Iron Age

transition from Bronze to Iron Age fairly well understood in the Périgord

Final Bronze Age IIIb well represented, particularly by large, high habitations in the valleys, including the Vézère; however this knowledge is mainly in artifacts, and not necessarily spacial, social, or economic organization

do NOT have a good understanding of burial practices
during this last stage of the Bronze Age the first Iron objects appear

little known about First Iron Age (Halstatt) probably due to lack of research

however, other sites in the central west, as well as Pourtem near Perigueux, show evidence of a population stability–speaks against the notion of eastern invaders

Middle Iron Age even less is known–only evidence is some cremation deposits at the Coursac necropolis

Final phase of First Iron Age (4-5th c BC) is better understood with the development of black painted, footed ceramics, and the practice of cremation underneath a tumulus of earth

necropoli and isolated mounds essentially in the north of the Dordogne department

several sites show continuation of occupation, but reduction in importance from Final Bronze Age IIIb

several indications of habitat displacement to non-flooding valley terraces

also a number of caves and rockshelters served as temporary habitats (e.g., Roque-Saint-Christophe)

evidence of gold mining in souther Limousin

For Second Iron Age (La Tène) the beginning and middle phases (450-150 BC) not well known likely from lack of research on the newly occupied zones by Celts

large migrations of Celtic population beginning in 400BC and reached southwestern France quickly

etymology of Petrucorii suggests a federation of 4 celtic tribes (petru=4 corri=tribe? group of people

however, the evidence we have is not the same as that in other places; no weapons deposits, or sanctuaries

only a few isolated discovers testify the presence of a Celtic population in the second half of the 5th c. BC

fibula of Maren type at la Calévie (Les Eyzies) 450-400 BC

Only a few isolated ceramics of the Laténien type provide evidence of middle phase

seems to be an increase in habitations building in 1st c. BC

reoccupation of Rouffignac and Roque Saint Christophe

large number of money deposits in the south of the department testifies to the economic vitality during the 1st c. BC

Valleys including Vézère became important economic avenues in the redistributions of Italin wine in amphora of Dressel I type

At the time of the Gallic War Perigord was part of the Celtic world and the Petrucores had privileged relations with Italian neogtiatores

seems they participated only timidly if at all in the reinforcements sent to Vercingétorix at Alésia in 52 BC (no leader name known)

César does not say much about the Pétrucrores

after the Gallic Wars Pétrucrores abandon oppidum and install themselves on the others side in the plain, in a meander of the Isle (birth of Périgueux the town)

Gallo-Roman epoch

From second half of 3rd c to beginning of 2nd BC is seems the Périgord is in the birth of a monetary system and a continental metal system

during the middle of the 2nd c. stable political entity along margins of Aquitaine Bassin (political center erected in the valley of Isle)

16-13 BC Augustus creates province of Aquitaine (unites Celts and South Garonne peoples)
Périgord one of the largest civitas in the region, capital called Vesunna opposite the Oppidum of la Curade

limits of civitas established through regression of medieval diocese borders, toponym studies, and studies of Merovingian coins

in S-E cannot establish with certainty but perhaps environmental constraints meant the territory followed the Jurassic profile
secondary villages seem rare in Périgord; according to J.-P. Bost (1983) Vesunna was “seule véritable ville au milieu d’un monde quasi uniquement rural” (p.45) check original source; this page number for Gaillard

no evidence of secondary villages from inscriptions but the large territory must have included road stations and some rural towns linked to economic activity; some archaeological finds suggest this

Communication roads

waterways were important routes during protohistory and Antiquity

P. Sillières 1990 set a baseline of navigability at 8=10 m3/s

the E-W slope in the Dordogne means that many of the rivers are navigable

Vézère has 65m3/s in December; valley densely occupied during Antiquity

however, in the Périgord no documents or direct archaeological evidence testifies to the importance of waterways–indirect evidence from amphora; implantation of villas along the rivers indicates a privileged utilisation of the waterways for transport

network of pre-Roman roads in Aquitaine

roads that follow the long waterways called pouges; and avoid places of water; situated on rocky outcrops and dry ridges of watershed lines

clues of road at Fanlac (undated)

