

**BERTRAND BONAVENTURE / STÉPHANE CARRARA (eds), Axes fluviaux et territoires à l'âge du Fer.**  
Collection Afeaf volume 4. AFEAF, Paris 2022. € 35.00. ISBN 978-2-9567407-3-5. 300 pages.

A conference volume without a conference – this paradox owes its existence to the coronavirus pandemic. The 2020 Symposium of the Association Française pour l'Étude de l'Âge du Fer (AFEAF), which was supposed to take place in Lyon, unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. And this at a time when many presentations and posters had already been prepared. Therefore, gratitude should be extended to the two editors for providing the originally intended participants with the opportunity to publish their presentations, thereby enriching the scientific discourse with this publication that offers numerous new insights.

As the title “Axes fluviaux et territoires à l'âge du Fer” already indicates, the topic aligns with the one of the 2013 conference in Montpellier and the accompanying proceedings (OLMER/ROURE 2015), but this time the focus is only on rivers and their surrounding areas, as these played a pivotal role in shaping prehistoric European landscapes. Central to the formation of settlement networks, rivers, alongside their tributaries and adjacent lands, dictated socio-political and natural dynamics within the Iron Age. This volume aims to dissect the complexities of riverine-influenced territorial systems across Central Europe, offering in-depth analyses to understand their impact on human settlements and interactions. Highlighting the diverse influence of fluvial environments, it reveals the nuanced interplay between human occupation and river courses, showcasing the intricate relationship between geography and societal development during the Iron Age.

The volume comprises 19 articles, including seven poster contributions. This is reflected in the clear differences in the length of the papers, as the contributions to the planned posters are significantly shorter with an average of six pages. The publication is divided into five thematic sections according to geographical aspects, which are based on the catchment areas of the major rivers Seine, Loire, Rhine and Rhône. Finally, all other river systems are aggregated in a fifth section.

Only Michel Philippe's essay (pp. 9–22) did not fit into this scheme, which is why it is the first after the introduction by both editors and ahead of this classification. His study meticulously examines the diversity and complexity of nautical practices in independent Gaul, suggesting a broader range of watercraft types than previously recognised, amidst the challenge of limited archaeological evidence.

The thematic block on the Seine River catchment comprises four articles. Each study offers a unique perspective on the role of the Seine River and its tributaries in shaping human settlement patterns, albeit through different lenses and methodologies. Claire-Élise Fischer, Marie-Hélène Pemonge, Stéphane Rottier, Mélanie Pruvost and Marie-France Guillou (pp. 25–38) use archaeogenetic data from Late Iron Age cemeteries to reveal the genetic structure of populations along the Seine River, highlighting the role of large rivers in settlement dynamics and showing genetic links that reflect the cultural and geographical divisions of the time. Carole Quatreuvre (pp. 39–55) analyses the strategic significance of the Seine and Marne river confluence for eastern Gaul, noting changes in territorial dynamics and settlement patterns from the middle to late La Tène period, including militarisation and shifts in river control. Marion Dessaint (pp. 57–71) focuses on the *Civitas Remorum*, demonstrating the importance of river proximity in settlement choices from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC, and how rivers and urban centres were crucial in structuring territory and facilitating exchange within the Remi landscape. Célia Basset (pp. 73–88) explores the role of the Seine rivers streambed and tidal zones in settlement occupation during the Iron Age, emphasising the navigability of waterways and the valleys as transport routes, which facilitated a network of interactions across Northwestern France.

The thematic block on the Loire River catchment comprises only two contributions: Jean-Marie Laruz, Laurence Augier, Marion Bouchet, Agnès Couderc, Fabrice Couvin, Francesca Di Napoli, Jean-Philippe Gay, Axel Levillayer, Murielle Troubaday, et al. (pp. 91–120) investigate the Loire's role in structuring landscapes and territories during the Iron Age to analyse the river's influence on settlement development, watercourse management, and the organisation of sites within a 50 km strip along the Loire, emphasising the Gallic populations' significant role in utilising the valley for settlement and long-distance exchanges. Annabelle Dufournet and Guillaume Varennes (pp. 121–124) examine the Nantes area, suggesting a network of multiple centres influenced by road and river routes rather than a single dominant site.

