"Celtic" Oppida

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I will start by stating that I do not believe the sites which I am dealing with qualify as "city-states"; indeed, in the past I have drawn a contrast between the city-states of the Mediterranean littoral and the inland "tribal states" of central and northern Gaul. However, their inclusion within the ambit of this symposium is useful for two reasons. Firstly, if a class of "city-state" is to be defined, it is necessary to define the characteristics with reference to what is, or is not, shared with similar types of simple state or quasi-state formations. Secondly, the written documentary sources are somewhat thin, or even non-existent, for these sites; therefore archaeology must produce much of the data for our discussion. So, what sorts of archaeological features might we expect for our "city" and "tribal" states?

The area with which I am dealing lies mainly within central and northern France, Switzerland, and Germany west of the Rhine (Collis [1984a-b], [1995a-b]). This is the area conquered by Julius Caesar in 58–51 B.C.. In his *Commentaries* he refers on numerous occasions to "*oppida*", sites often of urban character, and apparently all with some form of defences. Some of the sites he mentions are readily recognisable as predecessors to Roman and modern towns (Fig. 1) – *Vesontio* (Besançon), *Lutetia* (Paris),

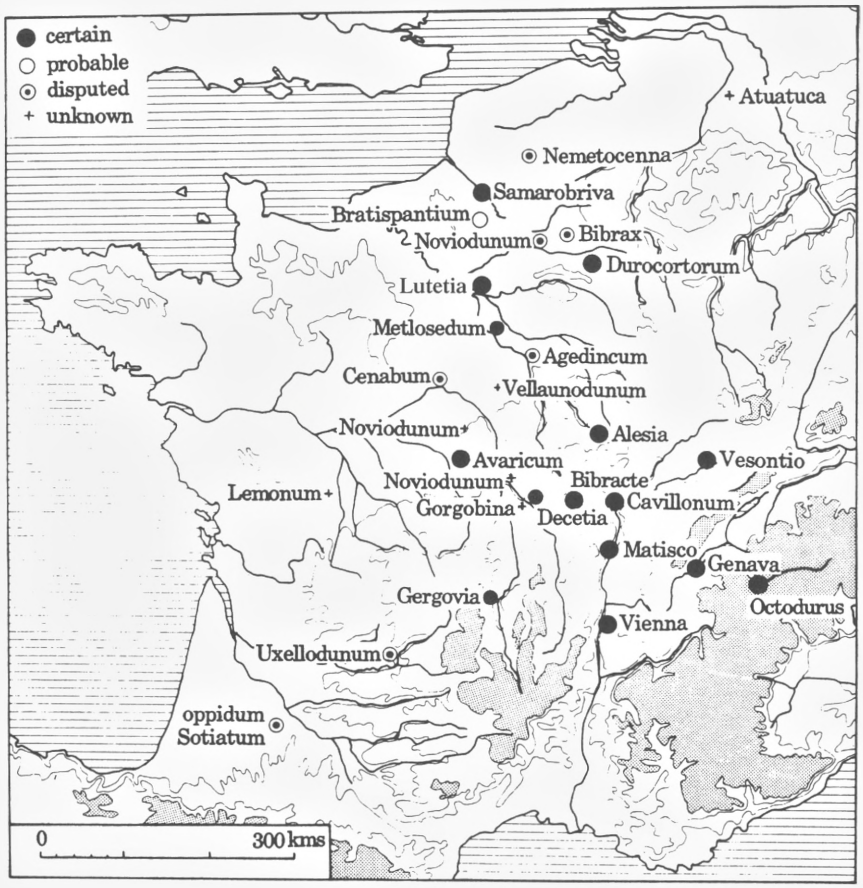

Fig. 1. Sites mentioned by Caesar in the *De Bello Gallico*.

Durocortorum (Reims), and *Avaricum* (Bourges) – while others have been deserted, or failed to develop – *Bibracte* (Mont Beuvray), *Gergovia* (Plateau de Merdogne), *Alesia* (Alise-Ste.-Reine). The sites tend to be large (80–350 ha), though some are smaller, and a small number are even larger (Fig. 2). They tend to lie in defensive positions, have large ramparts around them, and were generally occupied from the last quarter of the second century B.C. until the early Roman period (20–10 B.C.) or longer.

Similar sites are found east of the Rhine, in southern and central Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic, but for these sites we have minimal documentary evidence, and so we must rely on analogies with the Gallic sites. However, some of the central European sites start earlier than those in western Europe, around the middle of the second century B.C. Further east there are related sites in Slovakia and on the Hungarian Plain, for instance Tabán-Gellerthegy at Budapest, or Zemplín in Slovakia. These sites have a small defended area, but large undefended suburbs. Finally there are analogous sites in central Spain, though the internal layout of these sites is rather different (e.g. Úlaca near Ávila). They share the defensive characteristics and large size with the Gallic and central European sites (Úlaca is about 80ha). These Spanish sites may start as early as the third century B.C.

