

International Colloquium

**The Battle of Arausio (105 BC) : A European History
September 20-23, 2022**

Location: Orange, Vaucluse, France; Palace of the Princes

Organizational Committee :

Loïc BUFFAT, PhD in Archaeology, Director of the Arausio 105 Collective Research Programme, Manager of the company Mosaïques Archéologie (Cournonterral ; Hérault).

Alain DEYBER, Doctor of State in History and Civilisation of Antiquity, Civil Administrator, Honorary President of the Arausio 105 Collective Research Programme of the Ministry of Culture, General Coordinator of the colloquium (Avignon ; Vaucluse).

Mathieu ENGERBEAUD, PhD in Roman History, Maître de conférences (lecturer), Aix-Marseille University, TDMAM (UMR 7297).

Professor Nathalie GINOUX, Sorbonne University, Director of the Heritage Observatory at Sorbonne University (OPUS), Centre André CHASTEL, conference manager (Paris).

Professor Yann LE BOHEC, Professor Emeritus, Sorbonne University (Paris).

Stéphane MILLIERE, CEO of GÉDÉON Programmes (Paris), director of a 90" documentary film on the Battle of Orange in partnership with French and foreign TV channels (Paris).

Bernard PETIT, Agrégé d'Histoire (Saintes).

Scientific Committee :

Loïc Buffat,
Alain Deyber
Mathieu Engerbeaud
Nathalie Ginoux
Yann Le Bohec
Bernard Petit

Scientific argument :

On October 6 105 BC, near Arausio (Orange), the Romans suffered one of the most catastrophic military setbacks in their history. From the point of view of human losses, this disaster surpassed all the defeats of the past, and the historian Theodor Mommsen (1817-1903) was not mistaken when he wrote that "by the material losses and the moral effect, the disaster at Orange

even exceeded the day at Cannae¹” (216 BC). However, the ancient texts, which present only the point of view of the Romans and their allies, teach us that the victorious coalition, composed of Germanic and Celtic peoples, was defeated a few years later, in 102 and 101 BC, by the almost providential action of a Roman leader, Caius Marius. The action of the one who is presented as the savior of Italy has long polarized the narratives, ancient as well as modern, preventing the implementation of a fair analysis of the facts and the actors, whose action has been reviewed and corrected by Roman pride and morality. The historian Camille Jullian (1859-1933) summed up the views of ancient sources on the enemies of the Romans, which are all too often reduced to the *Cimbri* and *Teutones* : “The Ancients gave us the impression of a monstrous ride, of a hurricane of men and animals, sweeping the ground. As far as the river, overthrowing the legions and their camps, sowing despair, flight and death everywhere²”. Starting from Northern Europe and having migrated for several years in the central part of the continent, their movement has repeatedly clashed with Roman armies from 113 onwards, in confrontations which have been victorious each time. Their migration took them to the banks of the Rhone where, in 105, they destroyed two consular armies from Italy in a gigantic slaughter, close to the place where the Roman colony of Arausio was later founded.

Apart from the particular importance of the event, whose repercussions are immeasurable and little studied until then, the case study is of an exceptional singularity for an ancient battle, due to the discovery of Roman Republican military installations in the immediate vicinity of Orange, for which a date from the late 2nd century BC can be established. Since 2014, within the framework of the Research Group on the Battle of Orange, which succeeded the Arausio 105 Collective Research Project (2017), multidisciplinary archaeological research is being conducted to understand the logic of a military site that could be unique³ and a marker of European history.

