

ANNONCE DES XII^e RENCONTRES DOCTORALES
ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 12 DOCTORAL MEETING

**L'archéologie de la violence et des expressions de la force à la Protohistoire :
interroger ses approches, ses formes et ses marqueurs**

**Archaeology of violence and expressions of force in Protohistory:
questioning its approaches, forms and markers**

DU 12 AU 15 MARS 2026
FROM MARCH 12TH TO 15TH 2026
contact: eepb2026@gmail.com

PROGRAMME



→ B I B R A C T E ←

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Bartosz Kontny, Professeur, Université de Varsovie, Département de Barbaricum et d'archéologie provinciale romaine.

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Fernando Quesada-Sanz, Professeur, Université Autonome de Madrid.

**XII^e RENCONTRES DOCTORALES
DE L'ÉCOLE EUROPÉENNE DE PROTOHISTOIRE DE BIBRACTE**

**L'ARCHÉOLOGIE DE LA VIOLENCE ET DES EXPRESSIONS DE LA FORCE À LA PROTOHISTOIRE :
INTERROGER SES APPROCHES, SES FORMES ET SES MARQUEURS**

Les archéologues ont tendance à mettre en avant l'étude des conflits armés, de la figure du guerrier et des fortifications. Or, qu'il s'agisse d'"une force exercée par une personne ou un groupe pour soumettre, contraindre quelqu'un ou pour obtenir quelque chose"¹, la violence se décline pourtant sous de nombreuses formes (économique, sociale, iconographique, architecturale, etc.) selon les contextes (domestique, funéraire, culturel, territoire...).

Lors de ces rencontres doctorales, nous souhaitons questionner les formes et les marqueurs de la violence comme phénomène social, ainsi que ses causes pour comprendre "ce qui [...] constitue l'essence" de la violence à la Protohistoire².

La perception et l'analyse de la violence à la Protohistoire implique une approche interdisciplinaire qui mobilise, en plus de l'archéologie, l'anthropologie physique, l'archéozoologie, l'iconographie, l'ethnologie, la sociologie...

Ces rencontres ont donc pour but d'appréhender les déclinaisons de la violence au cours des âges des Métaux, dans ses différentes dimensions sociales, collectives et inter-personnelles mais aussi à l'égard des non-humains.

¹ Centre National des Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales - article "violence".

² CLÉMENT, DEMONQUE, HANSEN-LØVE et KAHN 2000, *La philosophie de A à Z*, Paris, p. 465.

**12th DOCTORAL MEETING
OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOL OF PROTOHISTORY IN BIBRACTE**

**ARCHAEOLOGY OF VIOLENCE AND EXPRESSIONS OF FORCE IN PROTOHISTORY:
QUESTIONING APPROACHES, FORMS, AND MARKERS**

Archaeologists tend to focus on the study of armed conflicts, the figure of the warrior, and fortifications. However, whether defined as “a force exerted by an individual or group to subdue, constrain someone, or obtain something”³, violence manifests in many forms (economic, social, iconographic, architectural, etc.) and in various contexts (domestic, funerary, ritual, territorial...).

During this doctoral meeting, we aim to question the forms and markers of violence as a social phenomenon, as well as its causes, in order to understand “what [...] constitutes the essence” of violence in Protohistory⁴.

The perception and analysis of violence in Protohistory require an interdisciplinary approach involving not only archaeology but also physical anthropology, archaeozoology, iconography, ethnology, sociology, and more.

These meetings thus aim to explore both the various manifestations of violence throughout the Metal Ages—in its social, collective, interpersonal, and even non-human dimensions.

³ Centre National des Ressources Textuelles et Lexicales - article “violence”.

⁴ CLÉMENT, DEMONQUE, HANSEN-LØVE et KAHN 2000, *La philosophie de A à Z*, Paris, p. 465.

PROGRAMME

Mercredi 11 mars 2026 / Wednesday, 11th march 2026

Welcoming of participants to Bibracte

Jeudi 12 mars 2026 / Thursday, 12th march 2026

9:30-9:40h Mots de bienvenue du Comité d'organisation / Welcome speech by the Organizing Committee

Session 1 – *Contrôler et Représenter la Violence / Controlling and Representing Violence*

9:40-10:20h **Sophie Krausz** – Keynote *War and Peace in protohistoric societies: how can archaeology help to decrypt the control of violence?*

10:20-10:45h **Alessandra Sorrenti; Simone Grosso** – Wearing (or not?) the warrior costume: insights into martial self-representation in protohistoric southern Etruria.

10:45-11:00h Welcome coffee

11:00-11:25h **Salvatore Veneziano** – Swords and Power : Warrior Self-Representation in the Hinterland of Pontecagnano.

11:25-11:35h **Júlia Carrera (Poster)** : Childhood and interpersonal violence in the Protohistory of the northeastern Iberian Peninsula (3rd-2nd millennium BC)

11:35-12:00h **Marta Cyran** – Violence Beyond the Battlefield: Funerary Practices as Markers of Power in the Przeworsk Culture. A Case Study from Eastern Central Europe.

12:00-14:00h Lunch break

14:00-14:25h **Emmanuel Hamon** – Expressions de la violence physique et symbolique dans l'habitat groupé de Verdun-sur-le-Doubs (Saône-et-Loire).

14:25-14:50h **Federico Corradi** – The Aequi between Erasure and Survival: Evidence from the Sanctuaries of Carsoli and Oricola.

14:50-15:15h **Io Cruz** – Local versus foreigner? Expressions of force and violence in Tartessos, Thrace and Scythia in the context of Mediterranean colonisation (9th-4th centuries BCE).

15:15-15:40h **Eleonora Pawlikowska** – Mobility as a Tool of Coercion: Horse Equipment from Eastern and Central Europe as Archaeological Markers of Violence in the Migration Period.

15:40-16:00h Coffee break

16:00-16:25h **Ethan Coulson-Haggins** – Carved in Stone: Rethinking the Hoplite through Lycian Tomb Reliefs.

16:25-16:50h **Martyna Marszalek** – Barbarians in the Face of Death: Representations of Violence as Imperial Propaganda in the Archaeological Record of the Italian Peninsula (1st–3rd c. CE).

16:50-17:15h *Discussion on session 2*

Vendredi 13 mars 2026 / Friday, 13th march 2026

Session 2 – Ritualiser la Violence : Pratiques et Objets / Ritualising Violence : Practices and Objects

9:00-9:25h **Bartosz Kontny** – Keynote: *Martial aquatic offerings in the Baltic Sea region. Old and new approaches to research of protohistoric post-battle rituals.*

9:25-9:50h **Iga Doniec** – Celtic Weapon Finds from Water Contexts in the Polish Lands.