I prefer not to use ethnic terms such as "Celtic" to describe these sites (cp. Cunliffe [1997]). There were "oppida" in northern Italy in an area occupied by the Celts, but these sites may well have had more in common with, for instance, Etruscan sites, and so may be closer to the concept of the "city-state". The areas traditionally assigned to the Celtiberians in Spain are far from uniform – some sites seem to confirm to the group I have just defined as "tribal states", others have more the characteristics of city-states (e.g. Lérida). We should not prejudge the situation by assuming ethnic homogeneity; Greece, after all, had both city-states and *ethne*.

The Sources

We only have contemporary written sources from outsiders, from writers from the Greek and Roman worlds; only Caesar can claim to have observed the sites first-hand. Strabo was writing two generations later, and leaned heavily on Caesar; the work of Pom-

Fig. 2. Distribution of *oppida* and tribes in Gaul.

peius Trogus, whose Gallic grandfather accompanied Caesar, only survives in abridged form in the late Roman author Justinus. Other sources are either derived, or are not particularly informative, often giving only the names of peoples and places, with little description (e.g. Polybius and Posidonius). We have no detailed descriptions of constitutions or of sites. One or two much later sources can provide snippets of information; Sidonius Apollonaris in the fifth century A.D. was urging the Arverni to remember their history; and information on tribal boundaries may perhaps be gleaned from the boundaries of bishoprics recorded in medieval and later sources.

On the physical characteristics of the sites, on chronology, settlement patterns, trade and industry, we are almost entirely dependent on archaeology. Extensive excavations, giving us usable information on town layout, with partial plans, are available from about a dozen sites. In the 1950s and 1960s several sites in Czechoslovakia were explored on a large scale, while in southern Germany the massive excavations at Manching, which have stripped several hectares of the site's 330 ha area, are a major point of reference. Most recently excavations in the Aisne valley have given us partial plans from Condé-sur-Suippe and Villenueve-St.-Germain (Haselgrove [1995]; Roymans [1990]), and likewise for Levroux in central France (Audouze and Büchsenschutz [1991]; Büchsenschütz [1995]; Woolf [1993]). The large excavations at Mont Beuvray are providing important information concerning the evolution of a major *oppidum*, the ancient *Bibracte*, into a Roman town, up to its abandonment in favour of the more accessible site of *Augustodunum* (Autun) around 10 B.C. (Goudineau and Peyre [1993]).

Ethnic Classifications

Φῦλον and gens. These terms are used by Greek and Roman authors to signify major groupings of peoples – *Iberi* (Iberians), *Galli*/*Galatae* (Gauls), *Germani*, *Britanni*. The basis of these groupings seems largely to be language, but also in part geographical location (e.g. on the one hand *Germani* could live in *Gallia* but were still *Germani*; however, *Britanni* spoke a language similar to *Galli*, but were not *Galli* because they lived in *Britannia*).

Ethnic sub-groupings. Caesar records sub-groupings in Gaul (*Belgae, Aquitani* and *Celtae*), distinguished, according to him, by different languages and customs. He claims the *Celtae* recognised themselves as Celts, but by the Romans they were termed *Galli*. We encounter similar groups in Spain, e.g. the *Celtiberi*. There is a confusion in the ancient literature between the terms *Galli, Galatae* and *Celtae*, with different authors using the terms in different ways. The modern usage of "Celts" is different again, being based purely on language, but this certainly does not agree with the ancient definitions.

Tribal names. These were regularly used as the normal expression to describe the tribal states of Gaul, and were apparently used by the natives as well. These are the largest political groupings to be found, with apparently fairly well-defined territorial boundaries. They are referred to as *civitates* or ἔθνη by the Romans and Greeks.

Pagus. These were subgroups of tribes, with their own distinct names, e.g. according to Livy, in the fifth century B.C. one of the *pagi* of the *Aedui* were called the *Insubres*. Only a small number of *pagi* can be identified by name, mainly from Roman inscriptions.

Administrative and Political Structures

Inter-tribal links. Four types of formal link are recorded by Caesar.

(1) A formal meeting of almost all the tribes of Gaul met at *Bibracte* to choose a leader of the joint force against the Romans; this seems to have been without precedent.

(2) An annual meeting of the Druids in the territory of the Carnutes; its function is unknown.

(3) Intermarriage between the aristocracy of different tribes to seal political agreements (e.g. the links of the Aeduan Dumnorix with the Helvetian Orgetorix).

(4) Some tribes were "clients" of others. Apparently these were small tribes seeking protection rather than tribes who had been defeated (e.g. the Velavii and the Gaballi were clients of the Arverni); it seems that such supporters would be expected to send armed assistance in times of warfare, but we do not know what other arrangements there may have been.