The place of confrontation, whose discovery has only just begun, was indeed an incredible place of convergence of populations. Until a fairly recent period, the formidable opponents of the Romans, whether *Cimbri*, *Teutones*, *Tigurini* or *Ambrones*, remained only names in Greek or Latin texts. In this perspective, the account of their final defeat in 102-101 was destined only to serve as a springboard for Marius’s political career. However, the work of the last decades has reinvested the study of these peoples, until finally giving them the status of historical object in its own right, independently of Roman history. This appropriation does not occur without difficulty, because the *Cimbri* and the *Teutones*, which are also mentioned by ancient geographers, remain largely ghosts to archaeologists and historians, as the traces of their migration across Europe remain particularly complex to identify. Indeed, this roaming would concern at least fourteen European countries : Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Switzerland, France, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and marginally Croatia. In front of them, they had composite forces bringing together Roman legionaries, allied Italian peoples (the *socii*) and *auxilia externa* from all over the western Mediterranean, from Spain to Greece through the Balearic Islands and from southern Gaul to North Africa.

¹ Mommsen T., *Histoire romaine*, 5, Paris, 1866, trad. fr. d’après la 1^{ère} éd. 1855, p. 143.

² Jullian C., *Histoire de la Gaule*, 3. *La conquête romaine et les premières invasions germaniques*, Paris, 1920, éd. originale 1909, p. 68.

³ The only valid comparison is that of the site of the Battle of Teutoburg which took place in northern Germany, near Kalkriese in 9 p.C.

By reflecting on the battle of Arausio on a European scale, the aim of this first colloquium⁴ is to restore the event to its place in the turbulent history of the late 2nd century BC, when the Roman power began to establish a political order in Southern Gaul. Considered independently of the final victory of Marius⁵, the confrontation opens the way to reflections little explored until then: the analysis of the relationship between textual sources and a very singular archaeological site, the taking into account of the enemies of the Romans as full-fledged actors in history, the study of the political-military fragilities of the Roman order emerging in Gaul and the consequences of a massive massacre, which was only too much minimized by the Romans themselves. This colloquium on archaeology and history, which is part of the intense scientific activity of the Arausio 105 Collective Research Project, aims to bring together international specialists and to cross-check approaches within four sessions, whose succession reflects the different orientations chosen for the debates :

Session 1 – History of an Outstanding Discovery; Research Methods and Tools (Textual Sources and Archaeology; Methods and Tools for Prospecting and Preventive Archaeological Excavations); Combating Archaeological Looting.

Driver : Loïc Buffat in collaboration with Xavier Delestre

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Session 2 – War Mobility and Ethnographic and Spatial Logics of a European Migration

Drivers : Nathalie Ginoux, in collaboration with Bernard Petit

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Session 3 – Rome in turmoil at the end of the second century BC

Drivers : Mathieu Engerbeaud, in collaboration with Yann Le Bohec

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Session 4 – The Battle of Orange, Military History and Battlefield Archaeology

Driver : Alain Deyber

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Bibliography

Articles and works published :

DEYBER (A.), *Les Gaulois en guerre. Stratégies, tactiques et techniques. Essai d'histoire militaire (IIe/Ier siècle avant J.-C)*. Paris, Errance, 2009⁶.

- *Arausio* (105 a.C.) Une batalla de exterminio en la Antigüedad, in : *Desperta Ferro*, n° especial VIII, Madrid, diciembre 2015 - 2016, p. 76-81 (en espagnol).
- Avec la collaboration de LUGINBÜHL (T.), Un sujet culturel et patrimonial appliqué au dialogue territorial et à la conduite de projets : l'exemple du Groupe de Recherche sur la Bataille d'Orange, in : *Administration – Revue de l'administration territoriale de l'État*, N° 248, pp. 79-81.
- Une bataille d'extermination de l'Antiquité : Germano-celtiques contre Romains à Orange – 8 et 9

⁴ A tour of the main sites and a temporary exhibition at the Museum of Orange are planned.

⁵ It was a decisive victory, however, it was observed that some of the *Cimbri* and *Teutones* escaped annihilation and apparently moved northward to Gaul and Italy, where they settled in several places by force (partly unpublished discoveries).

⁶ See index p. 499 and 506, items Arausio/Orange, *Cimbri*, Cimbri-Teutonic and *Teutones*. This book is now out of print in its original "paper" form; at the same time, it can still be purchased in digital edition on the websites of major online bookstores.

