

UNION INTERNATIONALE DES SCIENCES PRÉHISTORIQUES ET PROTOHISTORIQUES
INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR PREHISTORIC AND PROTOHISTORIC SCIENCES

PROCEEDINGS OF THE XV WORLD CONGRESS (LISBON, 4-9 SEPTEMBER 2006)
ACTES DU XV CONGRÈS MONDIAL (LISBONNE, 4-9 SEPTEMBRE 2006)

Series Editor: Luiz Oosterbeek

VOL. 41



Conceptualising Space and Place

On the role of agency, memory and identity in the
construction of space from the Upper Palaeolithic
to the Iron Age in Europe

C41 - The creation of 'significant places' and 'landscapes' in the
Northwestern half of the Iberia, during Pre and Proto-historic
times. Theoretical, recording and interpretation issues from case
studies in this region

C72 - Space, Memory and Identity in the European Bronze Age

Edited by

Ana M. S. Bettencourt

M. Jesus Sanches

Lara B. Alves

Ramon Fábregas Valcarce

BAR International Series 2058

2010

This title published by

Archaeopress
Publishers of British Archaeological Reports
Gordon House
276 Banbury Road
Oxford OX2 7ED
England
bar@archaeopress.com
www.archaeopress.com

BAR S2058

Proceedings of the XV World Congress of the International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences
Actes du XV Congrès Mondial de l'Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques

Outgoing President: Vítor Oliveira Jorge
Outgoing Secretary General: Jean Bourgeois
Congress Secretary General: Luiz Oosterbeek (Series Editor)
Incoming President: Pedro Ignacio Shmitz
Incoming Secretary General: Luiz Oosterbeek
Volume Editors: Ana M. S. Bettencourt, M. Jesus Sanches, Lara B. Alves and Ramon Fábregas Valcarce

Conceptualising Space and Place: On the role of agency, memory and identity in the construction of space from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Iron Age in Europe

C41 - The creation of 'significant places' and 'landscapes' in the Northwestern half of the Iberia, during Pre and Proto-historic times. Theoretical, recording and interpretation issues from case studies in this region
C72 - Space, Memory and Identity in the European Bronze Age

© UISPP / IUPPS and authors 2010

ISBN 978 1 4073 0547 9

Signed papers are the responsibility of their authors alone.
Les texts signés sont de la seule responsabilité de ses auteurs.

Contacts :
Secretary of U.I.S.P.P. – International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences
Instituto Politécnico de Tomar, Av. Dr. Cândido Madureira 13, 2300 TOMAR
Email: uispp@ipt.pt
www.uispp.ipt.pt

Printed in England by CMP (UK) Ltd

All BAR titles are available from:

Hadrian Books Ltd
122 Banbury Road
Oxford
OX2 7BP
England
bar@hadrianbooks.co.uk

The current BAR catalogue with details of all titles in print, prices and means of payment is available free from Hadrian Books or may be downloaded from www.archaeopress.com

SPACE AND MEMORY AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER ULLA (GALICIA, SPAIN)

Beatriz COMENDADOR REY

Area de Prehistoria. Dpto de Historia Arte e Xeografía. Facultade de Historia de Ourense.

Campus das Lagoas, Pavillón 2, Soto. 3004 Ourense Universidade de Vigo.

Email: beacomendador@uvigo.es

Abstract: The outlet of the river Ulla and the mouth of the estuary, the *Ría de Arousa*, present evidence of a continuous archaeological record, dating back as early as the Neolithic, with an abundance of exceptional finds. The intense use of the area has been demonstrated by the wealth of manifestations of the archaeological record, such as the megalithic phenomenon and the rock carvings. The Ulla is also the river on the Northwest Iberian peninsula which has produced the largest number of watery hoards in its downstream section as well as at the mouth. These finds add to the evidence corroborating the close relations that existed between the foreign areas and this zone towards the end of the Bronze Age. At the mouth of the Ulla river, the archaeological record indicates that a complex social structure arose starting from as early as the Copper Age, which is expressed in its art. This record verifies a special dynamic action in terms of evidence of foreign contact. We propose that in this zone two different phenomena can be related –rock art and prehistoric hoards, as different strategies used to appropriate the territory but linked in an ideological and symbolic framework. We also propose a different point of view regarding the find of the gold object usually known as the *Leiro helmet*.