Tribal organisation. Like contemporary states in the Mediterranean, the Gallic states were in a state of oscillation between oligarchy and kingship. According to Caesar, the dominant ethos was in favour of oligarchy (e.g. Celtillus, the father of Vercingetorix, was killed by the Arverni for aspiring to the kingship). Livy mentions kings as early as the fifth century B.C. (Ambigatus of the Bituriges Cubi), but the earliest contemporary mention is in Posidonius, talking of Luernios and Bituitos, the second-century B.C. kings of the Arverni (Tierney [1960]). Caesar imposed kingship on a number of tribes (e.g. Commius of the Atrebates).

The constitution of the Aedui was oligarchic, controlled by a small number of aristocratic families (as Caesar tells us was usual in Gaul – he considered the majority of the population to be little more than slaves). There were some constitutional arrangements to prevent private individuals or families obtaining too much power: e.g. it was not allowed for a member of a family to become *Vergobret* (chief magistrate) if a living member of the family had already held that office; the position was only held for one year. We hear of a number of institutions, though we do not know if these were normal in most tribes.

A "senatus". Caesar uses this Latin term to describe some sort of controlling body among the Aedui; it usually met at *Bibracte*, but he mentions it meeting at another *oppidum* on one occasion, at *Decetia*. Other tribes may have had similar bodies, but we do not know its size or how membership was decided.

Elected magistrates. Several tribes had magistrates, and in some cases they were elected, but we do not know by whom. One of the magistrates of the Treveri had the right to declare war.

Clientship. The power of individuals was based upon clientship, apparently very similar to that which operated in Rome. Ties were strengthened through marriage alliances.

Assemblies. The only evidence we have for decision-making assemblies is among the Aedui. It was an annual auction of the right to collect tolls from merchants; Dumnorix controlled it by bringing his supporters along with their weapons. The only other sort of assembly recorded was the mustering of the troops for battle; among the Treveri, the last warrior to turn up would be sacrificed to the gods. The order for the muster to take place was decided by the magistrate, but there is no evidence that decisions were made by the whole army (e.g. agreeing to war).

We hear nothing about citizenship, or even that the concept existed. The belief that a "warrior aristocracy" controlled Gallic society at this time is a "Celtic myth" with no historical foundation. We also do not know what the role of the *pagi* was in terms of administration. There is some evidence in the Roman period that they had a role in the administration of cult and religious activities; it has also been suggested that they may have played a role in the establishment of *oppida* in tribes where there are several such sites.

To judge from the figures quoted by Caesar of the numbers of the Helvetii who took part in the migration, and the numbers of those who were armed (25%), it would seem that all free adult males had the right to bear arms. The Gauls were famed for their cavalry, and it seems likely that this group formed an aristocratic elite (spurs turn up in the rich class of burials, such as at Goeblingen-Nospelt – see Metzler [forthcoming]). We also know that there were other types of prestige weapons, such as chain mail, and helmets; and also some of the swords are of exceptionally high quality, consisting of thin strips of steel welded together, and often etched and stamped to show their quality. Even so, normal swords were probably not carried by the rank and file of the army, most of whom would have probably carried spears and pikes. Thus the army, while reflecting the aristocratic nature of the society, would also have been subject to democratic pressures, as force was certainly threatened on occasion, if not used (e.g. Dumnorix' supporters turning up armed at the state auctions of the Aedui).

Nomenclature

The names of the tribes were established before the development of urbanisation in Gaul. Some tribal names were in existence by the third century (e.g. recorded by Polybius), but later authors such as Livy name tribes when relating events as early as the fifth century B.C.. Thus, names of tribes and of urban centres are not linked in the Iron Age. In the late Roman period, especially in northern and western Gaul, the name of the *civitas* capital was often suppressed in favour of the name of the tribe (e.g. *Lutetia Parisorum* (Paris), *Durocortorum Remorum* (Reims), *Avaricum Biturigum* (Bourges). This initial lack of linkage of the name of the tribe and of the city forms a contrast with the linkage of the names of city-states and that of their citizens (Romans, Athenians).

Coinage

We do not know who had the right to produce coins, or what controls there may have been. Many coins are uninscribed or only bear inscriptions taken from the coins they imitate (e.g. MAΣΣA from the coins of Marseilles). Some inscriptions are the names of individuals who are mentioned by Caesar as members of the aristocracy (Vercingetorix, Epasnactos) rather than as kings. In other cases, especially where two names appear, we may be dealing with magistrates. Tribal names are extremely rare, and often the reading or interpretation is disputed. Except for the dynastic coinage of Britain, names of towns do not appear; this

is another area of contrast with the sites on the Mediterranean coast, be they Greek (e.g. Marseilles) or Iberian or Celtiberian.

