

Unity and Diversity of Celtic Cultures Within the Site of the Oppidum of Manching

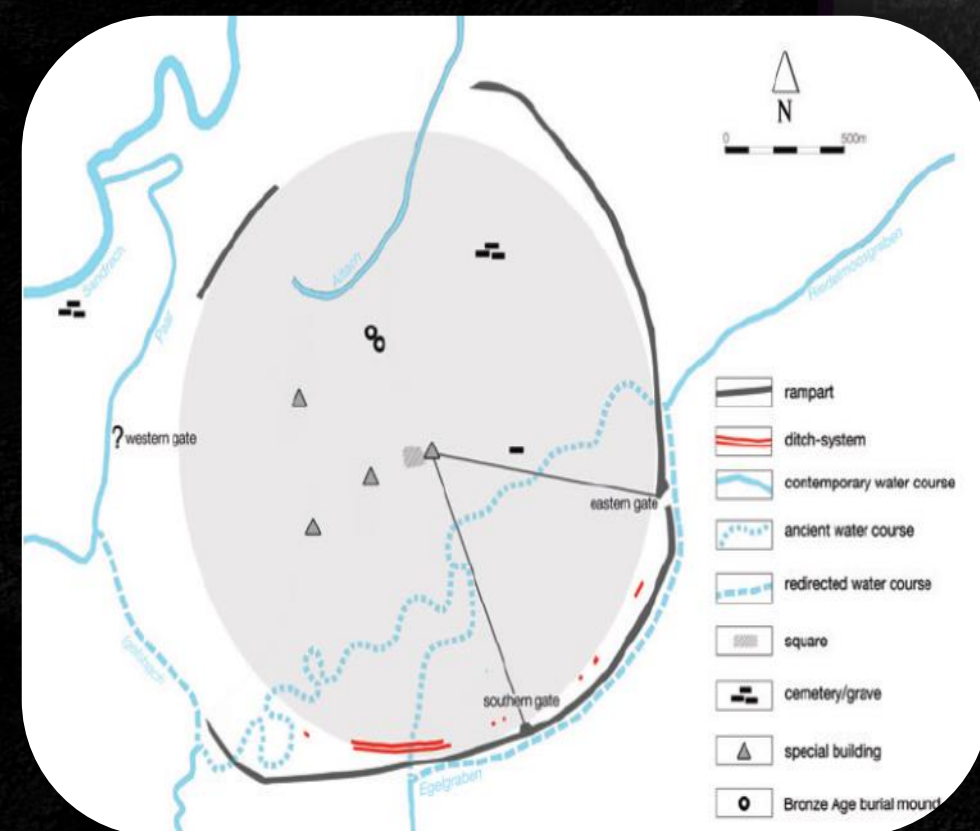


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Where is Manching?

The Oppidum of Manching is located in Southern Germany, Bavaria. Founded in the 3rd Century BCE, Manching started off as a small settlement nucleus on a popular trade route but grew to proto-urban settlement, with the size of approx. 380 hectares.

Activities such as coin minting, glasswork and metalwork indicates a delicate economic structure emerging in Manching in the middle La Tene period (250-130 BCE) (Brestel:2015).



Schematic map of the oppidum of Manching featuring important landmarks

This distribution map of Manching's important landmarks gives a good idea of the layout of the oppidum, with a swampy region on the western side of the oppidum used as a defensive strategy, not requiring use of a heavy fortified wall (Collis:2000).

What does material evidence from Manching tell us about "Celtic" identity?

Manching can tell us a great deal regarding "Celtic" identity through the material evidence. In 1903, Paul Reinecke identified artefacts and monuments such as the Murus Gallicus (wall) and the Murus Gallici (rampart) as being very similar in design to similar constructions found in France and Bohemia (Wells:1987).



These similar constructions found elsewhere in Europe would suggest a common link between these separated settlements, perhaps a link that points towards an overarching "Celtic" Europe. A feasible explanation for this would be the travelling and sharing of knowledge when it came to construction of defensive walls, especially with Manching located on a popular trading route.

Particularities of Manching and its relation to other Celtic sites of the La Tene period

Manching is most well known for its significance in revealing a proto-urban settlement with strong commercial trade links. It is argued by Wendling that the growth of Manching only occurred after the building of the Murus Gallicus, or the defensive wall of the oppidum, built 140-120 BCE (Wendling:2013).



Reconstruction of the Manching Oppidum

Wendling provides an interesting point regarding the growth of Manching, with its labelling as an oppidum diminishing the importance of the earlier stages of Manching's development (2013:462). Here, Wendling is correct in analysis that the earlier development of Manching provides significant evidence of a more isolated and culturally significant "Celtic" society, but since being developed into a fortified and centralised proto-urban settlement has become more of a regional/commerce centre for the Gaulish people.