The three studies in the Rhine River catchment section collectively emphasise the critical role of rivers in Iron Age Europe from different angles. Timo Geitlinger, Marianne Ramstein and Alexandra Winkler (pp. 127–143) focus on the Bernese Seeland's significance in Hallstatt traffic routes, utilising a variety of data to reconstruct the landscape and understand transport routes. Thierry Logel (pp. 145–164) examines the Upper Rhine through historical and archaeological lenses, suggesting its long-standing importance in cultural and economic exchanges. Clara Millot-Richard (pp. 165–169) explores the possibility of a briquetage salt production site in the Neckar valley, highlighting the structuring role of rivers in the economy.

In the last themed section on the Rhône River catchment Valérie Taillandier (pp. 173–180) focuses on the Doubs Valley, showcasing its role in facilitating north-Alpine trade and cultural exchanges during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. Émilie Dubreucq, Christelle Sanchez, Matthieu Thivet and Frederic Cruz (pp. 181–188) investigate the Saône-Doubs confluence, aiming to understand settlement dynamics from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, highlighting the emergence of proto-urban centres. Eric Durand, Cyril Gaillard, Pascal Marrou, Cécile Moulin, Frédéric Sergent, Réjane Roure and Maeva Serieys and Emilie Fencke (pp. 189–224) map the middle Rhône Valley, revealing a dense network of trade and settlement from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. G. Varennes (pp. 225–229) examines the Allobroges' territory, highlighting the interplay between land and water routes in the vertebration of their domain, especially around Tourdan (France). Together, these studies illuminate the intricate web of Iron Age trade, settlement, and cultural exchanges facilitated by river valleys across different regions.

The book concludes with individual studies on other rivers: Holger Wendling (pp. 233–252) focuses on the Salzach River in the Eastern Alps as a vital economic route since the Early Bronze Age, influencing settlement strategies without serving as a border, underlining differences in regional economic orientations. Antoine Dumas and Stéphanie Adroit (pp. 253–270) investigate early Iron Age cultural distinctions between Quercy (France) and the central Pyrenees through funerary practices and material culture, revealing a direct link between cultural facies, hydrographic networks, and settlement organisation. Jérôme Bénézet, Ingrid Dunyach and Jérôme Kotarba (pp. 271–278) examine the Tech River settlements in Occitania, Southern France, from the late Bronze Age to the Roman era, discussing the importance of traffic routes and fishery resources in understanding valley functions. Silvia Fogliazza and Roberto Macellari (pp. 279–292) analyse the Iron Age cultural, political, and economic dynamics around the Po Valley emphasising the intermingling of various cultures, ritual practices, and myths. Andrew William Lamb (pp. 293–296) explores rivers in Ulster, Ireland, as crucial to Iron Age life for rituals, transport, and boundaries, highlighting unique archaeological finds linked to both continuity and change since the Bronze Age.

The volume is attractively laid out, contemporary in design with numerous, large-format, and mostly colour illustrations and maps. The size (approximately DIN A4, but slightly wider), blank pages following each contribution, and a generous layout make the publication very user-friendly.

Modern not only in layout but also in scientific approach, most texts engage with the entire spectrum of human settlement contexts, from silos and wells to individual farmsteads and 'central places', leading to impressive results regarding the reconstruction of various settlement patterns during different phases of the Iron Age (mostly focusing on the La Tène period, especially in the last two centuries BC).

Several contributions reflect a methodology that can be described as a consistent bottom-up approach. Here, large data sets are processed, structured, and ultimately analysed to develop new concepts and insights from the bottom up. In contrast, a top-down approach starts with an existing concept, like the role of central places or oppida or viewing rivers primarily as transport routes, which are applied and tested against empirical data. Methodologically, a bottom-up approach is feasible only when large data volumes can be managed with databases and techniques for quantitative and digital data processing and analysis are mastered, as impressively demonstrated by most contributions. This is made possible by accessing data from numerous rescue excavations. A commendable publication policy for many emergency excavations and an apparently effective integration of heritage management into research seem responsible at the administrative level, fostering hopes that this practice might similarly transfer to many German states where a significant portion of these crucial excavations remain unpublished. It is hoped that future studies will continue to adopt the thematic and methodological impulses prevalent in "Axes fluviaux", exploring further questions.

