



CALL FOR PROPOSALS  
SECOND CIRCULAR

45<sup>th</sup> International Days of the French Association of Merovingian Archaeology

**Religious Architecture of the Early Middle Ages in the Frankish World and its Margins:  
Legacies and Transformations**

Toulouse (France), October 23-25, 2025

In 2018, several communications raised important questions about our understanding of the construction of religious buildings in the early Middle Ages during the 39<sup>th</sup> International Days of the French Association of Merovingian Archaeology. The increasing number of excavations and studies in building archaeology studies, along with the possibilities offered by archaeometric analyses and new dating methods, now allow for a more detailed understanding - and at a time even a rediscovery - of religious buildings from the first centuries of the Middle Ages. In recent years, we have witnessed a resurgence of interest in this subject both in France and across Europe. These numerous studies are part of, for example, large international research initiatives, such as the development of the Corpus CARE - Corpus of Religious Monuments Prior to the Year 1000. These efforts are also largely supported by regional initiatives, which have recently resulted in the completion of PhD theses and the launch of particularly active collective research programs.

The 45th International Days of the French Association of Merovingian Archaeology, to be held in Toulouse from October 23 to 25, 2025, will therefore focus on the religious architecture of the early Middle Ages in the Frankish world and its margins, examining the effects of inheritance and transformation. The conference will aim to take stock of current research on this theme, propose new research directions, and reflect on the architecture, spatial organization, and functional arrangements of ecclesiastical buildings from the early Middle Ages.

Proposals with synthetic approaches will be favored. Regional and/or thematic reports focused on the Frankish world, or summaries of contact zones (Northern Spain, Northern Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, England), illustrated by monographs, are particularly welcome.

The conference will address churches of various statuses, whether integrated into monastic or cathedral complexes or not. It will be just as valuable to discuss new studies as it will be to revisit earlier research, aiming to characterize the spatial and monumental organization of Christian places of worship and their architectural evolution, considering both legacies and ruptures in relation to the Merovingian period.

Proposals will address a range of issues, including the variety of architectural plans, the elevation of these buildings, and their transformation over time. Key topics will include the construction techniques and materials used in building churches, the evolution of their design -

which may indicate either continuity or a break with earlier practices - the reuse of building materials and their possible social significance, such as the affirmation of a sanctuary's antiquity. The decoration of these buildings, developed and adapted over time, will also be examined. Thus, proposals should consider the durability or modification of church architecture throughout the early Middle Ages, with a focus on their successive redevelopments and the functions attributed to the different spaces within these buildings.

As usual at these Days, a session will also be dedicated to current regional archaeology, focusing on the Occitanie region and its margins.

## **Proposals**

Proposals for communications (20 minutes) and posters (A0 or A1) should be submitted preferably in French or with visual support in French or English (posters will not be presented orally).

Proposals related to the main theme of the conference and to the session on current regional archaeology should be submitted by **February 1, 2025** to [afam2025.toulouse@gmail.com](mailto:afam2025.toulouse@gmail.com)

Proposals will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee and must include the following:

- Title
- Full contact details of the authors, including their affiliation(s)
- 5 keywords
- A summary of up to 3000 characters, accompanied by an illustration in .jpg, .tiff, or .AI format.

The text document should be submitted in either .odt or .doc format, with the prefix **JA\_** (for the current day) or **TH\_** (for the symposium theme) followed by the author's name. Please avoid using predefined styles.

## **Steering Committee**

Bastien LEFEBVRE (Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès, UMR 5608 TRACES)

Yoan MATTALIA (Eveha, UMR 5608 TRACES)

## **Scientific Committee**

Brigitte BOISSAVIT (Université Paris - Nanterre, UMR 7041 ArScAn)

Sébastien BULLY (CNRS, UMR 6298 ArTeHis)

Eleonora DESTEFANIS (Università del Piemonte Orientale)

Christelle EHRHARDT (Inrap, UMR 5607 Ausonius)

Christian GENSBEITEL (Université Bordeaux - Montaigne, UMR 6034 Archéosciences Bordeaux)

Mathias DUPUIS (Direction de l'archéologie Chartres Métropole et Ville de Chartres, UMR 7298 LA3M)

Elisabeth LORANS (Université de Tours, UMR 7324 CITERES)

Mariacristina VARANO (Université de Rouen, UR 3831 GRHis)

## Indicative Bibliography

BOUIRON Marc, DUREUIL-BOURACHAU Catherine, FIXOT Michel, GUYON Jean (dir.), *Guide des sites de l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge, V<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècle : Provence, Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Saint-Laurent-du-Var*, Éditions Mémoires millénaires, 2023.