Spatial Characteristics

Tribal boundaries. Though Caesar uses rivers to define the boundaries between the major ethnic groups (*Belgae, Celtae, Aquitani, Germani)*, little else is recorded of tribal boundaries in the Iron Age. Indeed even the concept may be false if membership of the group was through links of genealogy or clientship rather than through living in a defined territory. The location of the tribes is known mainly through the work of Greek geographers such as Strabo and Ptolemy who assign towns to specific tribes. Certain Roman and later place-names (e.g. *Fines*, Iguerande) refer to sites on or near the Roman administrative boundaries, and we can also use inscribed Roman milestones in some cases. These administrative boundaries often remained in use into the medieval period as the limits of bishoprics. Though we cannot argue in detail in individual cases that Iron Age tribal boundaries, Roman administrative boundaries, and those of medieval bishoprics are indeed the same, there is certainly an approximate correlation, which gives us at least a feeling for scale.

No figures are available for tribal areas, but they are certainly larger than those quoted for city-states (e.g. about 3000 km^2). The territory of the Arverni measured roughly 100 by 200 km^2, and so at about 20000 square kilometres was several times the size of the city-state, and this excludes the territory of client states. The *pagus* boundaries are unknown, but they would equate more to the size of a city-state.

Settlement hierarchies. Caesar several times uses a set of terms to denote the settlement hierarchy: *oppidum* (town), *vicus* (village) and *aedificium* (building, farm); occasionally he uses other terms such as *urbs* (city) for some of the *oppida*. The word *oppidum* should indicate some form of defensive site, perhaps translating some Gallic term (*?dunon*). Strabo is less specific; the term he usually uses for the Latin *oppidum* is simply πόλις. One exception is the site of *Bibracte* which he describes as a φρούριον (stronghold, garrison), in contrast to the πόλις of *Cabillonum* (Chalons, the port of the Aedui on the Saône). The capital of the Allobroges, *Vienna* (Vienne), he states had expanded from a κώμη (village) to a metropolis.

Archaeologically the sites described by Caesar as *oppida* show great variation, firstly in size, from over 300 ha (Mont Beuvray/*Bibracte*), to only a few hectares (the defended coastal sites of the Veneti in Brittany). Elsewhere *oppida* can enclose up to 1800 ha (the Heidengraben bei Grabenstetten in southern Germany). We will ignore the smaller coastal and hillforts; their size and the nature of the occupation inside them do not suggest they have an urban character. The nature of the larger *oppida* seems to be quite variable. At one end of the spectrum are sites such as Mont Beuvray which have evidence of extensive occupation over a considerable period of time. In contrast, some sites are only occupied briefly for a generation or less, though the scale of the occupation seems urban-like; other sites seem never to have had any large-scale occupation, unless it was of a very temporary nature. In a couple of areas there is a succession of sites of short duration, with a permanent site only being established in the early Roman period; the best examples are in the Aisne valley (Villeneuve-St.-Germain, Pommiers, Soissons), and in the Auvergne (Corent, Gondole, Gergovie, Clermont-Ferrand).

Caesar refers to the Helvetii as having 20 *oppida*; archaeology has not been able to locate so many sites in their territory. Some may be concealed beneath modern settlements (e.g. sites like Paris and Bourges are only known because of the documentary evidence we have from Caesar's accounts), and also there may be some mismatch between Caesar's concept of an *oppidum* and that of modern archaeologists. Tribes in which urbanisation had taken place usually had one pre-eminent site, but there seems to have been great variability. At one extreme there may only have been one site with urban characteristics, similar to the "solar central place" system described by Carole Smith in Japan (Smith [1976]). One example of this is the Arverni; though other possible defended sites are known in their territory, nothing compares with the central site of Gergovie. In this context it is worth noting that some of these *oppida* are very much larger than the Roman towns that succeeded them, and the scale and density of the occupation suggest they supported larger populations too; compare the size of the Iron Age *oppidum* of Manching in Bavaria (330 ha) with that of London, the largest city in Roman Britain, at about 100 ha. I have suggested that this may be a contrast between a primitive monopolistic system in which there were no rivals competing with the main site, and more advanced competitive systems with secondary sites vying with the primate city (Collis [1984b]). However, there seems to be a variety, as in the case of the 20 *oppida* of the Helvetii, and the Bituriges possessed several densely occupied *oppida* (Levroux, Chateaumeillant, Argenton) though Bour-

ges seems to have been the primate city. The Aedui seem to have had two major settlements: the "capital" at *Bibracte*, and the port at *Cabillonum*.

