La Dordogne


Book that presents the known sites and a brief synthesis of major research by commune for the Dordogne. The book includes an introduction to research and geology of the Dordogne, as well as an overview of each major chronological stage.

Gallo-Roman

--organisation of territory prior to the implementation of the civitas known primarily from numismatic study
--indicates that prior to the mid 2nd century CE the Perigord was a burgeoning economic regions at the boundaries of two well established continental systems
--during the mid 2nd century growing political stability and formation of definitive territory centered around the oppidum at Curade in the Isle Valley
--possibly represents the installation and foundation of the Gallic Petrocori[i][ZG1] from which the province takes its name. Specifically they were centered primarily in the area between the Dordogne and Vézère
--provided Vercingetorix with 5000 warriors against Caesar in 52 BC[ZG2]
-- Augustus organized the territories conquered by Caesar[ZG3] and formed the territory of the Perigord with a new capital emerging at Vesunna (modern day Périgueux) by the 3rd century. This was located across the river from the old oppidum at Curade
--much of this based on historical since no archaeological levels older than 20-15 BC have yet been found
--civitas limits established through 3 means: 1. Regressive studies of medieval diocese boundaries, toponymic studies of frontier words, and studies of coins from Merovingian period
--boundaries are....but little evidence to test the validity of this hypothesis
--seemingly largely rural territory, no grand agglomerations beyond Vesunna, however, likely that there were some rural villages in addition to road stations dotting the vast landscape
-Vézère densely occupied during Antiquity
--water ways probably preferred method of travel however no direct written or archaeological evidence
--indirect evidence includes finds of Italian wine amphoras, store houses (horreum), and implantation of villaes primarily along rivers
--terrestrial network of roads predates Roman occupation of the area
--these roads are laid out on the driest areas, primarily rocky outcrops, lateral valleys running parallel to main stream, and dry ridges of watersheds, and avoid valley heads

Pottery types: sigillée italique (not well represented outside Périgueux), ceramique sigillée des ateliers du sud de la Gaule (widely distributed throughout Dordogne); la céramique sigillée de Brive (indicative of local Petrocore provisionment between 80-120 AD)
after Trajan les ateliers du Centre major dominant makers in region and ceramique a l’eponge and sigillee claire marginalized

communal pottery not well known for the Dordogne area
roof tile production seems to be local and opportunistic with the exceptio of a possible forge of production at Campagne

only one known sanctuary in Dordogne area at Rigale along the Dronne
appearance of the persistance of local cultes disguised as Gallo-Roman gods but with physical traits of both greco-Roman and Celts
Apollo at Saint Amand de Coly with torque
young Bacchus head at Olivoux has treatment characteristic of the 1st century
cremation appears at the end of the La Tène period and persists through the Haut-Empire in diverse forms
at Montignac, some evidence of a mausoleum: vaulted brick area with cremation urns and in the middle of sculpture debris

Early Middle Ages

Vandal invasions between 406-409 down the Rhine (can't tell the magnitude of devastation they caused)–Perigueux builds protective wall
Visigoths installed in Aquitaine in 418 and their territory is in the neighboring areas
472, Perigord under new control by Visigoths (probably broke up some of the Petrucore fundi as part of their land grant)
507 Perigord enters French political sphere with the defeat of Alaric II and the support of Clovis by Aquitaine aristocracy

Between Clovis’ death and 660 victim of dynastic territorial break up

660 tentatively adheres to principality dependent on Eudes at Waifre (killed in 768)

780 order reestablished in Aquitaine under the rule of the Pipins

“Germanic origins” clues come from mobiliary objects

endurance of habitat through beginning of 6th century see fleetingly through mobiliary objects e.g., Terrason restoration of a Roman mosaic during early middle Age

at villa of Tayac Pyrenean marble ordered for making capitals of house

in reality finds only a small part of the larger occupation one can deduce from the cemetery remains

lack of information makes it difficult to determine territorial or property boundaries but it's suggested that villa grossly correspond to early parishes

establishment of church credited to a tradition of the installation by bishop Chronope in the 6th century

land of heretics (Paternus bishop at Perigueux deposed in 362 for preaching Arianism)

initial christianity in 5th century interrupted by invasions

monastic beginnings information much comes from later legends and suspect titles (e.g. Saint-Sour at Terrasson)

First nunnery at Bugue in 10th century

many of the early monastic foundations destroyed by Scandinavian invasions

--Dordogne preferred/privileged economic road during Middle Ages up until Modern times (Vézère connected to it)

well developed church and parish network likely hindered the development of monasticism before the Carolingian period

evidence of early parishes comes from three sources: textual, toponymic and archaeology

evidence of parish system well in place by the end of the Merovingian period (implantation of churches named after Saint Martin–also a key to the areas favored for occupation including the Vézère)

burial technology had several characteristics in early middle ages

sepulture in open ground and sepulture in wooden coffin or creation in limestone with trapezoidal shape

trapezoidal sarcophage most frequent

superposition of merovingian cemetery on Roman ones too frequent to be a coincidence--may indicate survival of organisation of landscape

burial of people around villas respective of the walls suggest that perhaps the nature of late villas changed around the 6th century

At Saint Léon sur Vezere however several trapezoidal sarcophages (reused during Carolingian period) found along walls of an early Middle Ages villa before the construction of a cella in Carolingian period–hiatus discredits idea of chapel

some texts mention early parishes in Dordogne

open air necropoli are not necessarily indicative of paganism (may be familial like the ones possibly at le Ruth)

burial in open fields sustained in Périgord , desertion only involved the favor of grouping within a parish cemetery at the end of the early Middle ages

Journiac

mentions the Roman road that passes through the commune (location based on map, not on archaeological evidence.) Also mentions pavement and wall finds at La Plantade in 1965 and a sarcophagus found at Aux Martoulets. (p. 133)

Proissans

mentions the Roman road running along the border of the commune and an old indication of a Roman camp near Barette. Neither "site" has yielded archaeological evidence. In addition, mentions an isolated find of a possible Bronze phallus in 1980. (p. 203)

Valojoulx

mentions the finds at la Combe, including remains from the Neolithic through Gallo Roman Period. Also mentions that south of les Bories Roman pottery was recovered.

Saint-Crépin-et-Carlucet
includes the finds of human remains and associated grave goods at Pech-Pélé. A single fragment of pottery suggests the remains date to the early medieval period.

*Saint-Félix-de-Reilhac-et-Mortemart*

mentions the Roman road that goes through la Gélie and la Faurie. No archaeological evidence to support the road’s existence.

*Savignac-et-Miremont*

mentions that in 1984 a tomb was found west of the village, carved into the rock, without any type of grave goods and that no date could be given.