*Corpus des monuments religieux antérieurs à l'an mil. Corpus of the European Early Medieval Churches (4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> cent.)*, [En ligne] : <https://care.huma-num.fr/care/>

DESTEFANIS Eleonora et BULLY Sébastien, « The Archaeology of the Earliest Monasteries in Italy and France (Second Half of the Fourth Century to the Eighth Century) », in BEACH Alison I. and COCHELIN Isabelle (éd.), *Medieval Monasticism in the Latin West. Origins to the Eleventh Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020, p. 232-257.

EHRHARDT Christelle, *Bâtir une église, fonder une mémoire, asseoir une autorité : lieux de culte et représentations du passé dans les campagnes des anciens diocèses de Bordeaux, Bazas et Agen au premier Moyen Âge (IV<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Thèse de doctorat sous la direction d'Isabelle CARTRON, Université Bordeaux-Montaigne, 2020.

GAILLARD Michèle (éd.), *L'empreinte chrétienne en Gaule du IV<sup>e</sup> au IX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2014.

GENSBETTEL Christian et GAILLARD Hervé, « L'église Notre-Dame de Gironde-sur-Dropt : une église préromane en Aquitaine ? », dans *L'Entre-deux-Mers et son identité. Saint-Ferme, Pellegrue et Massugas, Actes du 14<sup>e</sup> colloque de l'Entre-deux-Mers*, CLEM, Saint-Quentin-de-Baron, 2015, p. 25-31.

HEBER-SUFFRIN François et SAPIN Christian, *L'architecture carolingienne en France et en Europe*, Paris, Éditions Picard, 2021.

HEITZ Carol, *La France préromane, archéologie et architecture religieuse du haut Moyen Âge : IV<sup>e</sup> siècle-an mille*, Paris, Éditions Errance, 1987.

MARTINEZ Damien et MOREL David, « L'architecture religieuse de l'Auvergne entre Antiquité tardive et haut Moyen Âge à travers la documentation archéologique », *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, vol. 18/1, 2012, p. 97-121.

POUSTHOMIS-DALLE Nelly, « Quelques réflexions sur les matériaux et leurs mises en œuvre dans l'architecture religieuse médiévale du sud-ouest de la France », *Il paesaggio pietrificato. La storia sociale dell'Europa tra X e XII secolo attraverso l'archeologia del costruito, Atti del Convegno (Arezzo, 7-8 febbraio 2020) a cura di Fabio Giovannini e Alessandra Molinari, Archeologia dell'Architettura*, XXVI, 2021, p. 235-251.

SAPIN Christian, BULLY Sébastien, BIZRI Mélinda et HENRION Fabrice (dir.), *Archéologie du bâti. Aujourd'hui et demain, Actes du colloque d'Auxerre, 10-12 octobre 2019*, Dijon, Artheis Éditions, 2022.

SCHNEIDER Laurent (coord.), *Archéologie des églises et des cimetières ruraux. Les apports récents de la documentation languedocienne*, Actes du séminaire d'Archéologie Médiévale Métropolitaine et Méditerranéenne organisé par les laboratoires Archéologie Médiévale Méditerranéenne (UMR 6572, CNRS, Aix-en-Provence) et Archéologie des Sociétés Méditerranéennes (UMR 5140, CNRS, Lattes), le 13 mai 2009 à Montpellier, *Archéologie du Midi Médiéval*, t. 28, 2010, p. 129-247.

VALAIS Alain, *Les églises rurales du premier Moyen Âge (V<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècle) dans l'ancien diocèse du Mans et à ses confins*, Thèse de doctorat sous la direction de Brigitte BOISSAVIT-CAMUS, Université Paris Nanterre, 2021.



Moissac (Tarn-et-Garonne), Church of Saint-Martin