Petit 1990 (identified 5 types of sites for Antiquity)

villa–includes buildings for main house with a certain amount of decorated luxury along with the presence of marble and mosaics

villa–country estate

domus–town house

most G-R archaeology in the form of mobile objects; and the hierarchy of habitation types can only be established by the materials of construction

villa (pars urbana) known from excavation or aerial photo, has marble or mosaic, and limestone inscriptions or statuary

villa modeste sites with fragments of limestone architecture or statuary, or painted plasters, or indications of heating; same ambition as villa but in less rich materials

vestiges d’activités artisanales: recover walls, or tiles floors, or tegulae

chronological evolution of Roman Empire primarily studied only through evolution of villas

indications of implantation during 1st half of 1st c. are rare: Archignac–white mosaic associated with arétine seal and Hispanic wine amphorae

villas spread during second half of 1st c and beginning of 2nd c due to the economic prosperity and stability under the pax romana

mosaic pavements common for villas in the second half of the 2nd c and 3rd c

most villas show a continuity of habitat in villa sites from the High Empire into late Antiquity

Olivoux at Montignac rare in this case (no money after the 2nd c)

Late Antiquity period of florescence in Dordogne

distribution both a result of pedological factors (landfill, farming, road and train track building) also a result of the hen pecking nature of archaeological inquiry by local people societies

less populated areas correspond to sectors of massif forests, karstic relief and granite

villas during Roman period established on alluvial terraces
Jurassic and Cretaceous geology of the Vezere led to an implantation of villa about every 5 km often on the lowest terrace of a convex meander.

The relatively few quantity of other sites in the Vézère is tempered by an important cave occupation on the left side of the river of a temporary nature.

The veracity of the distribution map is supported by intensive archaeological survey of Palaeolithic sites, incidentally extended to historical sites. Even though there has been no detailed prospection (limit in questions that can be addressed) general overview can be validated at least in river valley through the proxy of paleo research (but must be mindful that a lot of this has been overlooked and lost in the reports of history).

During Antiquity agriculture and stock raising major activities of rural life, however few indicators of this rural lifestyle found in Perigord probably because of the privilege of excavating the main houses of the villa during the 1st c BC Petrucorii were big consumers of Italian wine and imported it in Dressel 1 amphora.

Reduction of Italian and Iberian containers in the second half of the 1st c AD seems to have induced an Aquitainian wine industry in the Garonne and Dordogne.

Testimony of the massive iron working by the Petrucorii however mining practices not very well known evidence of slag and ore reduction on sites only real testament.

Siderolithic outcrops provide easily exploitable alternative.

Ceramic production in Dordogne not well known.

Production of tiles seems to have been a short-term activity, made as needed, except possibly at Campagne where three furnaces discovered.

Gallo-Roman dietiés well represented in the Perigord: Jupiter, Mercury, Apollo, and Venus.

Cremation appeared in The Perigord generally in the final La Tene.

Cremated remains placed in a ceramic or glass urn, itself protected by a container; mausoleums also likely existed.

Outside of the towns, burial and body burning without a doubt existed druing the Gallo-Roman epoch.

2nd and 3rd c. AD most obscured in terms of burial rites.

Migration/Invasion Period and Early Middle Ages.

Vandal invasion between 406-409 descended down the Rhine towards the Pyrenees and Iberian peninsula.

No archaeological traces of the amplitude of devastation they caused but written sources (Paulin de Nole in Gregory of Tours) spoke of the Pégase, the archbishop of Perigueux offered.

Before 472 Perigord passed into new control, under Euric, and part of the territory was conceded to them.

Archaeological indications of Germanic tribes essentially portable objects (fibula, money, ).

Archaeological material suggests abandonment of villas around the beginning of the 4th c, however at Terrasson some evidence of possible restoration during the Early Middle Ages of a mosaic.

Three "tremisses" from the end of the 5t/6th c found suggesting the deceleration of money.

The few habitations known do not represent the likely reality as told by the the map of necropoli.

Evidence from money, (not archaeology) of implementation of Merovingian occupation in the north east of the department.

Evidence of the superposition of merovingian cemeteries on older sites.

The fact that burials sometimes occur within villa buildings and respect their boundaries suggests a continuity of respect for these buildings as a place for Christian funeral through the 6th c.

Necropoli in open fields do not necessarily signify pagan rites.
burial in open fields long standing practice in the Perigord only abandoned towards the end of the early Middle Ages in favor of burials within parish cemetery