Keywords: Bronze Age, Rock art, Hoards, Interaction, Memory

Résumé: L'embouchure du fleuve Ulla et l'entrée de la ria d'Arousa présentent des témoignages archéologiques continus qui datent au moins du Néolithique, avec une abondance de trouvailles exceptionnelles. L'usage intense de cette zone a été démontré par l'importance des manifestations archéologiques, comme peuvent l'être le phénomène mégalithique et l'art rupestre. De plus, dans le nord ouest de la Péninsule Ibérique, l'Ulla est le fleuve qui contient le plus grand nombre de dépôts aquatiques, que ce soit dans sa partie basse ou au niveau de son embouchure. Ces trouvailles confirment les intenses relations qui existent entre cette zone et d'autres espaces plus lointains, jusqu'à la fin de l'Âge de Bronze. À l'entrée du fleuve Ulla, les manifestations archéologiques indiquent l'apparition d'une structure sociale déjà complexe depuis l'Âge du Cuivre, cela se perçoit à travers son art. Ceci prouve qu'il existe un dynamisme particulier pour ce qui est du contact avec l'extérieur. On peut dire que dans cette zone, deux phénomènes différents peuvent être mis en relation, l'art rupestre et les dépôts préhistoriques, comme étant différentes stratégies d'appropriation du territoire, mais en même temps, ce sont deux phénomènes liés dans un même cadre idéologique et symbolique. D'autre part, on propose un point de vue différent en rapport avec la trouvaille de l'objet d'or habituellement connu comme le casque de *Leiro*.

Mots clés: Âge de Bronze, Art Rupestre, Dépôts, Mémoire

INTRODUCTION

The outlet of the river Ulla and the mouth of the estuary, the *Ría de Arousa*, present evidence of a continuous archaeological record, dating back as early as the Neolithic, with an abundance of exceptional finds. The intense use of the area has been demonstrated by the wealth of manifestations of the archaeological record, such as the megalithic phenomenon and the rock carvings. The Ulla is also the river on the Northwest Iberian Peninsula which has produced the largest number of watery hoards in its downstream section as well as at the mouth. These finds add to the evidence corroborating the close relations that existed between the foreign areas and this zone towards the end of the Bronze Age. At the mouth of the Ulla river, the archaeological record indicates that a complex social structure arose starting from as early as the Copper Age, which is expressed in its art. This record verifies a special dynamic action in terms of evidence of foreign contact. We propose that in this zone two different phenomena can be related –rock art and prehistoric hoards, as different strategies used to appropriate the territory but linked in an ideological and symbolic framework. We also propose a different point of view regarding the find of the gold object usually known as the *Leiro helmet*.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF A PLACE

Our research area is located on the Atlantic coast in the region of Galicia (Spain), in the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula¹ (Fig. 9.1 and 9.2). The galician coast branches into a myriad of *rías*-estuaries- of which the *Arousa* is the largest. This estuary is also an extraordinary marine valley because of both its size and the wealth of shellfish it produces. The angle formed by the estuary starts diminishing in size from the *Island of Sálvora* towards the NE, and is at its narrowest point, just 0.55 km wide, at the mouth of the Ulla river. It is the second most important river, after the Miño, in the hydrographic system of Galicia, offering optimum conditions for navigation along a stretch, upstream to *Pontecesures-Padrón*, where the effects of the tides are still strongly felt. It is more difficult to go beyond this point owing to the narrowing

¹ We realize that the selection of an area of analysis implies that we ourselves have created this entity. We do not define a concrete and closed area, but rather areas that comprise the mouth of the river Ulla and which are part of the counties of Rianxo, Vilagarcía and Catoria, although in this work we place special emphasis on the north area corresponding to Rianxo. We do not use space as a homogeneous and neutral concept, but as a culturally constructed notion. At the same time, this space is dynamic, not static. The horizontal movement of the river suggests, metaphorically, lines of interaction between the interior and the exterior, which reinforce its role as a gateway and frontier.