9:50-10:15h **Andjelika Babic** *Online* – Fragmentation and Performative Deposition: Material Violence and the Social Lives of Objects in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Central Balkans.

10:15-10:35h Coffee break

10:35-11:00h **Jasmin Köhler** – Expressions of Force and the Construction of Power: Iron Age Votive Practices in Comparative Perspective.

11:00-11:25h **Solène Alloin** – The different symbolic meanings of the Corinthian helmet, its link with warlike practices and its use as a marker of rank.

11:25-11:35h **Charles Vuillermin** – Lendemain de bataille, gueule de bois pour les boucliers.

11:35-12:00h Discussion on session 2

12:00-14:00h Lunch break

Session 3 – *Paysages Fortifiés / Fortified Landscapes*

14:00-14:25h **Manuel Fenández-Götz** – Keynote: *Iron Age societies in the face of the Roman conquest: Archaeological perspectives*

14:25-14:50h **Romain Tagliaferro** – Fortifications de hauteur et territoires protohistoriques (-1000/-50) entre Garonne et Massif central: apports du LiDAR.

14:50-15:15h **Andrea Solana** – Violence, social dynamics and landscape in the Iron Age: A methodological approach to the defensive systems of the upper-middle Ebro and upper Duero (Northern Spain) using non-invasive methods and GIS.

15:15-15:40h Coffee break

15:40-16:05h **Rodrigo González** – A world made of stone. The fortification as an agent in the landscape.

16:05-16:25h **Jaume Noguera** – Challenges and opportunities of creating sequential digital maps of the Sertorian War (82–72 BCE).

16:25-17:00h Discussion on session 3

Samedi 14 mars 2026 / Saturday, 14th march 2026

10:00-12:00h Visit to the Bibracte museum

12:00-14:00h Picnic

14:00-16:00h Visit to the archaeological site of Bibracte

16:00-17:30h Hike to the European archaeological centre of Bibracte

17:30-18:00h Arrival at the European archaeological centre of Bibracte

18:00-19:00h Support the 13th EEPB doctoral meetings

Session 1

Contrôler et Représenter la Violence

Controlling and Representing Violence





Keynote

Guerre et Paix au sein des sociétés protohistoriques : Comment l'archéologie aide-elle à décrypter le contrôle de la violence ?

War and Peace in protohistoric societies: How can archaeology help to decrypt the control of violence?

Sophie Krausz (sophie.krausz@univ-paris1.fr)

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Porter (ou non) le costume du guerrier : aperçus sur l'auto-représentation martiale dans l'Étrurie méridionale protohistorique

Wearing (or not?) the warrior costume: insights into martial self-representation in protohistoric southern Etruria.

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Through the analysis of two emblematic case studies, Caere (coastal Etruria) and Trevignano Romano (inland Etruria), this contribution examines the adoption – or non-adoption – of the warrior social model in protohistoric Etruscan societies during the 8th century BC, in the broader context of coastal and inland southern Etruria.

The comparison reveals significant differences in funerary representation and the construction of social identity. In Trevignano Romano (a small settlement between the proto-urban centres of Caere, Veio and Falerii), a warrior's tomb with grave goods clearly associated with the military world reflects an identity model linked to martial roles, modelled on the warrior's tombs in Veio, which conveys prestige and authority within the community. In Caere, despite its primary role as a proto-urban centre, no similar tombs have been found, and funerary practices favour alternative symbolic codes, suggesting different strategies for legitimising power and constructing memory.

A comparative analysis of grave goods, tombs and ritual strategies allows us to discuss the possible reasons behind these differences, considering local traditions, internal community dynamics and interactions between coastal, inland and Tiber Valley communities. This approach highlights the plurality of models of warrior identity and the complexity of self-representation processes in Etruscan societies of the 8th century BC, showing how martial prestige can be (or not be) expressed. The study then contributes to ongoing debates on the archaeology of violence, especially understood as "symbolic violence" according to the sociological categories of P. Bourdieu, offering nuanced perspectives on how social roles and power were materially and symbolically enacted in protohistoric southern Etruria.

In conclusion, within the context of 8th century BC Etruria, warrior burials provide a key interpretative framework for understanding how violence, prestige, and authority were expressed within protohistoric societies.

Épées et Pouvoir : Auto-représentation du Guerrier dans l'arrière-pays de Pontecagnano

Swords and Power : Warrior Self-Representation in the Hinterland of Pontecagnano

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Among the elements that best make it possible to identify social stratification are weapons, not only as indicators of rank but also as material signs of the capacity to exercise violence and control. Four individuals buried in the necropolises of Pontecagnano and Monte Vetrano (SA), whose panoplies are distinguished by the presence of a sword, appear both as exceptional warriors and as elite members of their community. Chronologically, these figures belong to the transition between the Villanovan and later Etruscan cultures, a period of particular dynamism in the processes of constructing identities and social structures in southern Italy.

In this contribution, the presence of exceptional weapons will first be analyzed from the martial perspective, considering their functional and technical dimensions, as well as their role as instruments of legitimizing power and intimidation, capable of conveying a coercive message that operates psychologically both on those who suffer it and on those who wield it. Weapons, in fact, not only display the concept of force but also help build an aura of authority and fear that reinforces social hierarchies, enabling individuals or groups to assert their dominance over “Others” perceived as different or subordinate.

Moreover, these objects do not merely reflect transcultural dynamics linked to the circulation of goods, models, and ideologies of power, but also allude to specific martial skills and differentiated forms of combat practice: the possession of certain weapons suggests membership in categories of warriors endowed with greater mobility, versatility, and offensive capability than others equipped in a more standardized manner, such as simple spear-bearers. In this sense, armament expresses a complex symbolic language.

The study proposes a comparative interpretation of the four cases from Pontecagnano and MonteVetrano. The aim is to illustrate how dynamics of power, identity, and social representation in proto- Etruscan communities were constructed through the use of weapons as instruments of psychological violence. This violence is understood not merely as a contingent event but as a relational structure capable of shaping hierarchies, symbols, and funerary practices.

Enfance et violence interpersonnelle durant la Protohistoire au nord-est de la péninsule Ibérique (III^e-II^e millénaire av. n.-è.)