The term *vicus* is assumed to refer to small open settlements, mainly of an industrial character. In some cases they are contemporary with the *oppida* (e.g. Roanne and Feurs among the Segusiavi – the latter was to become the *civitas* capital; and Saumeray among the Carnutes). Often, however, they seem to pre-date the *oppida*, and were abandoned at the time the *oppida* were founded (Levroux, Aulnat) or diminished in importance (Roanne, Feurs). Their role in a "hierarchy" is thus ambiguous.

In many areas archaeology has failed to identify the *aedificia* referred to by Caesar. Around Clermont-Ferrand sites of this class seem to be abandoned at the time of the founding of the first *oppidum*, and only reappear some time after the Roman conquest. In Luxembourg and Champagne the burial evidence indicates that the elite class lived on some of these sites (Goeblingen-Nospelt, Clemency) rather than in the nearby *oppidum* (Titelberg), though they may well have moved seasonally between their country estates and the town as the centre of power and government.

Urban Layout

Most of the *oppida* represent deliberate foundations rather than a gradual evolution. The provision, in most cases, of a bank and ditch defined the occupation area, creating a contrast between what was within, and what was without, and also allowing control and surveillance of the population at the points of entry, at the gateways. At some sites we can see the expansion, or contraction, of the enclosed area, and occasionally, especially in central and eastern Europe, occupation could take place outside the gates, even developing into extensive suburbs. On some sites in the west, e.g. Mont Beuvray, this space outside the gates was largely reserved for the dead, though in most areas we do not know how the dead were disposed of.

The defined area was usually given a planned layout, with a rectilinear plan as at Condé-sur-Suippe or at the Titelberg. The sites of Villeneuve-St.-Germain and Pommiers were divided into quadrants by ditches (or subterranean buildings, depending on the interpretation), which cut right across the site, possibly defining different areas of activity, or social groupings. At Mont Beuvray a monumental stone basin marks the spot which may have been the base point from which the settlement was laid out, apparently following astronomical alignments (Almagro-Gorbea and Gran-Aymerich [1991]). These symbolic aspects of town layout are well documented in historical societies (e.g. Roman and Etruscan) but are difficult to identify from purely archaeological data.

There is great variation in the range of types of building found on these sites, but only rarely are stratified sequences found with living surfaces and floors surviving intact, so the definition of individual buildings and their functional interpretation (unless there is some distinctive deposition of debris from occupation) is even more difficult. However, at Manching, which has produced the greatest range of recognisable house plans, there is a range of large store houses, barns, and smaller buildings which seem to be used as workshops (and presumably the dwelling houses of the craftspeople as well). Tools help us to identify the range of sometimes very specialised crafts beyond the obvious blacksmiths, carpenters, bronze founders, leather workers, potters, etc.; for instance, goldsmiths, jewellers, saddlers, and others are clearly represented. The role of the *vici* and *oppida* as centres of production is not disputed, and workshops are concentrated along the main thoroughfares for traffic, such as the road which ran from the east to the west gate at Manching, or through the main entrance at the Porte du Rebout at Mont Beuvray.

More problematic, however, are the so-called "palisade" enclosures which have been found at a number of sites. They consist of areas enclosed by a wooden fence or stockade, enclosing a number of structures. One particularly large one at Manching, measuring some 75 m^2, may, on the evidence of the distribution of horse gear, have had stables along one side. Some have a clearly recognisable main dwelling house, and large barns or storehouses up to 40x5m in size. Often the palisade enclosures contain evidence of industrial activity, especially iron working, and from the example at Manching there was a concentration of the moulds which are usually interpreted as for the manufacture of flans for coins. Some see these enclosures as working farms; others as the residences of the elite class, the equivalent of the courtyard house in Greek and Roman cities (these make their appearance at Mont Beuvray within a decade or two after the conquest). Perhaps the two interpretations are not mutually exclusive, with the enclosures marking the residences of an elite land-owning class, but whose lives were not so divorced from the realities of agricultural and even industrial production as the elite in the classical world.

With the exception of temple sites (which are, in fact, rare and generally unpretentious in comparison

with rural temples), no "public" buildings can be recognised on pre-conquest sites. The Spanish sites such as Ulaca are an exception, as here large stone structures of apparently cult significance are known. One or two of the buildings at Manching are somewhat larger, or have more massive postholes than the average, but their siting does not suggest any special roles. Caesar mentions a "market place" at *Cenabum*, but no special open spaces are known from archaeology (except, perhaps, the exceptionally wide main road at Mont Beuvray). Open spaces where meetings could take place presumably existed, but no covered meeting places, which the weather might demand, have been found. Public buildings such as *fora* and *basilicae* were usually built, at earliest, three of four generations after the Roman conquest.