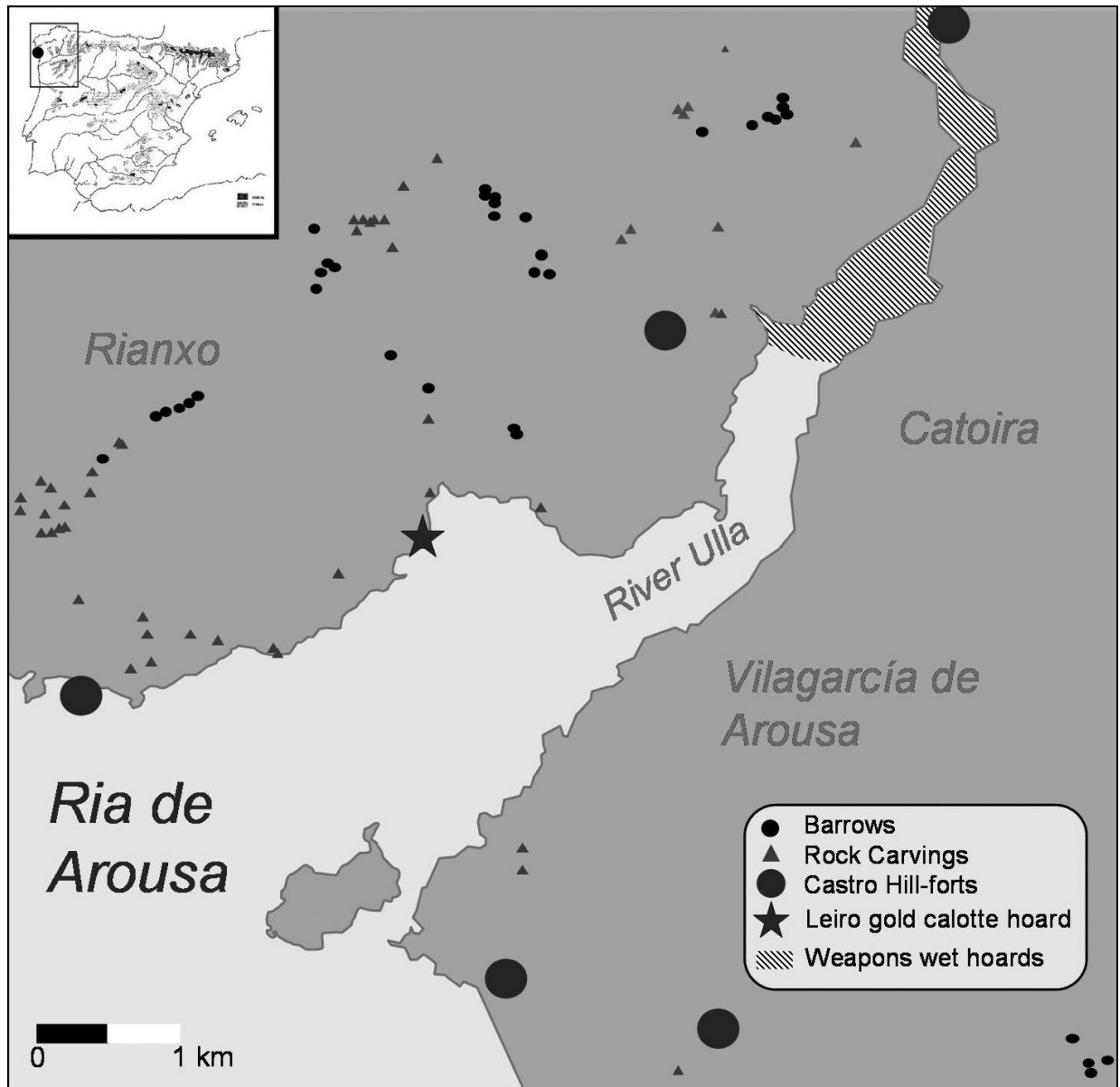


Fig. 9.1. The area around the mouth of the Ulla river (Galicia, Spain)



Fig. 9.2. The mouth of the Ulla river from the South at the beginnings of the XX century

of the riverbed. However, the basin offers an alternative route by land with no major obstacles, connecting to the numerous valleys formed by its tributaries on either bank.

