

andersetzung als Ursache nicht gänzlich aus. Diese zu vorsichtig formulierte Schlussfolgerungen begründet er mit dem Hinweis, dass mit archäologischen Methoden letztlich primär die Auswirkungen eines Ereignisses dokumentiert werden, sich aber für die Antwort auf die Frage nach der Ursache lediglich verschiedene mögliche Erklärungen anführen lassen.

Im letzten Kapitel „Ausblick: Zur Frage der Historizität in der Provinzialrömischen Archäologie“ erörtert Ch. Hinker die generelle Frage, inwiefern sich der archäologische Befund mit der historischen Überlieferung verknüpfen lässt. Hinsichtlich seiner historischen Deutung weist er auf eine massive Abhängigkeit von den Schriftquellen hin. In diesem Fall beziehen sie sich nicht konkret auf das Munizipium Flavia Solva, und wäre kein Einfall der Germanen nach Oberitalien schriftlich überliefert, würde man wohl kaum den Brandhorizont der Insula XLI mit einem kriegerischen Ereignis in Verbindung bringen. Dementsprechend wären archäologische Quellen wenig geeignet, zur Ereignisgeschichte Grundsätzliches beizutragen, sie könnten diese bestenfalls ergänzen. Die mögliche Ergänzung hängt vom konkreten Stand der beiden Quellengruppen ab. Deshalb erscheint dem Verfasser im vorliegenden Fallbeispiel die Möglichkeit eines Schadensfeuers plausibler als eine Verknüpfung mit kriegerischen Auseinandersetzungen. Jedoch ließe sich weder die eine noch die andere Deutung mit Sicherheit bestätigen oder ausschließen.

Zuletzt ist ein kurzes Resümee beigefügt, danach folgt ein ausführlicher und präziser Katalog mit übersichtlichen Tafeln, ein Anhang mit Abkürzungen, ein sorgfältig zusammengestelltes Literaturverzeichnis und Abbildungsnachweise.

Ch. Hinker legt eine Arbeit vor, die in mehrfacher Hinsicht verdienstvoll und vorbildlich ist. Er begnügt sich nicht mit der detaillierten Bearbeitung und Auswertung eines wichtigen geschlossenen Brandbefundes und dessen vereinfachter Interpretation als Folge des vermeintlichen germanischen Überfalls während der Zeit der Markomannenkriege. Die vollständige Ausschöpfung des Quellenmaterials nutzt er nicht nur zur Beurteilung und Darstellung kulturgeschichtlicher Rahmenbedingungen und lokaler Lebensweise innerhalb eines Wohnbereiches der römischen Stadt, sondern vor allem als Grundlage für weitere Überlegungen, inwiefern es mit dem konkreten Kontext der Ereignisgeschichte verknüpfbar ist. Seine Bestrebungen um eine methodisch saubere Vorgehensweise bei der Auswertung des archäologischen Befundes und den bedachtsamen Umgang mit historischen Interpretationen kann auch bei weiteren Behandlungen von ähnlichen markomannenkriegszeitlichen Befunden inspirierend und vorbildlich sein.

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PETER ETTTEL / LUKAS WERTHER (eds), Zentrale Orte und zentrale Räume des Frühmittelalters in Süddeutschland. Römisch-Germanisches-Zentralmuseum-Tagungen Band 18. Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Mainz 2013. € 55.–. ISBN 978-3-88467-212-9. VIII, 406 pages with numerous figures.

During the past two decades, archaeological research has given rise to many projects and publications under the rubric “central place”. Predominantly prehistoric and early medieval archaeology address this field, which can be traced back to the fact that for both periods, due to missing or incomplete written sources, it is impossible to clearly differentiate individual elements of a settlement hierarchy, analogous to examples from historical epochs such as Antiquity or the High Middle Ages. There is a particular problem in this regard for the Early Middle Ages, which the preface to the present volume points out: early sources of scripture use terms such as *palatium*, *monaste-*

rium, *civitas* and *castellum* without, however, clarifying their status in the settlement structure of their time or, in many instances, providing any information about their spatial and structural appearance. Thus, it is left to archaeological and historical research to localise such places and to develop criteria for the classification of individual sites or site-regions.