Population

The only figures we have for population sizes comes from Caesar, and may well have been exaggerated for political reasons. The figures that he gives for the Helvetii and their allies who took part in the abortive attempt at migration were from documents captured from the Helvetii after their defeat, and includes all classes, combatants and non-combatants. Those who bore arms form a quarter of the population (those excluded include women, children and old people); this implies that all male adults were armed. The only other tribal figures we have for the total population is for the Atuatuci who brought all the members of the tribe into their *oppidum*; the numbers relate to those sold into slavery. We also have the numbers killed or captured at the *oppidum* of *Avaricum* but this does not include the whole of the tribe of the Bituriges Cubi.

Tribe	total	warriors	oppidum	population	reference
Helvetii	263,000	65,750			BG I-29
Tulungi	36,000	9,000			BG I-29
Latobici	14,000	3,500			BG I-29
Rauraci	23,000	4,750			BG I-29
Boii	32,000	8,000			BG I-29
Atuatuci	57,000		unnamed		BG II-33
Bituriges			Avaricum	80,000	BG VII-28

Production

As already mentioned, there is plentiful evidence of industrial activity in the *oppida*. This may take the form of specialist installations, such as pottery kilns (though these are not common on the major sites), or hearths for melting and casting bronze (like the workshop recently excavated at the Porte du Rebout at Mont Beuvray where brooches were the main item produced). Secondly, there are the tools used for craft activities; at Manching the range implies highly specialised craftsmen, for instance in the types of hammer needed for everything from heavy smithing, for swords and ploughshares, to fine delicate examples for jewellery. Thirdly, there is the discarded debris of manufacture – faulty castings, wasters from pottery kilns, slags of various kinds, ingots of metal or glass, or moulds for bronze equipment or coin flans. All these demonstrate that the *oppida* and the *vici* performed a key role in industrial production.

Argument, however, continues as to what extent these sites acted as "central places" to supply surrounding settlements with manufactured goods, or had a monopoly over certain types of production. Some sorts of exploitation were naturally dictated by the availability of raw materials – salt production, mining for metals. Activities such as the smelting of metals took place on the spot, with the finished raw materials being traded, in the form of ingots of metal, or blocks of salt. Pottery production too was dispersed to where the clay and fuel were available, and some *vici*, such as Sissach in Switzerland, became specialist pottery centres. But lack of information on the range of activities on smaller farming settlements prevents a full answer to these questions (small-scale iron smithing, at least, seems widespread). On the other hand, there are hints in the distribution of workshop activities at Manching that there may have been specialist groups coming into existence on the *oppida*, similar to the guilds that are documented in the Roman and medieval worlds.

Trade

Oppida tend not to be located to best exploit the richest agricultural soils; they are located either on ecological boundaries, or in highland environments

(e.g. Mont Beuvray). Many are located on or near major rivers, or controlling land routes (e.g. on watersheds). The implications are that trade was considered more important than the food supply, and that *oppida* relied on importing much of their food, be it only from a few kilometres away. Given the costs of overland transport of goods and river transport, in comparison to the costs of sea transport, it is unlikely that staples such as grain were moving long distances, except perhaps for export.

In contrast there is plentiful evidence for the movement of luxury goods, most especially wine. Judging by both the documentary evidence, and the huge quantities of amphorae which turn up in *oppida* such as Corent and Mont Beuvray, this trade was considerable. From documentary sources, especially Posidonius and Caesar, it would seem that Italian merchants controlled the movement of these goods. We have evidence from Caesar of Roman merchants resident on some *oppida* (some were killed in uprisings), and epigraphic evidence from the Magdalensberg in Austria for traders resident on the site representing the interests of major Roman families. However, we have no direct evidence for a class of traders in Gallic society.

Coinage, if used for market exchange, was operating mainly at a local level (though individual coins could move considerable distances). Long-distance trade in part relied on exchange of high value metals (gold is mentioned at the Magdalensberg), but especially on credit (see the accounts on the walls of the cellars at the Magdalensberg), and also on barter. Tolls were demanded (and paid) for the passage of goods. In return, presumably, raw materials and slaves were the main products traded back to the Mediterranean, a situation of Mediterranean dominance more familiar in core/periphery relations than in peer polity interaction.

Origins

As previously mentioned, the *oppida* came into existence as a result of a process similar to that of synoikism as recorded in Greece. This implies the prior existence of an organisation capable of making political decisions, and with a social and economic system capable of supporting urbanisation. In this section I wish to explore the background to this process (Collis [1984b], [1995a]).