The intensive use of the area has been demonstrated by the wealth of manifestations: megalithic necropolises, rock carvings, prehistoric hoards, *castro* hill-forts and Roman sites (Fig. 9.3). The course of the Ulla has been used as a waterway to reach the interior of Galicia from very early times. Standing out among the most important *castro* hill-forts in this area are *Casa de Xil* or *As Cercas (Isorna)* and the *Castro de Neixón (Boiro)*, both strategically located overlooking the mouth of the estuary and the outlet of the Ulla river. Naveiro and Caamaño (1992) have highlighted the importance of the Ulla waterway during Roman times, particularly during the early decades of the 1st century AD. They assume that there were several embarkation points and river ports. This idea was also corroborated by the find of a Roman shipwreck at *Punta Fradiño*, near the Island of *Cortegada* and the Roman Neptune Ara at *Alobre (Vilagarcía)* and *Padrón* (Singul and Suárez 2004: 56; Abuín 1997). Ruiz-Gálvez (1995: 29) has pointed out that it is no coincidence that this is the route -as legend has it- that St. James the Apostle followed when he traveled to Spain (in a *stone boat*), and it is the very same route that the Normans used when they stormed Santiago de Compostela in the 10th century AD. It is noteworthy that the mouth of the river enjoys a strategic location and comprises a landscape with singular natural conditions. In other words, it is the *gateway* of what historically was the major route traveled to reach the interior of Galicia.

It would be impossible here to expand upon the whole archaeological context of the area in question. However, we will analyze the principal features of two archaeological phenomena: rock art and prehistoric hoards.

Rock Art

In the last few years the region of the *Barbanza* has revealed itself to be one of the Galician regions with the highest density of prehistoric rock carvings,² as evidenced by recent research (Gutián and Gutián 2001; Costas *et al.* 2006). Made up of open air engravings whose base is the granite rocks, the repertoire consists mainly of cup marks, circular motifs, spirals, animals, riding scenes, human figures, weapons, idols, and other images.

The mouth of the river Ulla is an important center of rock carving tradition (Fig. 9.1). It was reported that rock carvings found on the banks of the Ría de Arousa have a distinct style, particularly those in the area around Rianxo. A **similarity in style in the depictions of the quadrupeds** on the shores of the Ría de Arousa³ was pointed out

(Fernández *et al.* 1993-94; Vázquez Rozas 1997: 91-92). There may be certain characteristics peculiar to the rock art of each individual region that would differentiate them from one another and could be interpreted as an indication of a certain territoriality (Santos, 2005b: 43; Vázquez Rozas 1997). Peña and Rey (2001:42) suggest for this region the presence of **individual rock carvers** whose style highlighted these features: static positions, heavy figures, most of them having long necks, that appear to be out of proportion and two-legged animals portrayed using three parallel lines. Santos (2005: 43) attempted a wide characterization, taking into consideration not only the style of the image, but also the selected panels, many of them, vertical, and other aspects. These aspects have been discussed by Costas *et al.* (Op. cit.).

In Rianxo we find an ensemble of rather unusual representations, such as for example, the **depictions of weapons** (halberds and daggers). *Foxa Vella* station (Monte da Pena, Rianxo) located on a hilltop with a sweeping view over the lowlands, includes the depiction of two halberds, as well as daggers and circular motifs (Calo and González 1980). As an exception, Leiro is the only place in Galicia where the weapons depicted in the carvings and their metal counterparts appeared in close proximity. On the same mountain slope a possible hoard was located, consisting of five tanged daggers and the only copper halberd in the Galician archaeological record (Comendador 1999).

Equine figures with **human figures** on their backs, representing riding scenes, can also be identified. Lastly two anthropomorphic figures interpreted as *praying figures* (less common in the record) appear in Rianxo, one in group *III of Praia das Cunchas* (Vázquez Rozas 1997:105) and the other, which bears a striking resemblance to the former, is found on the *petroglyph da Insua*, situated in the valley of O Rial (Bonilla *et al.* 1995-96: 290). At Foxa Vella we also have a figure interpreted as a quiromorfe (Calo and Reboredo 1980: 209).

Most of the stations are situated between 60-100 m, which implies a transition between the high zones of Monte da Pena (200 ms) and the coastline, oriented to the East.

Prehistoric Hoards

The essential feature in the determination of many metalwork **deposits** was that they should consist of a prescribed combination of artifacts and that they should have been deposited in a specific location. Bradley (1998) has pointed out that not only might different categories of artifacts have been deposited separately, but that hoards might also have been created in different locations separated from one another. Thus weapons might be deposited in watery locations, whilst ornaments may be buried in sites on dry land. An important element in many different areas is to link these deposits to singular features of the natural topography.

body, and a *zoomorphic type -Rianxo-*, with a long body, a straight, elongated neck and limbs depicted by three lines.

