



Arbeitsgemeinschaft Eisenzeit  
des West- und Süddeutschen Verbandes für Altertumsforschung

50th international conference of the AFEAF

38th conference of the AG Eisenzeit des West- und Süddeutschen Verbandes für  
Altertumsforschung

Strasbourg (May 13-16, 2026)

# Territories of Europe in the Iron Age

## The Iron Age between Champagne and Bavaria

### Date and place

The conference, organized in partnership with the AG Eisenzeit, will be held in Strasbourg, at the Palais Universitaire, over four days, from **May 13 to 16, 2026**.

### Conference themes

The Strasbourg conference will be organized around two themes: **territories in Europe during the Iron Age**, and **latest research on the Iron Age in a region between Champagne, the Ardennes Massif, Bavaria and the Swiss Plateau**.

In 2000, at the Martigues conference, AFEAF has examined "Celtic territories" from a resolutely forward-looking angle. The organizers of the conference wanted to offer a multitude of methodological, thematic and chronological points of view, that will be confronted to bring out the possibility of "a geopolitical approach of the Celtic area". Twenty-five years on, it is now possible to evaluate the progress made, to offer a progress report on the answers provided to this central question in our understanding of Iron Age societies and their dynamics, and to outline new perspectives.

The chronological framework envisaged is a long-term one. It covers a period from the end of the Bronze Age to the beginning of the Roman era, offering the opportunity to document developments over almost a millennium. From a geographical point of view, we need to go beyond the limits of the major cultural domains specific to each of the chronological sequences covered, by integrating all European data, from the Carpathians to the British Isles, and from the shores of the Baltic to those of the Mediterranean.

Analysis of the ways in which Iron Age societies appropriated the space they occupied can be approached along several thematic axes, which are not mutually exclusive. Each will require consideration of the actors who helped to define, delimit and structure protohistoric territories, and ultimately to occupy them. Taken together, these contributions should make it possible to sketch out a geohistory of the Iron Age in Europe.

### **1. Methods and modalities of study**

The methods and means used to understand and apprehend protohistoric territories have undergone significant renewal since the Martigues conference. It therefore seems appropriate to leave some room for epistemological reflection on the subject. The modes of representation of these territories, which generally remain in the blind spot of reflection, should also be questioned. The heuristic value of the maps produced could be explored. The development of modelling also requires us to consider the question of sensitive areas, the means of apprehending them (visibility, pathways, etc.) and the benefits expected from such studies.

### **2. Social and political territories**

Over the past twenty-five years, a growing number of studies have focused on the political definition of Iron Age territories, their structuring by authorities or communities whose nature is sometimes difficult to grasp. The social and historical dynamics underlying the various forms of spatial appropriation reveal contrasting situations between entities of varying sizes, whose levels of integration also differed from one to another. Generally approached in a sequential manner - the European princely complexes of the first half of the 1st millennium BC, the Celtic *civitates* of the late Iron Age - political territories would also benefit from being placed in a broader perspective and their trajectory traced on an Iron Age scale.

### **3. Economic and cultural territories**

The increase of specialized studies and the consideration of an ever-increasing number of material markers offer the opportunity to outline complex economic and cultural spaces, subject to different scaling factors. These territories and the resources exploited within them rarely coincide; on the contrary, the interlocking and overlapping of exchange networks seems to have been quite frequent. These frictions point to the establishment of diverse, sometimes competing, economic entities that need to be examined. The question of areas dedicated to agricultural activities, "terroirs" or "finages", can also be considered as one of the basic levels of larger territories. At the same time, the definition of cultural areas, whether juxtaposed or not, can also be considered.

### **4. Funerary, religious and symbolic territories**

Recent studies of Iron Age funerary practices show the importance of necropolis distribution and their role as spatial markers that must be taken into account when describing territories. The geographical variations observed in deposits and in the treatment of the deceased suggest the existence of distinct spaces, the social scope of which has yet to be more precisely defined. Finally, the revival of studies on religious landscapes underlines the importance of sanctuaries and their networks in defining symbolic territories.

## 5. Regional theme

The Strasbourg conference will also be an opportunity to relive a day of Iron Age research in the region between Champagne and the Ardennes to the west, and Bavaria to the east. A session devoted to this topic will be organized, bringing together a dozen oral communications. Proposals will cover the results of synthetic studies or monographic presentations representative of the renewal of questions and advances in research on the Iron Age in the regions concerned. No posters will be accepted for this session.

Proposals for papers or posters must be submitted to the conference secretariat by **June 15, 2025**, with the author(s)' contact details, the title and an abstract of 2500 to 3000 characters (including spaces) for oral papers, or 1000 to 1500 characters for posters. The session in which the paper or poster will be presented should also be specified.

### Secretariat of the conference

Proposals should be sent to the following address: [afeaf2026@gmail.com](mailto:afeaf2026@gmail.com)

### Publication of proceedings

Publication of the proceedings is scheduled for May 2028 in the Collection AFEAF.

The deadline for submission of manuscripts is **October 15, 2026**.

### Organizing committee

**Clément Féliu** (Inrap, UMR 7044 – Archimède), **Gilles Pierrevelcin** (Archéologie Alsace, UMR 7044 – Archimède), **Stephan Fichtl** (Unistra, UMR 7044 – Archimède), **Anne-Marie Adam** (PR émérite, UMR 7044 – Archimède), **Bertrand Béhague** (SRA Grand-Est), **Loup Bernard** (Unistra, UMR7044-Archimède), **Alexandra Cony** (Archéologie Alsace, UMR 7044 – Archimède), **Steeve Gentner** (Landesamt für Denkmalpflege im Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart, UMR 7044 – Archimède, AG Eisenzeit), **Jasmin Wallner** (Sprecherin AG-Eisenzeit), **Sarah-Julie Wittmann** (Sprecherin AG-Eisenzeit), **Philippe Barral** (Président de l'AFEAF), **Philippe Gruat** (Trésorier de l'AFEAF), **Valérie Taillandier** (Secrétaire générale de l'AFEAF).

### Scientific Committee

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