The present volume of the proceedings collects some two-thirds of the papers given at the conference of the same name, supplemented by some investigations of overarching issues. The conference was organised in 2011 by the Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum in Mainz and the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, cooperative partners within the international research project “Reiterkrieger, Burgenbauer – frühes Ungarn und das ‘Deutsche Reich’ vom 9. bis zum 11. Jahrhundert” (Mounted Warriors, Castle Builders – Early Hungary and the ‘German Empire’ from the 9th to the 11th Century). The conference was held in Bad Neustadt an der Saale, close to the Carolingian-Ottoman Palatinate, which has been excavated since 2009 and was one of many examples that were subjects of the discussion on the role of early medieval centres. At the same time, this also marks a spatial and chronological focus of the 21 contributions, which concentrate predominantly on the sites and settlement landscapes of western Central Germany and northern Bavaria from the Carolingian-Ottonian period. This selection is probably due to the fact that, first, the studies presented here were carried out under the auspices of the two institutions that organised the meeting, and second, a complete examination of the chosen subject matter would have exceeded both the scope of the conference and that of the publication. Nevertheless, a few contrasting papers dealing with fields such as the central places of the Merovingian Period or central regions in western Southern Germany would have been sensible additions. Thus, it is left to the introductory contribution of Peter Ettl (pp. 1–46) to at least touch upon these topics in the context of his wide-reaching survey. Noticeable here is the clearly too-brief treatment of the category “towns” (pp. 9–10), within which context the “still-functioning Roman towns” are cited as prime examples of central places, although without further elaboration. Among the remaining contributions, only one – in the example of Mautern – is devoted to this category of central place (see below). The definitions of “central place” and “central region” build on the work of Walter Christaller, who first coined the terms in 1933, as well as on their adaptation for archaeological-historical research by Dietrich Denecke (1973) and Eike Gringmuth-Dallmer (1992). On that basis, Ettl presents six categories of central places: “rural settlements”; “towns”; “*palatii* and similar fortified complexes”; “bishoprics”; “royal courts and monastic houses”; and “castles of the nobility / early forms of territorial lordship”.

The second introductory article by Andreas Dix (pp. 47–57) deals fundamentally with the history of Christaller’s theory of central places. The question of its transferability to archaeology is also raised, but not examined in greater detail. The contributions that follow refer to a greater or lesser degree to central place theory and primarily are limited to the presentation of individual case studies; when taken as a whole, however, they offer deep insight into the organisational forms of the eastern (border-) landscapes of the East Franconian Empire. Petra Wolters (pp. 59–73) presents the current state of knowledge concerning the Veitsberg, which, based on a comparison between its structural features and those of other contemporaneous building complexes, can in all likelihood be identified as the location of the historical palace of Salz. Caspar Ehlers and Bernd Päßgen provide a brief overview of the historical and archaeological studies of the palace sites and royal courts in Bavaria (pp. 75–87). This article is followed by a summary of the historical-archaeological sources for the Salz royal estate and its surrounding region by Lucas Werther (pp. 89–112), which certainly would have been better placed immediately after Wolters’ contribution. The following presentation of the first interim results of the research on the Fossa Carolina, written by Christoph Zielhofer and Eva Leitholt (p. 113–124), leads to yet another landscape, whereby the significance of this structure as a central place is not discussed in detail. Markus Blach, in contrast,

in his article on Pfalz Werla (pp. 125–139), succeeds without difficulty in portraying the central place character of that location in Ottonian times. Thomas Liebert, too, in his presentation of the settlement complex at Großhöbing (pp. 141–159), argues convincingly that mills and boat landings can be seen as facilities of rural central places. The same applies to Thomas Kohl's article on rural centres of the Carolingian period in southern Germany (pp. 161–174), with the focus here being on places of assembly and baptisteries known from written documents, which functioned as centres of small regions. In Heidi Pantermehl's article on central place research in the Palatine Forest (pp. 175–191), she rightly states that the mountainous central uplands – often regarded as unsuitable for human settlement – are largely omitted from central place studies. She concludes that the transferability of current central place theories to such regions cannot be taken as given and that new models must be developed.

With the examination of the former Roman fort location *Favianis* / Mautern an der Donau, Helga Sedlmayer provides (pp. 193–216) the only example of the continuing development of an originally important ancient centre into a *civitas* during the Carolingian-Ottonian era, excluding a hiatus from the early 5th to late 8th centuries that is undoubtedly attributable to the paucity of sources during this period. This, however, still leaves unanswered the question of why Mautern, after an apparent interruption of several centuries, was able to reassume its former function and significance in the 9th century.