Most contributions have a sometimes strong quantitative and GIS-related orientation and/or are strongly interdisciplinary. At the same time, the obtained results are consolidated by varying degrees of source criticism throughout many papers.

The volume is particularly insightful in suggesting a correlation between social rank and proximity to rivers and oppida (M. Dessaint, pp. 57–71), indicating that high-ranking settlements are located closer to rivers than smaller, simpler ones. For further studies, it would be interesting to consider and compare this approach with similar typifications (e.g. MAGUER et al. 2009, 428 and MALRAIN et al. 2002, whose concept was recently taken up by FICHTL 2021, 20–22). Research in other regions addressing the impact of climatic developments during the Iron Age and the hydrogeomorphological changes of river courses to the respective settlement strategies, as undertaken by C. Basset (pp. 73–88), T. Geitlinger et al. (pp. 127–143) or E. Durand et al. (pp. 189–224), would be particularly interesting.

Many contributions have shown that rivers seldom acted as boundaries; rather, they were focal points and lifelines within cultural groups or tribal territories, which tended to align along river courses (C. Fischer et al., pp. 25–38; Basset, pp. 73–88; J.-M. Laruz et al., pp. 91–120; Th. Logel, pp. 145–164; Durand et al., pp. 189–224; H. Wendling, pp. 233–252). This indirectly demonstrates how important ferries, fords and bridges must have been. Nevertheless, investigations systematically exploring geostructural aspects, as well as studies focusing more on ports, jetties, and general river crossings during the Iron Age still represent research desiderata (see e.g. ELLMERS 1995; for the Iron Age bridges, especially those from the La Tène period, see LEHNEMANN 2021, pp. 97–106 with list 3 [only 16 La Tène bridges in Central Europe currently known]). In this publication, these aspects are at least occasionally mentioned but often only peripherally treated (in approaches by Basset [pp. 73–88], Laruz et al. [pp. 91–120], A. Dufournet/G. Varennes [pp. 121–124], Logel [pp. 145–164], and especially Durand et al. [pp. 189–224]). As the authors consistently emphasise, archaeological evidence of river crossings is challenging to secure, but the frequent application of a bottom-up approach based on numerous archaeological data seems promising. For example, the middle and northern Upper Rhine would be particularly suitable for such a study due to the relatively dense settlement during the La Tène period. The role of watersheds, briefly addressed by Basset (pp. 73–88), deserves more attention on a supra-regional scale, for ex-

ample concerning the location of so-called 'princely seats' of the late Hallstatt period, where many central places like Mont Lassois (France), Britzgyberg (France), and the Heuneburg (Germany) are situated near major European watersheds.

This conference volume is the fourth title published independently by AFEAF and within the "Collection Afeaf" series. This marks a significant step in AFEAF's development, highlighting its growing importance in the pan-European discourse on Central European Iron Age. The establishment of a dedicated series is a logical progression for an association that originated from regionally focused studies and has evolved over the past four decades into a key institution within European Iron Age research.

Despite the overall high visual quality of the volume, there are noticeable lapses in editorial quality. For instance, the titles in the table of contents do not always match the actual titles of the contributions. Titles from the conference were initially used ([http://www.afeaf.org/bibliotheque/\\_modules/catalogue/Actualites/Actualites\\_25\\_2.pdf](http://www.afeaf.org/bibliotheque/_modules/catalogue/Actualites/Actualites_25_2.pdf) [last access 10.07.2024]), but appear to have been altered during the publication process without correction. Additionally, some texts contain surprisingly obvious errors, such as the use of "Nauis", "Naues", and "Nauicula" instead of "Navis", "Naves", and "Navicula" (M. Philippe, p. 10). In C. Quatrelièvre's text (p. 42), reference is made to figures 4, 10–12, which actually pertain to figure 5. These issues are likely due to the challenging circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic and possibly initial difficulties in managing a new series, issues that are expected to be resolved in subsequent volumes.