The sixth century B.C. This is a period when connections between central France/southern Germany and the Mediterranean countries reached a high point. Certain centres of this trade and social development have been identified, the so-called *Fürstensitze*, with concentrations of imported Mediterranean goods, a defended hilltop which has been interpreted as a royal residence, and rich burials which supposedly indicate a hierarchy of "chieftains" who controlled the trade and production through a "prestige goods economy". In fact only three sites conform more or less to the ideal model: the Heuneburg on the upper Danube, the Asperg on the Neckar, and Mont Lassois on the Seine (Pare [1991]). However, the most extensively researched of this group, around Asperg (Biel [1985]), suggests the reality may be somewhat different. Unfortunately the Hohenasperg itself is inaccessible, and the site, if it existed, seems to have been largely destroyed by medieval and more modern fortifications. Around it there is a cluster of small settlements, and the rich burials seem to be associated with these rather than with the defended site. They also produce evidence of industrial activity, e.g. metalworking, and imported goods, suggesting that the central site by no means held a monopoly. The closest parallels for Asperg lie with sites like Proto-Geometric and Geometric Athens. The sites which produce the imports or rich burials lie 100 km or more apart, somewhat more than one would expect under the "city-state" model. Unfortunately we have no useful documentary evidence in the Greek sources for this period.

The fifth century B.C. Most of the centres of Hallstatt D disappear at the end of the sixth century, though imported goods and wealthy burials still continue in central Europe, but in areas adjacent to (especially north of) the earlier centres. One centre that does continue is Bourges; it has imports, but not especially wealthy burials. Writing several centuries later, Livy names the Bituriges Cubi under their king Ambigatus, as the most powerful tribe in Gaul, and as the instigators of the Gallic invasions of northern Italy and central Europe at the end of the fifth century. If we accept Livy's statment at face value (and there is nothing in their later history to suggest why Livy might have exaggerated the power of the Bituriges Cubi), then it indicates that the tribal organisation was already in existence then. It had certainly become crystallised by the time of Polybius in the third century B.C.

Fourth–second centuries B.C. The centuries following the period of apparently peaceful contact are marked by a demise of the trade, and of armed invasion of the Mediterranean countries by groups from central and western Europe. It is a period when, in central Europe, it is difficult to identify any central-

ising features in the archaeological evidence – no (or few) wealthy burials, no central places, either defensive, ritual, or demographic (Collis [1995b]). The only possible exceptions are two or three cult sites where enclosures were constructed, or deposition starts to take place, perhaps at the beginning of the third century (at Gournay-sur-Aronde, or at the eponymous site of La Tène). With the second century this evidence begins to accelerate, with more sites becoming recognisable, and an increasing amount of deposition, especially of weapons, but also of humans and animals. This continues on, reaching its height in the period of the *oppida*. Caesar himself was certainly aware of the religiosity of the Gauls, and of the deposition of booty from wars, and of human sacrifice, but he makes no mention of whether this was happening at a tribal, or at a supra-tribal level. On the basis of the number of sites known in Belgic Gaul, Roymans (1990) has suggested that the organisation of cult activities may have been organised at the level of the *pagus*; on the other hand, the number of human bones that were deposited at Ribemont-sur-Ancre, or the numbers of swords at La Tène or at Gournay, are more suggestive of a tribal level of activity.

In terms of settlements, a small number of sites which are clearly more than small villages or hamlets, start emerging around the end of the third century (Manching) or at the beginning of the second (Levroux, Roanne), and some of these start taking on urban characteristics, in size and in the range of activities represented. Around Clermont-Ferrand, in the Auvergne, there is an exceptional concentration of sites (perhaps one every 500 m), and one at least of these, La Grande Borne, was heavily engaged in production, the working of various metals, bone, glass, etc. It is the period when Luernios, the "richest man in all Gaul" according to Posidonius, became king of the Arverni. This is also the period when trade with the Mediterranean starts to develop again.

The oppida. Only for a small number of areas can we say much about the pre-*oppidum* settlement patterns. In some cases we see the direct move of an entire site to a new defended site a few kilometres away (Levroux, Basel), or defences put round an pre-existing settlement (Manching). However, synoikism seems to be the norm, though only in one case can we clearly identify it: in the area around Clermont-Ferrand almost all the sites in the plain of the Grande Limagne were abandoned at the time of the foundation of the first *oppidum* on the hilltop of Corent, though it is difficult to believe that the whole of the population was nucleated on the one site; though the plateau of Corent encompasses some 75 ha, only half of it was apparently densely occupied, and that includes a ritual area.

In some areas there is only a partial abandonment of the open sites, e.g. among the Segusiavi where Roanne and Feurs contract when the *oppida* of Jœuvre and Crêt Châtelard were established. Here the *oppida* never really develop as urban centres, and it is the open sites which become major Roman centres. Elsewhere we either know little or nothing about what preceded the *oppida* (e.g. Mont Beuvray) and we can only assume that they were formed through synoikism; or we do not know what the impact was, if any, on the previous settlements. In Champagne and in Mosel/Luxembourg many settlements did continue.

The re-organisation of the province under Agrippa and Augustus saw the establishment of a local government based on the tribal *civitas*, and many Iron Age settlements (or their successors) evolved into *civitas* capitals, with their *fora*, *basilicae*, and local councils.

Discussion

There are several features of these "tribal states" which seem to contrast with the model of the "city-state":

(1) the tribal territories are larger than those of the city-state (the latter seem to equate more with the division of the *civitas*, the *pagus*); (2) the limited figures we have from Caesar for the total populations of the tribal states suggest populations, at least for the major ones, larger than those of the "city-state" (the figures we have for client tribes are more similar) (3) the names of the tribes came into existence long before the urban sites were established; (4) the tribes are not named after geographical features (e.g. their towns or territory), rather the reverse; (5) inscriptions on coins generally relate to individuals, not to cities or tribes; (6) public works, other than cult buildings, bridges, defences, and roads, have not been identified; (7) the origin of the urban centres resembles more that of synoikism among the *ethne* rather than the dense cluster of small villages which have been suggested for sites like Athens, Rome or Veii; (8) the urban sites in these tribal states seem much larger than is general among city-states; (9) it is perhaps only when city-states start developing empires that they become comparable, at least in the ancient world (e.g. Athens, Syracuse, Carthage, Rome).

There are certain areas of similarity in the institutions found in these different types of "archaic state" in Europe: (1) there were elected magistrates, who

were supported by some sort of advisory council; (2) there were defined rules surrounding the eligibility of candidates for magistracies aimed at preventing control by a supreme ruler or family; (3) there was a controlling oligarchy whose power was largely based on clientship; (4) these states were unstable, and oligarchic rule was threatened by tyranny or kingship, which could be achieved, for instance, by the display or use of armed power (e.g. Dumnorix), or by a display of wealth and largesse (e.g. Luernios), but these attempts were not always successful (e.g. Celtillus); (5) the need for popular support was essential if effective armies were to be put into the field; (6) in Gaul a quarter of the population seems to have borne arms; (7) cult activities may have acted as a uniting feature bringing together disparate political groups (cf. the meetings of the Druids, the Olympic Games, the symbolic role of Delos); (8) the state played an increasingly important role in the construction of temples and in the deposition of rich offerings.

The characteristics which might be used by archaeologists as key features to identify city-states as against tribal states include: (1) the urban sites in city-states should show a range of characteristics which they share in common (cult buildings; public buildings, including ones used for administration or assembly; a range of different types of private houses including those of the elite and of an artisan and or trading class; a range of facilities for storage and craft production); (2) the site should be relatively small in size, though larger and small urban sites can be expected; (3) the distribution of such sites should be fairly dense (e.g. with around 50–60 km between "nearest neighbours", and with a limited settlement hierarchy); (4) if coinage exists, though the names of rulers or magistrates may appear, there should be prominence given either to the name of the city, or its symbolic representations (e.g. the Athenian owl); (5) low value coins may be expected to have limited and localised distributions, though high value coins, like the Athenian silver "owls", may be used for bullion or as standards, and have a wide distribution; (6) there should be evidence for an ideology, especially among the elite, oriented towards the city, e.g. as the place to be buried, or to invest in the building of their private residences, rather than on country residences.

Conclusions

The sites in central and northern Gaul do not seem to conform to the model of the "city-state" on several criteria; these can be gleaned from authors such as Caesar, but which are also reflected in the archaeological data. The characteristics of sites in central Europe and central Spain, for which we have less documentary evidence, suggest that they are similar to the Gallic sites. They contrast with the sites on the Mediterranean littoral of southern France and eastern Spain, which are smaller, more homogeneous in their characteristics, and more densely spaced; for some sites in eastern Spain, inscriptions on coins suggest that some of them at least were city-states.

This raises the interesting question of why the coastal sites should tend towards the characteristics of a "city-state" while those inland tend towards the "tribal state" or "territorial state". In part this may be due to the emulation of Greek and Carthaginian colonial settlements; in part greater self-reliance due to an orientation towards the sea, in trade and fishing. In contrast, settlement inland tended to be dispersed into smaller non-urban settlements, and defence relied more on alliances and mutual support along links of genealogy and clientship, rather than reliance on a single defended settlement. Inland, the conditions just did not exist for the development of the typical city-state, for instance: the port of trade as an enclave supplying a major empire with goods while keeping foreign influences at a distance (e.g. Hong Kong, Tyre and Sidon); political agreement between major powers guaranteeing protection and neutrality of a site lying on their borders (Luxembourg, Danzig); small plains bounded by mountains (Athens); a foreign colony, like the many Greek and Carthaginian enclaves in the classical period, on the coast of the Mediterranean, the Adriatic and the Black Sea.

Perhaps this contrast between inland territorial states and coastal city-states, is not confined to the southern Europe, e.g. in north Africa and the northern Black Sea. Is it a world-wide phenomenon, and if so, why?

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