- octobre 105 avant J.-C., in : *Bulletin de l'Académie de Vaucluse*, 214^e année, janvier 2017, n° 454, p. 2, 1 carte.
- & LUGINBÜHL (Th.), *Cimbri and Teutones* against Rome: first research results concerning the battle of *Arausio* (105 bc), in: Fernández-Götz, M. and Roymans, N. (eds.) (2018): *Conflict Archaeology: Materialities of Collective Violence from Prehistory to Late Antiquity*. EAA Monograph Series "Themes in Contemporary Archaeology" Volume 5. Routledge, New York, Chap. 14, p. 155-166 (en anglais).
 - & BUFFAT (L.), Le champ de la bataille d'Orange dévoilé ! In : *Archéologia* n° 565, mai 2018, Quetigny, p. 16-17, 4 ill.
 - & ZAARAOUI (Y.), BUFFAT (L.), Le Lampourdier. Un camp romain républicain témoin de la bataille d'Orange (6 octobre 105 av. n. è.). In : REDDÉ, Michel (dir.), in : *L'armée romaine en Gaule à l'époque républicaine. Nouveaux témoignages archéologiques*. Glux-en-Glenne : Bibracte, 2018 (Bibracte ; 28), p. 19-44.
 - Avec la collaboration de Pascal MARROU, Xavier DELESTRE, Mathieu ENGERBEAUD, Bernard PETIT, Loïc BUFFAT, Nathalie GINOUX, Yahya ZAARAOUI, Yann LE BOHEC et Stéphane MILLIERE, La bataille d'Orange : Rome en péril, in : *Archéologia*, n° 597, avril 2021, p. 38-53, 28 ill.
- LUGINBÜHL (Th.), Les Cimbres et les Teutons, une histoire sans archéologie ? In : Gaeng, C. dir. *Hommages à Jeannot Metzler*. Luxembourg : *Archaeologia Mosellana*, 2014, pp. 343-360.
- PETIT (B.), *Santones. Migrations cimbriques et peuple santon*, Éditions universitaires européennes, Saarbrücken, 2016.
- POUSSEL (L.), *Pourrières tombeau des Teutons*. Préface de Jean Courtin directeur de recherches au CNRS, Cheminements éditions, Prix de l'Académie littéraire de Provence 97, s.l., 1998 (coll. « en Provence »)⁷.
- Le processus migratoire cimbrique, in : *Revue des Études Latines*, 2020-4, Bruxelles, Latomus, 2021, p. 1028-1075.

Book in press

DEYBER (A.), *La bataille d'Orange, 6 octobre 105 av. J.-C., quand le destin de Rome a failli basculer*, Éditions Faton, Paris-Quétigny, 2022⁸.

Articles and books in preparation⁹

DEYBER (A.), dir. Auteurs : Deyber (A.), Engerbeaud (M.), M. Petit (B.), avec une participation de Buffat (L.), Féraud (J.-L.), Le Bohec (Y.), Marrou (P.) – *La bataille d'Orange du 6 octobre 105 av. J.-C. : une histoire européenne*. Préface de Catherine Wolff.

DEYBER (A.) – « La fin du II^e siècle, un tournant dans la manière de faire la guerre chez les Celtes ? », in *Continuités et discontinuités à la fin du II^e siècle avant Jésus-Christ dans*

⁷ Edition out of print.

⁸ Book release in May 2022.

⁹ A first archaeological monograph presenting the results of all archaeological research undertaken from 2014 to 2018 is being prepared by a group of researchers led by Loïc Buffat.

l'espace celtique et sa périphérie. Actes de la table ronde du Centre archéologique européen de Bibracte, 27-29 octobre 2021, Glux-en-Glenne (coll. Bibracte XX).

The magazines *Archéologia*, *Histoire Magazine* and the *Revue des Études Celtiques* each plan to publish an article in 2022 or 2023.