Childhood and interpersonal violence in the Protohistory of the northeastern Iberian Peninsula (3rd-2nd millennium BC)

Júlia Carrera (Poster) (juliacarreracat@gmail.com)

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Interpersonal violence constitutes a fundamental dimension for understanding social dynamics and the consolidation of power during Protohistory. Despite its relevance, the role of children within contexts marked by the exercise of force has traditionally been overlooked in archaeological discourse. This research, framed within the Archaeology of Violence and the Archaeology of Childhood, examines the exposure of non-adult individuals to social environments where interpersonal violence is documented among adults. The study focuses on communities in the northeast of the Iberian Peninsula during the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, a period characterized by significant socio-economic transformations.

The primary objective of this study is to explore the relationship between the presence of children and episodes of interpersonal violence documented in adults from the same archaeological contexts. The specific objectives include: identifying material and contextual indicators of violence in children's funerary contexts; documenting episodes of conflict in sites with subadult presence; assessing the social and symbolic role of children in environments of adult violence; and establishing potential patterns of exposure through a systematic comparison between adult and child individuals.

The research is based on a diverse sample of burial sites from the northeastern Iberian Peninsula. The core sample consists of subadult individuals ranging from neonates to 12 years of age. In addition, adult individuals from the same funerary units are included to establish direct comparisons within the same spatial, chronological, and cultural framework. This multi-layered selection allows for a rigorous analysis of the intergenerational proximity to violence, while minimizing the interpretative biases often derived from comparing unrelated archaeological contexts. The methodology integrates bioarchaeological analysis with a high-resolution study of the archaeological record. Osteological analysis is employed to characterize biological profiles and identify bone alterations. However, it is recognized that the physiological and taphonomic limitations of the subadult skeletal record often obscure traumatic injuries directly attributable to interpersonal violence. Consequently, this study places special emphasis on indirect markers of violence derived from the funerary and spatial context.

These proxies include burial practices, the micro-spatial arrangement of graves, material associations, and the osteobiographic relationship with adults presenting evidence of perimortem trauma. This integrated approach allows for a holistic interpretation of violence from material, social, and symbolic perspectives, ensuring that biological data are interpreted within its specific cultural landscape. Ultimately, this research aims to provide a more inclusive

narrative of protohistoric conflict, identifying children as active subjects within the complex fabric of social violence.

La violence au-delà du champ de bataille : les pratiques funéraires comme marqueurs de pouvoir dans la culture de Przeworsk. Une étude de cas en Europe centrale et orientale.

Violence Beyond the Battlefield: Funerary Practices as Markers of Power in the Przeworsk Culture. A Case Study from Eastern Central Europe.

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Background

In Germanic communities of Central Europe during the Roman Period, social organization was largely based on chieftainship, and male identity was closely associated with the role of the warrior. Participation in warfare was a normative expectation, with exclusion generally limited to age or illness. Consequently, violence, domination, and conflict were embedded not only in military activity but also in everyday social and ritual practices. Funerary sites constitute one of the most important sources for reconstructing social structures, power relations, and expressions of violence in these communities.

This paper focuses on the Przeworsk culture (commonly identified with the Vandals), which practiced cremation burial and frequently deposited weapons in graves. These objects were often intentionally bent or damaged prior to deposition, indicating complex symbolic meanings related to violence, status, and identity.

Aims

Rather than limiting violence to armed conflict or battlefield evidence, this study conceptualizes violence as a broader system of force, control, and symbolic domination expressed through mortuary practices and the organization of funerary space. Using two contemporaneous cremation cemeteries from the western Lublin Region in eastern Poland – Opoka, site 3, and Kraśnik-Piaski, site 2 – the paper examines how violence functioned as a social phenomenon within and between local communities.

The main research questions address the following points: whether burial treatment reflected social status; whether the quality and composition of grave goods corresponded to the position of the deceased; whether weapons in funerary contexts carried primarily symbolic or functional meanings; whether weapon destruction represents ritualized “killing” rooted in older traditions or pragmatic behaviour; and whether differences in the number of warrior graves in the two examined cemeteries may be linked to intercultural contacts, particularly with the Wielbark culture (associated with the Goths), which eliminated weapons from burial rites.

Methods

The research is based on a critical re-analysis of archival excavation data combined with interdisciplinary approaches integrating archaeology, physical anthropology, and archaeozoology. Cemeteries are treated as socially constructed spaces in which power relations, inclusion and exclusion, and community responses to crisis are materially expressed.

Special emphasis is placed on the anthropological analysis of cremated human remains. Patterns of thermal alteration, bone fragmentation, and pathological markers are examined to identify

traces of embodied violence and differential treatment before or after death. Variability in cremation practices, selection and destruction of grave goods, and spatial organization of burials are interpreted as potential indicators of structural and symbolic violence.

Conclusions

The comparative analysis demonstrates that violence in Przeworsk communities was not confined to warfare but permeated ritual and funerary practices. Differences between the two cemeteries reveal distinct local strategies for constructing power, identity, and social memory. These patterns may reflect broader social tensions, environmental stress, or political reorganization within the eastern Germanic communities of Central Europe.

By highlighting funerary rituals as arenas of social control and ideological expression, this study contributes to current debates on the archaeology of violence and argues for the inclusion of mortuary data as a key source for understanding coercion, domination, and resistance in protohistoric societies.

Expressions de la violence physique et symbolique dans l’habitat groupé de Verdun-sur-le-Doubs (Saône-et-Loire).

Expressions of physical and symbolic violence in the group housing of Verdun-sur-le-Doubs (Saône-et-Loire).

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The site of Verdun-sur-le-Doubs is an open settlement from the 2nd century BCE located in Saône-et-Loire, at the confluence of the Saône and Doubs rivers. Its position at a branching point of river and land routes gives it a strategic location in exchange networks, at the margins of Aedui and Sequani territories. Its economic vitality is reflected in the richness and diversity of artifacts – locally produced or imported – uncovered since the first discoveries in the 1970s.

Since 2019, the Gallic settlement has been the subject of scheduled excavations as part of the collaborative research project "Saône-Doubs-Dheune Confluence in the Iron Age." The last three campaigns have focused specifically on the southern edge of the settlement. This zone is characterized by recurring evidence of violent acts—physical or symbolic—directed against human beings, animals, and various objects. These elements, sometimes isolated and sometimes grouped, appear to follow ritual prescriptions or, at the very least, socially regulated practices. These behaviors are primarily expressed within two types of structures that may have served as boundaries between different spaces.