² There is some controversy at present concerning the denomination and chronology of the prehistoric rock engravings (Costas *et al.*, 2006; Santos 2006). Underlying this debate are the different theoretical points of view regarding the study of the phenomenon of rock art.

³ Distinguishing a *quadruped type -Arousano-*, as a big animal, with a rectangular body carved in a single line and linear type legs added to the

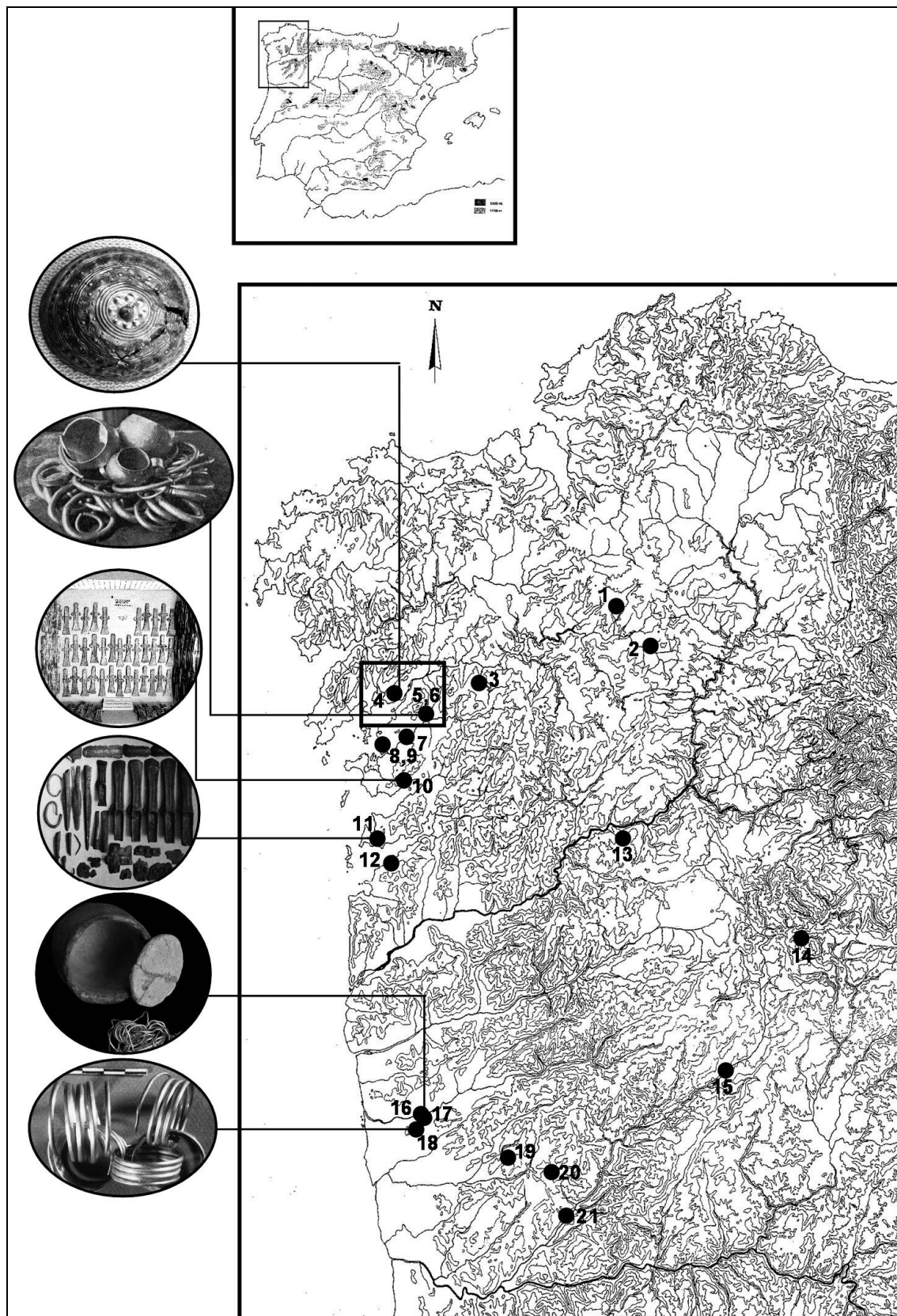


Fig. 9.3. The distribution of metal deposits mentioned in the text and table 1: 1- Melide. A Coruña; 2- Antas de Ulla. Lugo; 3- Lamela. Silleda. Pontevedra; 4- Leiro. Rianxo. A Coruña; 5- Caldas I (As Silgadas). Pontevedra; 6- Caldas II. Pontevedra; 7- Paradela. Meis. Pontevedra; 8- Tremoedo. Cambados. Pontevedra; 9- Cambados. Pontevedra; 10- Samieira. Poio. Pontevedra; 11- Hfó. Cangas. Pontevedra; 12- Alcabre. Vigo. Pontevedra; 13- Toen. Ourense; 14- A Urdiñeira. A Gudiña. Ourense; 15- Alto da Pedisqueira. Chaves; 16- Monte da Saia. Barcelos; 17- Sequeade. Barcelos; 18- Góios. Barcelos; 19- Cantonha. Guimarães; 20- Arnozela. Fafe; 21- Gondeiro. Amarante (In a square: the area around the mouth of the Ulla river)

In our case, the Ulla contains one of the highest densities of Later Bronze Age weaponry in Northwestern Iberia. The finds of archaeological material are not uniformly distributed, and the mouth seems to have been especially favored for making offerings. These **finds from wet locations** are chance discoveries, recovered by dredging⁴, hence little is known about their original contexts. The main artifacts that have been recovered are swords and spearheads dating from the Middle/Late Bronze Age to the transition period of the Late Bronze Age/Iron Age; two rapiers from the transition period -Middle Bronze Age/Late Bronze Age; three swords from the Later Bronze Age in addition to another one that was washed away; a spearhead and a sword of the *Monte Sa Idda* type from the transition period of the Later Bronze Age/Iron Age that may be dated around 800 b.C. (Peña Santos 1985; Ruiz-Gálvez 1995: 29; Meijide 1988; Grela 1995-96).⁵ These finds add to the evidence corroborating the foreign interactions that existed towards the end of the Bronze Age.⁶

