



## Geophysical prospection on an Early Iron Age Cult Site near Frankfurt/Oder, Germany

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The Free University of Berlin and the Humboldt University of Berlin hosts the excellence cluster 264 Topoi, “The Formation and Transformation of Space and Knowledge in Ancient Civilizations”. The Excellence Cluster pursues the goal of researching the interdependence of space and knowledge in the civilizations of the Ancient Near East, the Mediterranean, and Black Sea region and parts of the Eurasian steppe from the 6th millennium BC to around AD 500. Within this excellence cluster, the project A-I-11 “Lossow near Frankfurt/Oder – An Early Iron Age Cult Site of the Ancient Peripheral Zone” examines the evolution of an important cult site in Central Europe.

The castle mound of Lossow was built as a fortified settlement in the late Bronze Age (10th century B.C.). After a phase of around 200 years, a supra-regionally significant, early Iron Age cult centre developed on this site (8th-6th century B.C.). Several pieces of evidence indicate that the locality had a central-site character. Typical for the site are well-shaped shafts, filled with large amounts of human and animal bones. The shafts with a diameter of about 1 meter and a depth of about 5 to 7 meters are a great challenge to near surface geophysics. Here, geophysical methods (geomagnetic gradiometry, geoelectric imaging, georadar survey) have been used to obtain a large-scale conclusive picture of the sub-surface both within the castle mount and around the perimeter. While the magnetic results reveal numerous archaeological artefacts, geoelectric imaging deciphers the subsurface structure of the site.