The first subset consists of a group of three wells spaced approximately fifteen meters apart. The first two contained human deposits associated with targeted peri-mortem removal of the lower limbs; one deposit is also associated with animal remains. These acts, which constitute an elaborate staging, invite us to question the boundary between atypical funerary treatment, punitive violence, coercive displays, or structured ritual practices. The third well yielded in its initial fill a homogeneous deposit composed notably of bottle-shaped vessels, including several complete examples. Traces of intentional breakage, particularly the recurring perforation of vessel bottoms, suggest symbolic neutralization of objects.

The second subset corresponds to a linear scatter of artifacts that appears to delimit the space north of the excavated area. Observed over a length of approximately 40 meters, it forms a 4-meter-wide band characterized by a very dense accumulation of material. These deposits, dominated by faunal remains and amphorae, also include numerous ornamental elements and various metal objects, among them a prisoner's shackle with its key. The assemblage includes several human skulls, some bearing traces of peri-mortem violence or post-mortem manipulation. Concentrated within a restricted area and notably found alongside a horse skull, these remains suggest practices of display or exhibition. Unlike the wells, the visibility of these deposits along what appears to have been a main axis of the settlement highlights the social and performative dimension of these acts.

The cross-examination of these assemblages and their organization, placed in the socio-economic context of a major settlement in eastern Gaul, sheds new light on the social, political, and ritual logics underlying these violent acts.

L’Aequi entre effacement et survie : témoignages des sanctuaires de Carsoli et d’Oricola.

The Aequi between Erasure and Survival: Evidence from the Sanctuaries of Carsoli and Oricola.

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Classical historiography describes the relationship between the Aequi and Rome as a long sequence of hostilities throughout the 5th and part of the 4th centuries BCE, culminating in a violent and definitive conquest at the turn of the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE. Livy (IX, 45) narrates the annihilation of the Aequi (*prope ad internecionem*), the capture and destruction of thirty-one oppida within fifty days, and the erasure of their very name. He briefly mentions two minor rebellions by survivors, which were swiftly crushed (X, 1; 3). Yet the archaeological record offers a different image of this transition. Recent investigations of the sacred landscapes, production contexts, and sanctuaries of the Aequi — particularly the cases of Carsoli and Civita di Oricola (Abruzzi, Italy) — conducted within the Civiltà dell’Italia preromana program at Sapienza University of Rome, present a more nuanced picture, revealing traces of continuity rather than total obliteration.

This paper challenges the traditional markers of violence, power, and conquest commonly used to interpret Roman expansion. What constitutes “violence” in the archaeological record? Are destruction layers, changes in cult practices, shifts in material production, or the apparent disappearance of settlements necessarily indicators of domination? By examining the Aequi’s perspective through the material evidence gathered to date, this study explores how they positioned themselves in relation to Rome before, during, and after the conquest. Through an interdisciplinary approach combining archaeology, epigraphy, and the study of craft and ritual, this research reconsiders the expressions of force and the mechanisms of negotiation and adaptation within this frontier area.

Rather than a narrative of total erasure, the evidence suggests forms of coexistence, selective appropriation, and ideological transformation, blurring the boundaries between conquerors and conquered. Continuities and discontinuities emerging from sacred contexts reveal a transitional historical landscape not fully captured by literary sources. The Aequi case thus provides a lens to rethink how violence, conflict, and power are materialized, or re-signified, across the protohistoric and early Roman periods.

Local versus étranger ? Expressions de la force et de la violence à Tartessos, en Thrace et en Scythie en contexte de colonisation méditerranéenne (IX^e s.-IV^e s. av. n.-è.)

Local versus foreigner? Expressions of force and violence in Tartessos, Thrace and Scythia in the context of Mediterranean colonisation (9th-4th centuries BCE).

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The unknown, understood as that which is new, has been shown to elicit feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and fear. Such reactions are to be expected when human groups encounter, interact, or cohabit with novel populations for the first time, particularly if these groups possess different languages, cultures, and/or traditions. Interactions between these groups are then likely to be characterised by some form of violence. This may manifest in the form of direct physical confrontation, or more subtle effects on the economy, everyday practices, ritual traditions, cultural norms, and so on. The repercussions within either group may be the result of deliberate actions or unintended consequences of neutral interactions with no clear intent to actively change the practices of the other group.

A situation in which different populations with little previous knowledge of each other interacted occurred along the coastline of Mediterranean Europe during the first half of the first millennium BCE. From southern Iberia to the Black Sea coast, new settlements distinct from those of the local populations developed from the 9th to the 5th centuries BCE. The aforementioned settlements were distinguished by the presence of Mediterranean settlers, who are considered to be predominantly of Greek and/or Phoenician origin. However, the precise origins of these populations vary depending on the specific region and settlement.

In this context, limited Mediterranean groups settled in relatively unknown lands, which were occupied by local populations with vastly different languages, cultures and traditions, after a period of initial contact through maritime exploration. This in itself can be considered a form of violence.

However, it is imperative to ascertain the actors responsible for the violence and its nature. Conventionally, the scholarly investigation has focused on the actions of the Greeks and Phoenicians, who have been regarded as the primary agents of violence, having entered a new territory and subsequently imposed their cultural, religious and technological practices. This vision was prevalent during the majority of the 20th century, drawing partly from the studies on the remaining literary descriptions, which were issued by Greek or Near Eastern ancient authors.

However, contemporary challenges have emerged, reevaluating the power dynamic within the colonial phenomenon. In the context of this prevailing paradigm, the present study aspires to further refine our comprehension through a comparative analysis of two regions: the south- western Iberian Peninsula (9th-6th centuries BCE), and the European Black Sea coast

(7th-4th centuries BCE). It is evident that the local populations — Tartessians, Thracians and Scythians — have attempted to exert forms of domination over the foreign settlers. Violence manifested in various forms, ranging from overt conflict and warfare to more subtle methods of control, such as regulating access to natural resources, constraining or dictating where they could settle or even imposing regulations through treaties as shown by the Pistiros stele.

The aim of this communication is therefore to analyse the evolution of the power dynamics that have emerged in these regions between local and foreign populations, as well as the reactions of the Mediterranean settlers to these various forms of violence.

La mobilité comme outils de coercition : l'équipement équestre d'Europe orientale et centrale comme marqueur archéologique de violence durant la période de migrations

Mobility as a Tool of Coercion: Horse Equipment from Eastern and Central Europe as Archaeological Markers of Violence in the Migration Period

Eleonora Pawlikowska (e.pawlikowska3@uw.edu.pl)

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This paper examines mobility as a specific form of force during the Migration Period, focusing on horse equipment as an archaeological marker of raiding, coercion, and asymmetric violence in Eastern and Central Europe. Rather than approaching violence exclusively through weapons, skeletal trauma, or fortified sites, the study argues that mounted mobility itself constituted a structural condition of violence, enabling rapid incursions, territorial pressure, and the disruption of sedentary communities.