But we must also consider two important **hoards found on dry land** in Leiro. We have already discussed the possible *Leiro hoard*, found by chance at *Monte Lioira*, dated to the beginnings of copper metallurgy. The other, in our opinion, is the find of the so-called Leiro helmet or bowl, one of the most popular and unknown archaeological finds in Galicia.

The so called Leiro Helmet as a hoard

The finding circumstances

This find took place by chance on April 7th 1976, at a spot known as *Corruncho dos Porcos* a small, rocky projection by the sea near Leiro beach (Rianxo, A Coruña, Spain)⁷ (Fig. 9.1). That day, J.M.^a Vicente Somoza, a local seaman, was busy clearing a piece of land among the rocks to build a shed where he would keep his boat and fishing gear. As he was shoveling out the earth, he found a vessel made of clay.

It is commonly assumed that this is a foreign object, because it imitates foreign objects or that it actually is one. The studies have focused on the central European typological parallels and chronology. Many authors have expressed their opinions about this unknown golden object, but paid little attention to the presence of a pottery vessel⁸ and the fact that it can formally be considered a hoard.⁹

⁴ Sand was extracted from the Ulla River on a regular basis in the past. However, this practice has been strictly forbidden by environmental laws for several decades. *Os Lombos do Ulla* is a natural formation of sandbanks, lying downstream on the Ulla River, within the tidal Arousa Estuary.

⁵ We can add a dagger with three holes for rivets (255 x 55 x 10 mm) located at the beginning of the century in Beluso (Bealo, Rianxo) (Bouza Brey 1928).

⁶ A recent review in Singul & Suárez (2004: 25).

⁷ A recent review in a paper presented at the conference *Golden Ritual Artifacts of the Bronze Age* at the Germanisches National Museum (Nuremberg) in May 2001 (Comendador 2003). The UTM coordinates are: X: 518.801.80 Y: 4.721.964.80 Zone: 29.

