated increase in importance of a pastoral economy at the end of the Hallstatt / beginning of the Latène era occurred in reaction to ecological or sociological changes, or whether changes in societal structure were caused by a (possibly ecologically-determined) change in the economy cannot be decided at this time – at least not on the basis of data from Main-Franconia. In this respect, only future – above all, natural scientific – investigations will be able to provide an answer.

It will also be up to future studies, based on similar GIS-based analyses, to compare of settlement behaviours across time periods as well as across regions. With them, the yet-to-be-identified environmental relationships of Neolithic and of Hallstatt period ditch enclosures in Main-Franconia, and also the comparison to those in southern Bavaria, should form an important aspect of future

research. It could be shown that, while the inclusion of now-undated earthworks in extensive settlement-analytic interpretations might not be very meaningful, on the other hand, with the help of Geographic Information Systems the possibility of extending the grounds for dating exists.

For some time now, Archaeological Heritage Management activities have been able, with the GIS-supported methods of predictive modelling, to simplify monument-preservative and monument-protective decisions, and also to base such decisions on scientific foundations. This dissertation should also lend impetus to such activities. The prerequisites are – at least in those German states that possess a digital database of archaeological sites – available. But Geographic Information Systems are not only important tools for heritage preservation, it could be shown that they are also especially valuable in the field of archaeological research.

(Translation: C. Murray-Seegert)