The analysis draws on a comparative review of published assemblages from selected regions of the so-called *Barbaricum*, including the Middle Danube basin, the Carpathian Basin, and neighbouring areas of Eastern and Central Europe. Particular attention is given to Migration Period frontier zones, which functioned not merely as defensive boundaries but as spaces of pronounced power asymmetry. Characterised by unequal access to resources, mobility, and defensive infrastructure, these zones fostered forms of violence that were frequently latent.

Equestrian equipment is examined as a material correlate of raiding practices that leave only limited direct traces of physical conflict. The contexts containing horse equipment without accompanying weapons, as well as the settlement finds of riding gear outside clearly military contexts, offer particularly promising markers. Rather than indicating non-martial background, they may reflect roles embedded in barbarian economies of violence, including scouting, raiding support, escorting, or the control of movement along routes and crossings. These assemblages are evaluated through typological comparison, contextual analysis, and spatial distribution, with the aim of identifying patterns that may reflect sustained mounted activity instead of isolated raiding display.

The study further situates Migration Period horse equipment within broader networks of cultural transfer between nomadic and European traditions. Steppe-derived modes of mounted mobility posed a fundamental challenge to provincial power structures based on fixed borders and fortifications. The ability of certain groups to move rapidly across frontier landscapes created a constant sense of insecurity that shaped economic practices and settlement choices on both sides of the frontier.

In addition, the author considers the role of technological transfer from steppe-related traditions in shaping equestrian assemblages, highlighting hybrid forms of horse gear as indicators of changing modes of conflict and interaction. Certain standardisation of equipment lowered both the cost of acquiring riding gear and the skills required to use it, enabling broader participation in armed raids by less affluent members of the community. Methodologically, this study shifts the identification of violence from destruction to mobility and its material foundations, challenging the binary approach to war or peace in inter-community interactions. Raiding is thus approached not merely as episodic violence but as a sustained practice of pressure and control, whose archaeological markers are mainly subtle and indirect.

Sculpté dans la pierre : repenser l'hoplite à travers les reliefs des tombeaux lyciens

Carved in Stone: Rethinking the Hoplite through Lycian Tomb Reliefs

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Scholarship has long crossed theoretical swords over the heavily armoured 'Greek' infantryman – the 'hoplite'. From his origin, to his method(s) of war, to his socio-political impact on the still nascent Greek polis, the hoplite is firmly entrenched within a modern war of words. For over a century, scholars have viewed the hoplite as a distinctively 'Greek' type of warrior, one invented in Greece proper and used by the Greeks alone to militarily dominate 'non-Greek' armies in the ancient Mediterranean. Following this, a small but significant (and very influential) group of scholars have used the hoplite as a vehicle to push modern political polemics that champion Western superiority of the 'East' (broadly defined), whereby the hoplite encompassed the (white European) Western values of honour and bravery (fighting face-to-face with his opponent on the battlefield in an equally matched bout) that contrasted greatly with the 'Eastern' light armed archer. These politically charged views have long been criticised, but one vital point, however, that generally remains overlooked is the phenomenon of 'hoplite warfare' in local, regional contexts beyond the very borders of Greece.

This paper seeks to ignite a new vein of research by investigating the nature of infantry warfare in a much-overlooked region: that of Lycia, on the south-west coast of Anatolia, during its so-called 'Dynastic Period' (c.545-362 BC). The region did have its own written language, but one that was severely limited to a scant epigraphic record that remains poorly understood, leaving historians (both ancient and modern) reliant on written Greek and Latin sources for Lycian history. However, Lycia is uniquely rich in its archaeological record, especially its large tomb monuments, a number of which are highly decorated with carved relief art that betrays a great deal regarding local society. This rings especially true for local perceptions of warfare and violence – the most popular themes across Lycian tomb iconography – where warriors are repeatedly depicted as hoplites in various military and civilian contexts.

Scholarship has traditionally interpreted the warfare imagery from 'Dynastic Lycia' as either entirely derivative of Greek art or merely indicative of Greek mercenary activity, thereby denying the historicity of a distinct 'Lycian hoplite' and judging the region through a Hellenocentric lens. Both views, however, stem from long held assumptions regarding the dominance of Greek culture across the ancient Mediterranean and a perceived uniqueness of the 'Greek hoplite' (above). Drawing on very recent revisionism of Anatolian art, culture, and the phenomenon of hoplite warfare more broadly, this paper re-examines Lycian funerary reliefs in a new light to argue for a local military identity expressed via a unique visual culture. The hoplite was important to the expression of Lycian martial identity, with relief art serving as a vital source for reconstructing local conceptions of warfare and violence that betray a broader shared martial culture that extended beyond borders.

Les barbares face à la mort : représentations de la violence comme propagande impériale dans les archives archéologiques de la péninsule italienne (I^{er}-III^e s. apr. J.-C.).

Barbarians in the Face of Death: Representations of Violence as Imperial Propaganda in the Archaeological Record of the Italian Peninsula (1st–3rd c. CE).

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Violence and death in Roman art served not only a documentary function but were primarily propagandistic, legitimizing imperial authority and reinforcing asymmetries between Romans and the “Other.” This paper examines how representations of barbarians, their wounded, dying, and dead bodies functioned as material and visual markers of violence, employed as tools of military propaganda and as instruments for constructing ideological narratives of victory and dominance.

The study focuses on archaeological evidence from the Italian Peninsula dated to the 1st–3rd centuries CE, including monumental reliefs, stelae, and sarcophagi. The analysis considers both the composition of battle scenes and the spatial context of barbarian depictions in public and monumental spaces, revealing strategies of visual encoding of violence and propaganda directed at the “Other.” Special attention is given to the evolution of form and degree of visual expression, ranging from realistic to symbolic and dramatically expressive representations.

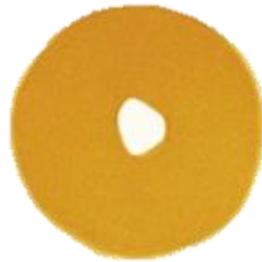
This study adopts an interdisciplinary approach, combining iconographic archaeology, art history, anthropology, and theories of propaganda. A key component is the integration of literary sources, including Tacitus, Caesar, and Cassius Dio, which document Roman perceptions of barbarian peoples. Comparing visual and textual narratives allows for the identification of consistent propaganda strategies and a better understanding of how violence against barbarians was communicated across media, functioning as a mechanism of social control and legitimization.