⁸ We have studied 22 pottery sherds from the find deposited at the Museum of Archaeology of A Coruña. They correspond to a single vessel but we could not reconstruct it. Despite the lack of information,

Over the last few years in Europe several hypotheses have been put forth to explain the use of the golden cone- and calotte-shaped objects discovered across Europe: suits of armor; ceremonial vases; decorative caps placed on top of wooden stakes that surrounded Bronze Age sites. Others suggest that they were originally worn as ceremonial hats by Bronze Age oracles. Such figures, referred to as “king-priests”, were believed to have supernatural powers because of their ability to accurately predict the proper time for sowing, planting and harvesting crops (Springer 2003).

On the basis of her research, S. Gerloff (1995, 2003) proposes that the calotte-shaped hats are part of ceremonial splendor clothing, like the “Gold Cape of Mold”. She suggests that the Cape of Mold came from Ireland and was manufactured in the same workshops as the Irish calottes and also perhaps that of Leiro.

Technological framework

Over the last decade, the study of prehistoric gold-work has undergone a new approach that pays special attention to the technological aspects. The Leiro find was studied in detail by Armbruster (1999: 243-244) who concludes that it is one individual object (appendix included), beaten from a pre-cast lump of raw material, like the others in Europe. From this standpoint, Armbruster (Op. cit.) has linked Leiro to the hoards of Axtroki and Villena, with the latter being included in the Late Bronze Age, around 1000 b.C., owing both to the bracelets cast using the lost-wax process and shaped in combination with rotary-motion tools, as well as one of the first vestiges of iron found in south-western Europe.

In Iberia very few goldsmith's tools have been found and there are no assemblages containing anything like circular bronze dies, many of which are matching pairs (of negative and positive dies), used for stamping ornaments on objects such as the golden cups, calottes or cones from Europe.¹⁰ Armbruster (1995: 402) separates the goldwork of Leiro from that of Hallstatt and includes it in the technological domain of the *Villena/Estremoz* goldwork, thus taking several findings and situating them in a relative chronological and technological framework. This same framework also encompasses other artifacts from North-Western Iberia, which stemmed or evolved from the *Villena/Estremoz* type (Armbruster 1995: fig. 3; Perea, 2005: fig. 3).

At the deposit of As Silgadas (Caldas de Reis) we found the same concept of a prestige vessel, with a different type of technical work (Pingel 1991). At Leiro they were crafted by means of raising and embossing, while at As

we would suggest that this is a good-sized hemispherical-shaped vessel with a coarse finish.

⁹ Vázquez Varela (1992, 1994); Almeida *et al.* (1994: 30-31).

¹⁰ Like the goldsmith hoard of Generalard (France) which consists of raw material, an array of circular dies and an anvil, or the tool assemblage from Upper Bavaria (Germany)...etc (Armbruster *et al.* 2003).

Silgadas, they used a lost wax process and rotary-motion tools fixed to a vertical lathe to make incisions or engravings.

Leiro and the features of other hoards

It is interesting to highlight the fact that not only is it technologically possible to relate this artifact to objects from the Villena/Estremoz domain, but also from a contextual point of view, it presents the typical characteristics of the deposits from the Later Bronze Age. Perea (2005: 61-62) indicates a number of gold finds all along the Atlantic seaboard of the Iberian Peninsula during the Bronze Age and the Bronze-Iron Age transition, compounded by objects that pertain to a semantic code that would seem to be normalized and highly specialized: hoards containing spirals or chains of spirals; hoards with Villena/Estremoz type rings and hoards containing torcs of the Sagrajas/Berzocana type. We would suggest that the Leiro gold artifact might be related to the first two. It is also linked to other deposits of bronze objects, such as double-looped axes.

None of these finds present the complete features, but they may have many in common: the location on a specific spot of the landscape and in concrete places (rock fissures, near water); selective deposition of objects; correspondence between different categories of artifacts and different deposition places; the presence of containers (vessels, boxes...) or a specific display and arrangement of the objects (that would suggest that the containers were made of perishable materials); the occasional imbrication of elements in chains in a fractal concept; the sumptuary and foreign character of many of the objects, etc. (Table 9.1, Fig. 9.3).