It is gratifying to note that more than half of the authors are female, and many of the articles were written by early career scholars. Most contributions offer insightful perspectives, showcasing a varied and layered methodological canon, from gene analyses, geomorphological excursions to sophisticated GIS evaluations like least-cost-path models.

The publication adeptly marries innovative research with aesthetic presentation, establishing itself as an indispensable resource for the study of Iron Age settlements and landscapes. It conclusively positions river systems not merely as geographical features but as pivotal architects of Iron Age societal structures, driving the evolution of settlements, economies, and cultural exchanges. This holistic approach underscores the volume's contribution to advancing our understanding of the symbiotic relationship between watercourses and ancient civilisations.

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**FABIEN DELRIEU / CLÉMENT FÉLIU / PHILIPPE GRUAT / MARIE-CAROLINE KURZAJ / ÉLISE NECTOUX (Hrsg.), *Espaces fortifiés à l'âge du Fer en Europe*. Actes du 43<sup>e</sup> colloque international de l'AFEAF (Le Puy-en-Velay, 30 mai–1<sup>er</sup> juin 2019). Collection AFEAF Bd. 3, Paris 2021. € 48,00. ISBN 978-2-9567407-2-8. 484 Seiten.**

Der stattliche Tagungsband enthält 40 Einzelbeiträge in Französisch, bis auf vier englischsprachige Ausnahmen, jeweils mit knappen Résumés und Abstracts. Der geographische Schwerpunkt liegt naturgemäß in Frankreich (ohne Korsika), wobei Zentral- und Südfrankreich dominieren. Zwölf manchmal nur knappe Fallstudien, Regionalübersichten oder Vergleichsstudien lösen den europäischen Anspruch des Titels ein. Davon beziehen sich je zwei auf die britischen Inseln, die Heuneburg-Region (Manuel Fernández-Götz, S. 149–153.; Roberto Tarpini, Leif Hansen und Dirk Krause, S. 221–234) und Iberien. Je ein Beitrag ist der Emilia Romagna mit dem östlichen Venedig (Lorenzo Zamboni und Paolo Rondini, S. 213–220), den Tiroler Inneralpen (Peter C. Rams, S. 431–436), Manching (Thimo Jacob Brestel, S. 235–240) sowie der späten Eisenzeit im Schweizer Jura und Mittelland (Pascal Brand et al., S. 375–391) gewidmet. Zwei Beiträge nehmen zusammen mit Frankreich das ganze südliche Mitteleuropa in den Blick (Stephan Fichtl, S. 97–114; Sophie Krausz, S. 123–136).

Die Beiträge sind durchweg ansprechend und üppig mit Abbildungen und Grafiken unterlegt und vermitteln insgesamt auch einen guten Querschnitt über zeitgemäße Prospektions- und Analysemethoden. Nicht gering veranschlagt werden sollte der jeweilige Literaturapparat, der besonders die Forschungslandschaft Frankreich aufschließt.

Wie nicht nur aus einer gleichsam statistischen und kompakten Gesamtübersicht (Pierre-Yves Milcent et al., S. 175–194) hervorgeht, verzeichnet die Eisenzeit in Frankreich wie in Mitteleuropa bei den Befestigungen zwei chronologische Schwerpunkte, die ältere Eisenzeit im Bereich des 8.–4. Jahrhunderts und in der jüngeren Eisenzeit vom ausgehenden 2. bis zum 1. Jahrhundert v. Chr. In diesem bipolaren Umfeld gilt die Hälfte der Beiträge dem jüngsten Abschnitt, ein Viertel ist epochenübergreifend angelegt.

Der Übersichtlichkeit halber waren die Vorträge und werden die Beiträge des Bandes unter drei übergeordneten Aspekten präsentiert: Thema 1 sind die Befestigungswerke selbst von der Typologie bis zur Frage nach deren Funktion. Thema 2 weitet sich auf die innere Organisation, Umlandbeziehungen und Funktion befestigter Plätze in ihrem Umfeld. Thema 3 ist der Rolle der Befestigungen im regionalen Siedlungswesen und den dabei erkennbaren Entwicklungen gewidmet. Vielleicht unvermeidlich sind schon diese Kategorien und die entsprechenden Zuordnungen nicht immer