The paper contributes to broader reflections on the archaeology of violence in a protohistorical context, treating representations of barbarians as a case study for examining intergroup relations, mechanisms of power, and the social and ideological consequences of violence. It demonstrates that the depiction of barbarian death in Roman art was not merely illustrative of military realities but primarily served as a tool of imperial propaganda, in which violence becomes an ideological vehicle legitimizing Roman authority and expansion.

Session 2

Ritualiser la Violence : Pratiques et Objets

Ritualising Violence : Practices and Objects



Keynote

Offrandes martiales aquatiques dans la région de la mer Baltique. Approches anciennes et nouvelles de la recherche sur les rituels protohistoriques post-bataille.

Martial aquatic offerings in the Baltic Sea region. Old and new approaches to research of protohistoric post-battle rituals.

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University of Warsaw, Département de Barbaricum et d'archéologie provinciale romaine.

Découvertes d'armes celtiques dans des contextes aquatiques en Pologne. Celtic Weapon Finds from Water Contexts in the Polish Lands.

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In this presentation, I aim to present the phenomenon of weapon deposits discovered in rivers within the territory of Poland during the Pre-Roman period, with particular emphasis on their significance in the context of violence in the Celtic world and communities under its influence. Weaponry being the primary tool of violence also functioned as an object of strong symbolism, capable of expressing aggression, sacrifice, and transcendence. This issue, which is an important element of the cultural landscape of the Iron Age, reflects the complex relationships between humans, the natural environment, and the sphere of beliefs, with weapons constituting a key point of reference for explaining these relationships. An attempt will be made to reinterpret the meaning of ritual practices associated with water by comparing archaeological data, topographical contexts, and comparative evidence on analogous phenomena from other regions of Pre-Roman Europe, especially from the Celtic world.

Particular emphasis will be placed on three aspects of the functioning of weapons: first, as physical violence inflicted with them, perceptible, among other things, in possible traces of combat and in the battle context of the finds; second, as physical violence inflicted upon the weapons themselves, visible in traces of deliberate, ritual destruction of objects; and third, as symbols of votive offerings, associated with “transcendent” violence, which prompts the question of whether the deposited weapons were meant to provoke, neutralise, or prevent such violence, and how this might have been perceived and understood socially, among others in the light of examples from well-known sites such as La Tène.

Selected sites from the area of Poland where watery weapon deposits have been identified will be revealed. Consideration of topographic, conservation-related, and typological aspects makes it possible to indicate recurring patterns in the location and selection of deposited objects, which suggests the existence of consciously shaped and socially embedded ritual practices comparable to those known from Celtic areas of Western and Central Europe.

Various hypotheses concerning the significance of depositing weapons in water will be examined - ranging from sacrifices offered to water deities through initiation or commemorative rituals, to symbolic gestures associated with power, prestige, and the identity of warrior communities. In the final part, the Polish material will be compared with examples from other parts of Europe, with particularly Celtic cult centres such as La Tène sites. This comparison will reveal both symbolic patterns shared across Pre-Roman Europe, shaped by Celtic ideology and local variants resulting from specific cultural contexts and interregional contacts.

Fragmentation et dépôt performatif : violence matérielle et vie sociale des objets dans les Balkans centraux à la fin de l'âge du bronze et au début de l'âge du fer.

Fragmentation and Performative Deposition: Material Violence and the Social Lives of Objects in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Central Balkans.

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Archaeological discussions of violence have traditionally privileged armed conflict, warfare, and physical aggression. However, when understood as a structured relationship of power, control, and transformation, violence may also be expressed through material practices that regulate value, memory, and social relations. My doctoral research explores intentional fragmentation and deposition of objects in Late Bronze and Early Iron Age hoards in the Central Balkans as a form of material and social violence, enacted not against bodies, but upon objects imbued with economic, symbolic, and social significance.

Drawing on post-processual approaches to material culture and object biographies⁵, as well as Chapman's fragmentation premise and the concept of enchainment⁶, my research argues that fragmentation should not always be interpreted as accidental damage or technical waste, but rather as a socially regulated act of controlled destruction. Such practices constituted transformative moments in the social lives of objects, deliberately removing them from circulation and redefining their value within ritualized frameworks. Building on Fontijn's concept of selective deposition⁷ and Knight's model of performative destruction⁸, fragmentation and deposition are approached as interconnected phases of a single ritual system, through which communities negotiated power, morality, and memory.

The core case study focuses on the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age hoards in the Central Balkans. Traditionally, hoards were interpreted primarily as technical or recycling assemblages; here, however, they are re-evaluated as evidence of potentially structured material violence and archaeological markers of force: a controlled process of disabling, fragmenting, and permanently removing metal objects from everyday use. Patterns of selective damage, the absence of refitting fragments, and the spatial concentration of deposition suggest intentional acts governed by social norms rather than purely economic logic.

⁵ Appadurai, A. (ed.) (1986) – *Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value*, in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in a Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 3–63 ; Kopytoff, I. (1986) – *The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process*, in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in a Cultural Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 64–91.

⁶ Chapman 2000– *Fragmentation in Archaeology: People, Places and Broken Objects in the Prehistory of South-Eastern Europe*, Routledge, London–New York.

⁷ Fontijn, D. R. (2002) – *Sacrificial Landscapes: Cultural Biographies of Persons, Objects and “Natural” Places in the Bronze Age of the Southern Netherlands (c. 2300–600 BC)*, *Analecta Praehistorica Leidensia* 33/34, Leiden.

⁸ Knight, M. G. (2024) – *Selective Fragmentation: Exploring the Treatment of Metalwork across Time and Space in Bronze Age Britain*, in *Broken Bodies, Places and Objects: New Perspectives on Fragmentation in Archaeology*, Routledge, London–New York.

Viewed in this context, fragmentation may have functioned as an act of moral and social regulation, enforcing communal values through the destruction of material wealth. By conceptualizing fragmentation as a form of materialized force (performative, selective, and socially meaningful), my research contributes to broader discussions on how coercive practices and relations of power can be identified archaeologically beyond warfare. It demonstrates that acts of destruction played an important role in structuring social relations, controlling resources, and shaping protohistoric landscapes, offering a nuanced perspective on violence as a fundamental component of everyday and ritual practice in later European prehistory.

Expressions de la Force et Construction du Pouvoir : les pratiques votives de l'Âge du Fer dans une perspective comparative

Expressions of Force and the Construction of Power: Iron Age Votive Practices in Comparative Perspective.