As an example, the calotte of Leiro was deposited in a very **special landscape**, hidden in a crevice and placed inside a coarse vessel. As Bradley (1998) has reported, hoards might be associated not only with water but also with hilltops, passes, fissures and natural rock formations. It is the same case as the *Hío hoard* (Cangas do Morrazo, Pontevedra, Spain), which was discovered in the crevice of a granite cliff overlooking the estuary of Vigo, and the hoards of Alcobre (Vigo) and Samieira (Pontevedra) (Singul and Suárez 2004: 56) appeared in close proximity to the beach. Other gold objects were found **inside a coarse vessel**, like the gold chain of skeins from Sequeade (Barcelos, Braga), or the composite ornament of Cantonha (Braga). In other instances there are indications that they have been **arranged with some formality in the ground**, like those from As Silgadas (Caldas de Reis), or hoards with numerous double-looped axes, such as the ones found in Samieira (Meaño) or Ponte Baión (Meis), the latter uncovered in close proximity to Leiro.

In a small-sized area there is an exceptional density of gold finds (Fig. 9.3). First and foremost is that of *Leiro*. At a distance of only eleven km from Leiro, the hoard of *As Silgadas* (Caldas de Reis, Pontevedra) was found. In recent

years, however, the deposit has been considered to date from the Late Bronze Age (Comendador 1999). And lastly, worthy of mention is a set that is usually ignored: the so-called *Caldas de Reis II*.¹¹

Finally, the objects recovered from the Ulla are associated with Leiro not only because they are deposits, but owing to their sumptuary and foreign character.

Symbolic framework

Regardless of whether it is importation or imitation.¹² Leiro presents evidence of foreign contact. The Leiro helmet, as a symbolic representation, may have been part of a kind of ritual, and once it was used, it was sacrificed and buried. The deposit represents the end of the object's life cycle, i.e., its use had been intentionally prevented. Moreover, its symbolic value may have already been lost at that time. However, as suggested by Kristiansen and Larsson (2006: 230) it would seem that imported objects were not a random selection whose original context had been lost. Instead, they may have been part of a collection of new knowledge -a new cosmology of the elite-entailing the introduction and integration of foreign objects, but at the same time, the introduction of a new system of values, and, from a long-term perspective, of new institutions.

The ritual or religious purpose does not exclude their interpretation as a political discourse. Similar to the sword offerings, the hoard may be interpreted as the elite public expression of control over a strategic place and the right of entry into a territory, at a time when control over long distance interactions and alliances was becoming a source of power.

A PLACE FOR MEMORY

Our hypothesis, based on evidence, would suggest that the local elite had a special interest in exerting their right to control the area at the mouth of the river Ulla for its strategic value, among other factors. We would not venture to propose a relationship between the deposits and petroglyphs considered by several authors as strategies of territory occupation (Table 9.2). For many authors, Galician Rock Art is the expression of a hierarchical society, with the male figure being predominant. Vázquez Varela (1994) has put forth the theory of the development of a type of warfare, which would have been reduced to battles between groups that were few in number, representing the small social units, and perhaps engaged in for ritual purposes or for ostentation. The social hierarchy would have been

¹¹ Peña (1988) looks for parallels in grave goods from B.A. Central Europe, but we may also mention S. Martinho (Setúbal) (with 7 simple spirals and 2 tutuli similar in size and shape) (Armbruster 2000: taf 41) or Cabezo Redondo (Villena).

¹² An imitation tells more than an importation about the local value of the foreign prestige goods, and the same could be said for the application of foreign technological knowledge (Kristiansen and Larsson 2006: 34).

Tab. 9.1. Features of metal depositions – dry location (North-western Iberia)

	Contents	Container	Other detailed locations
Melide	Ornaments		–
Antas de Ulla	Ornaments	Bronze or cooper box?	Islet of the river Ulla
Lamela, Silleda	Ornaments	–	Rock fissure
Leiro	Ornament	Pottery vessel	Rock fissure – Overlooking the estuary of Arousa
Caldas de Reis I (As Silgadas)	Ornaments, Scrap metal?	Arrangement	Buried
Caldas de Reis II	Ornaments	–	Buried
Ponte Baión, Meis	Tools, Mould	Arrangement with stone slabs	Buried
Tremoedo	Tools	–	
Cambados	Tools	–	
A Urdiñeira, A Gudiña	Ornaments	–	Buried
Samieira, Poio	Tools	Arrangement with stone slabs	Near the beach. Estuary of Pontevedra – Buried under a stone slab (50x50x9) ordered in four horizontal levels
Hío, Cangas do Morrazo	Weapons, Tools, Ornaments	–	Rock fissure – Overlooking the estuary of Vigo
Alcabre, