The Heuneburg

The Iron Age hilltop settlement of the Heuneburg is situated in South Western Germany in the Upper Danube Basin. The Heuneburg is considered to be the first proto-urban centre north of the Alps – Herodot’s Celtic city of Pyrene. For almost 70 years systematic archaeological investigations have been ongoing. With its logistically favourable location, the Heuneburg dominates its surroundings and, with good visibility, there is a fine view of the Alps. Historically the Heuneburg’s geographical situation facilitated connections to the Balkans and over the alpine passes to Northern Italy.

The Heuneburg’s first fortifications date to the Bronze Age (1600–1100 BC). But it was only after a hiatus of several centuries that it reached its heyday between the 7th and the 5th century BC as a supra-regional centre of the Early Iron Age. An impressive archaeological landscape has already been revealed in the catchment area of the Heuneburg. It includes an extensive outer settlement as well as further spectacular sites in the surroundings.

The burial of the Celtic princess in the Bettelbühl necropolis, excavated in 2010 or the bronze equestrian figure from the 2016 excavation of the burial mounds near Unlingen are just two examples.

The DFG long-term project

Not least because of the massive research potential, the long-term project „Settlement and cultural landscape development of the Heuneburg surroundings during the Hallstatt and Early La Tène periods” was established in 2014 by the DFG (German Research Foundation). The new investigations in the Heuneburg area concentrate on questions concerning economic, social and ritual habits as well as geographical connections between the central site and the environs. The main focus of the project is on the exploration of the development of regional rural settlement structures (farmsteads, hamlets, villages) during the Hallstatt and Early La Tène periods.

Additionally, other hilltop sites such as the Alte Burg and the Große Heuneburg are under investigation in order to define their interaction with their direct surroundings and their relationship with the Heuneburg. The well preserved outer settlement of the Heuneburg itself is also subject to study. This area can give us an opportunity to assess the chronological sequence of the construction phases. This holistic approach gives us the possibility to capture the essential characteristics of the Iron Age cultural landscape in the environs of the Heuneburg.

We want you!

Once again this year excavations in the surroundings of the Heuneburg will take place from April until probably October. The work will concentrate on the fortified settlement Große Heuneburg as well as the topographically modified cult and gathering place Alte Burg and the Bettelbühl necropolis. We are looking for interested and enthusiastic archaeology students to support our team. Students with prior excavation experience will be preferred but beginners also have the chance to participate. Minimum duration of the traineeship is four weeks. If you are interested, send us a mail to one of the addresses below with a complete and up-to-date CV (in English or German) and your preferred dates.
We offer:

- An allowance of 370€ for each entire month. The possibility to continue as a regular member of the team is given for a limited number of trainees.
- Free accommodation.
- The collaboration with an experienced international team at important sites.
- The application of the latest archaeological methods and technologies.
- And for the really courageous: the opportunity to learn the very special local dialect of South Western Germany!

Please note:

We can only accept students whose degree regulations stipulate mandatory field work of at least 4 weeks (20 days).

Contact

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Excavations in the surroundings of the Heuneburg

6 At sunset: a relaxed end of an excavation day

7 The Heuneburg and further sites in its environs

Link to the open-air museum:
http://www.heuneburg-keitenstadt.de/index2.html

Source of figures:
Cover: A. Drescher (LAD)
1: after Antiquity 91, 2017, 108
2: G. Neumann (LAD)
3–5: A. Striffler/W. Weher (LAD)
6: R. Hartmayer (LAD)
7: I. Kretschmer/L. Hansen (LAD)

Required:
Trainees for the DFG long-term project „Settlement and cultural landscape development of the Heuneburg surroundings during the Hallstatt and Early La Tène periods“