In contrast to the preceding description of the continuing development of an older centre, the articles by Jan Mařík, on the formation of the first centres on the Upper Elbe during the course of Bohemian state formation (pp. 217–233), and Jiří Macháček, on the centres of the Great Moravian Empire (pp. 235–247), deal with the genesis of new centres, whereby the identification of historically documented places on the basis of archaeological sites remains a particular challenge. The preliminary report on the excavations at the Frauenberg near Sondershausen by Diethard Walter, Niklot Krohn and Sybille Jahn (pp. 249–258) outlines the development of a late Merovingian-Carolingian central place in northern Thuringia in the form of a multi-part fortified settlement with associated Christian cult building and burial place, where the latter is distinguished by the richly equipped graves of a separate cemetery. While these burials undoubtedly point to the supra-regional significance of the Frauenberg, its central place function remains unproven due to the incomplete archaeological development of the internal buildings of the “Kernburg”.

The subsequent concise contribution by Heinrich Wagner outlines the origins of the early medieval settlement area of the Franconian Saale on the basis of written sources (pp. 159–265) but does not address the extent to which this might be considered a central region. The essay by Mathias Hentsch on northeastern Bavaria (pp. 267–308), which presents the genesis and development of a central landscape in a Carolingian-Ottonian expansion area of the East Franconian Empire, is far more extensive and detailed. In particular, Hentsch succeeds in demonstrating the relevance of archaeological and settlement-geographic research to the study of landscapes whose history of events is well documented by written records, but whose function and, above all, whose economic network can only be revealed through the analysis of extensive archaeological sources. Here, the author primarily places the fortified settlement at the centre of his convincing treatise.

The same applies to the succeeding contribution by Christian Later (pp. 309–332), which, based on his current study of the Solnhofen Priory and its environment, presents the early medieval conditions in the Altmühl region. Later uses the same kinds of sources and a similar instrumentarium, but these lead to a structurally different reconstruction of this central region, whose settlement framework was not strongly shaped by castles, but rather by monasteries and, newly emerging in the 9th century, the transport axis of the Fossa Carolina. Thorsten Sonnemann presents a ‘negative finding’ in his article on the Büraburg in North Hessen (pp. 332–352): here, geophysical

prospections and the investigation of ceramic finds supplement and correct the location of this Bishopric, sparingly identified in written sources as a central place. Thus, we learn that the outer bailey, assumed by prior studies to have been densely populated, shows no traces of construction, and also that the surroundings of the Büraburg lack evidence for Carolingian colonisation. All in all, therefore, central place functions can only be proved in the form of the Bishopric that was briefly located here. A contrasting picture is presented in Eike Michl's article on Gerolzhofen in Lower Franconia (pp. 353–374), which for many years has been the focus of a research project of the Chair of Archaeology and the Modern Age at the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg. With the discovery of a previously unknown, early medieval fortification with sacral and representative buildings, a new central place of the 8th to 14th century emerges, displaying strong architectural parallels to known palaces and royal courts. In the contribution that follows, Ralf Obst explains, using the example of Karlburg am Main, the development of a central place and its surroundings from a Carolingian foundation to its relocation to the city of the same name, established around AD 1200 (pp. 375–388). The conference volume concludes with a methodological contribution by Michael Herdick (pp. 389–403) on the interpretation of economic-archaeological sources from medieval places of power; it, however, focuses on the High Middle Ages, which come after the time frame of this volume.

With the publication of the present conference volume – soon after the conference itself – an essential building block for the debate about central place theories in the field of early medieval research has been published, although the number of methodological and theory-oriented contributions is comparatively modest. The great strength of the collection is the presentation of numerous examples of different methods and approaches to a comprehensive settlement research. The focus on selected South German sites and landscapes does not diminish the significance of the volume for settlement research as a whole, even if individual case studies from earlier stages of the Early Middle Ages and an exploration of the possible continuity of central places would also have been desirable. Unfortunately, the sequencing of the individual contributions seems quite arbitrary and incomprehensible. Ordering them by geographic and also by chronological aspects could have ensured a better interconnection among the articles. At the end of the volume, the reader also misses a summary discussion comparing the various examples. As a preliminary conclusion, however, the essays taken as a whole make it possible to state that models and theories like Walter Christaller's central place theory can only be adapted to archaeological research with great reservations. As shown by the enormous range in the appearance of early medieval centres and landscapes, there are hardly any schemata that can be applied to many or even all examples. At the very least, on the periphery of the East Franconian Empire, certain regions appear to have passed through very diverse developments, which led to the formation of very different central places; these can only rarely be compared with one another. This also makes clear, however, the need to intensify research into regions not represented in the present volume. For this, the conference series “Central Places and Central Regions of the Early Middle Ages in Southern Germany” simultaneously provides both encouragement and motivation.

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