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The archaeology of violence in Protohistory has been dominated by interpretations that frame large-scale weapon depositions primarily as the aftermath of conflict – as the ritualized disposal of captured arms or the symbolic neutralisation of defeated enemies. While such interpretations have significantly contributed to our understanding of warfare and its organisation, they tend to underplay the broader social and political dimensions embedded within the practice of depositing weapons as well as related martial objects in dedicated ritual spaces. The upcoming doctoral thesis by the author argues that Iron Age votive sites should not be approached solely as reflections of combat, but as manifestations of power, authority, and emerging forms of social organisation that were materialised, negotiated, and publicly staged.

Drawing on comparative evidence from three regions – the early Iron Age sanctuaries in the paleo-Venetian area (Este, Padua, Vicenza), Iron Age Northern Gaul and the Roman and Germanic Iron Age of southern Scandinavia – the paper proposes that martial votive practices constitute a crucial indicator of shifting socio-political structures. In all three regions, weapon depositions or depictions of warriors and weapons appear at moments of increasing settlement centralisation, the formation of supra-local identities, and expanding spheres of political integration. These contexts suggest that votive sites served not only as ritual foci but also as instruments of social cohesion and spaces for negotiating emerging hierarchies.

Special attention is given to changes in the materiality of votive offerings: from large-scale weapon sacrifices in wetlands or other liminal spaces (e.g., Hjortspring, Als Island, Denmark) to smaller, more symbolic items such as miniature weapons, anatomical votives, coins, and anthropomorphic plaques deposited in stationary sanctuaries inside centralised settlements. These developments are interpreted as part of a broader process of symbolic abstraction of martial power, driven by increasing political complexity and more diversified ritual practices. The comparison between continental and Scandinavian evidence highlights that while the chronological trajectories differ, the structural logic of these transitions remain remarkably similar.

The thesis further situates these developments within a broader anthropological trajectory, drawing on Alan Strathern's and Marshall Sahlins' model of immanentist and transcendentalist ontologies. While none of the studied regions can be described as fully "transcendental" in a strict sense, the emergence of fixed, architecturally defined ritual sites – often associated with martial iconography or centralised political spaces – indicates a movement away from purely immanent, clan-based ritual landscapes towards more abstract, collectively

shared frameworks of meaning. From this perspective, weapon depositions are not only expressions of force but also performative assertions of legitimacy, embedding authority within a framework that transcends local kinship structures.

Les différentes significations symboliques du casque corinthien, son lien avec les pratiques guerrières et son utilisation comme marqueur de rang.

The different symbolic meanings of the Corinthian helmet, its link with warlike practices and its use as a marker of rank.

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Independent researcher

The aim of this presentation is to study the spread of Corinthian helmets and to understand the value given to this weapon in different regions. Studies on the subject often focus on military movements and mercenary practices, which are not, however, the only factors involved in the spread of these helmets. For this study, we rely on the morphological characteristics of the helmets and a comparison of the contexts in which they were found. It appears that the helmet was frequently used as a ‘diplomatic gift’ to local elites, without necessarily leading to the adoption of Greek military practices. The Italic elites, in particular, not only adopted the use of the Corinthian helmet, but also modified it and adapted it to their own elite model. Here, the defensive weapon became a symbol of prestige, which, even if it evoked a warrior figure, sometimes even a mythical one, was not necessarily used in combat. The symbolic and even ritual value of these helmets was also a constant. The Corinthian helmet is thus a testament to the intercultural relations between the Hellenes and local populations, but not necessarily to military practices or violent events. The study of these helmets therefore allows us to question the links between the exercise of violence, the expression of power and the symbolic values associated with these societies.

Lendemain de bataille, gueule de bois pour les boucliers

The day after the battle, a hangover for the shields

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Among the hundreds of military artefacts discovered at the ancient site of Clos de la Visitation (Lyon, 1st-2nd centuries), there are numerous shield reinforcements that were studied between 2020 and 2022 as part of a thesis completed at Lyon 2 University.

The aim of this paper is to present the shields and the traces of deliberate destruction they suffered when they were buried.

The Clos de la Visitation site was occupied by the military from the middle of the 1st century onwards, with an urban cohort present in the city. Occupation of the site came to an abrupt end at the end of the 2nd century, probably as a result of the sacking of the city of Lugdunum after the Battle of Lyon (197). This battle ended the period of civil war following the death of Commodus (192) and saw the rise to power of the Severan dynasty. Texts tell us about the pillaging of the city due to its support for the defeated “usurper”, Clodius Albinus.

Several hundred shield reinforcements were discovered in a warehouse whose walls had been deliberately knocked down, along with a skull that was still “fresh” at the time of burial. These iron elements have been identified as rims and reinforcement strips, and there are also numerous unidentifiable fragments and rivet nails used to fix them in place.

The peculiarity of this discovery lies in the systematic destruction of these objects in the days or hours following the battle. In addition to their extreme fragmentation, traces of twisting and bending attest to a clear desire to destroy these objects before burying them.

Session 3

Paysages Fortifiés

Fortified Landscapes



Keynote

Les sociétés de l'âge du fer face à la conquête romaine : perspectives archéologiques

Iron Age societies in the face of the Roman conquest: Archaeological perspectives

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Fortifications de hauteur et territoires protohistoriques (-1000/-50) entre Garonne et Massif central: apports du LiDAR.

Hill fortifications and protohistoric territories (-1000/-50) between Garonne and Massif central: contributions from LiDAR.

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Highly fortified sites are one of the most emblematic markers of conflict and the expression of power in protohistoric societies. Through the monumentality of their fortifications, their strategic location and their ability to structure territories in a lasting way, they embody various forms of violence: armed defence, deterrence and the assertion of political power. However, their study has long been hampered by significant documentary biases, particularly related to their location in forested or steep terrain.

This paper is based on a doctoral project devoted to hilltop settlements and protohistoric territories located between the Garonne River and the Massif Central. This region, identified early on as having great archaeological potential, has been the subject of little recent research. The use of IGN HD LiDAR data, available in 2022, has profoundly changed this situation. It has already enabled the detection of more than 200 potential new fortified sites, suggesting a corpus that could more than double the number of sites recorded in two centuries of research.

The presentation will first address the contributions of this detection phase, based on the systematic analysis of LiDAR surveys. In parallel with this visual approach, the recent development of large and accurate databases of fortified sites (Fortipolis / Occidunum) opens up new perspectives for automatic detection. One aim of this work is to explore the potential of automatic detection using deep learning applied to LiDAR data, in order to assist archaeologists in locating fortified sites and to cover very large areas automatically. This methodological dimension is part of a joint supervision project with a computer science laboratory (IRIT) and international collaborations.

In order to exploit them in a territorial approach, these discoveries are compared with ground surveys of a large number of site indices and, occasionally, targeted surveys. The dialogue between LiDAR data and the field guarantees the quality and relevance of the method, confirming the nature of the structures and collecting dating elements on previously unknown sites.

Once the corpus has been consolidated, the national LiDAR will, for the first time, enable large-scale quantitative morphological analysis. Standardised measurement of surfaces, layouts, fortification volumes and location patterns enables multifactorial statistical analyses (not yet used on a large scale in France for these fortified sites) to be carried out, resulting in more objective site typologies than those based solely on descriptive criteria.

These new data are integrated into a territorial and spatial approach. Low-cost analyses, coupled with the position of burial mounds, make it possible to model possible ancient axes and the integration of fortified sites into transport networks. In this region, the spatial and hierarchical relationships between these sites already suggest a complex organisation in the late La Tène period, which has long been underestimated in south-western Gaul. By combining the study of fortifications and territorial dynamics, this contribution aims to show how methodological renewal sheds new light on the forms and issues of protohistoric violence.

Violence, dynamique sociale et paysage à l'âge du fer : une approche méthodologique des systèmes défensifs du cours supérieur moyen de l'Èbre et du cours supérieur du Douro (nord de l'Espagne) utilisant des méthodes non invasives et le SIG.

Violence, social dynamics and landscape in the Iron Age: A methodological approach to the defensive systems of the upper-middle Ebro and upper Duero (Northern Spain) using non-invasive methods and GIS.

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My doctoral thesis project aims to provide a large-scale temporal and spatial interpretation of the social dynamics that took place in the Upper-Middle Ebro and Upper Duero basins (Northern Spain) during the Iron Age (8th–2nd c. BC). This period is characterised by a type of settlement whose most significant features are defensive earthworks. These material manifestations have been the focus of interest in the research tradition, generating qualitative studies offering different interpretative perspectives in the proposed study area.

Building on methodological proposals applied in other areas (NW Iberia) and making use of non-invasive methods and geospatial analyses, this paper presents a preliminary quantitative and systematic approach to explore the multifaceted character of these elements, either as functional devices, as monumental displays or as both. The variables analysed are: 1) the monumentality of the defensive systems, 2) the effort invested in their construction and 3) their relationship with their immediate surroundings in terms of prominence.

From a diachronic perspective, the results show variations in locational decisions, monumentality, and the effort invested in the construction of defensive systems. In other words, the fortified landscapes of the Iron Age differ and change when we compare the Early Iron Age (8th–5th c. BC) with the Late Iron Age (5th–2nd c. BC).

In this paper, I will present the results obtained and the methodology proposed for studying these fortified landscapes as manifestations of violence and power dynamics in Iron Age societies.

Un monde de pierre. La fortification comme agent du paysage

A world made of stone. The fortification as an agent in the landscape

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The archaeological feature that best represents the Iron Age in the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula is the fortified settlement. During this period, previous forms of settlement disappeared from the record, giving way to the hegemony of the castro -hillfort- as the only archaeologically recorded settlement model. For this reason, research tradition in the region ended up grouping the Iron Age societies of north-west iberia under the term castro culture. From the outset, these settlements were assumed to be martial in nature and were associated with indomitable warrior chiefdoms wich, since the early 20th century, have taken root in the identity ideology of the northwestern iberian regions.

However, there is little evidence to explain the relationship between fortifications and the dynamics of conflict or the use of violence. In fact, many authors assert that the endemic forms of warfare that existed throughout much of iberian protohistory did not involve fortifications. Also, ideas on this subject have tended to be based on analogies with other European contexts or Celtic approaches wich, since the last decades of the 20th century, have been constantly challenged. This has been a long-debated topic in attempts to understand the role of fortifications in apparently egalitarian agrarian societies.

A review of the significance of fortification in the context of the Iron Age in north-western Iberia is proposed, as part of a tesis proyect. Methodologies that address the qualities of fortification as a generator of landscape wich are conceived within a particular constructive tradition are developed. This study shows that, beyond its possible defensive function, the process of fortification is a way for transforming the environment. Thus, it is argued that the existence of fortifications is not inherent to violence, and that monumental defensive architectures play complex roles in the organisation of societies and the anthropisation of space.

Défis et opportunités de la création de cartes numériques séquentielles de la guerre de Sertorie (82-72 av. J.-C.).

Challenges and opportunities of creating sequential digital maps of the Sertorian War (82–72 BCE).

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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

This presentation examines the challenges and opportunities of creating sequential digital maps of the Sertorian War (82–72 BCE). The Iberian Peninsula is the primary focus, but the wider Western Mediterranean context of the late Roman Republic is also taken into account.

The conflict played a pivotal role in shaping Roman provincial governance and local communities' attitudes towards Rome. This would influence their integration into the Republic in the following decades after the war. The full impact of this conflict, which unfolded in a peripheral area far from Rome, remains to be fully understood.

The historical accounts of writers such as Plutarch, Appian, and Sallust provide anchors, but the spatial specificity of the narrated events is often in need of further analysis with the support of archeological evidence. As a result, archeology becomes essential for refining the chronology, identifying disputed battle locations and troop movements, and reconstructing the roles of local protohistoric communities.

These communities exhibited varying degrees of involvement, from active or passive resistance to pragmatic accommodation and active alliance with Rome, as the Roman influence and pressure on their territories intensified, driven by the Roman internal civil strife.

The project integrates material data from fortified sites and settlements, weapon assemblages, patterns of destruction and other evidence of military interaction, using them to test and complement the literary sources. Attention is given to seasonal constraints and the resulting mobility restrictions. A GIS-based methodology allows for the organisation and integration of this diverse evidence.

The project builds on the opportunities modern map-making technology provides to understand conflict dynamics. A nuanced model of territoriality is proposed. Rather than traditional, fixed, and clear-cut dichotomies, a spectrum is considered for parameters such as faction alignment, sovereignty, border delimitation, exerted military control, etc. Methodological constraints for this type of spatial reconstruction approach and context, that is, mapping warfare in frontier regions and involving protohistoric societies, are also addressed.

In conclusion, the presentation illustrates how a state-of-the-art digital mapping approach, including both historical and archaeological sources, can clarify the evolving geography of the Sertorian War, thus improving the global understanding of the conflict and providing a model that could be replicated in comparable conflict contexts.

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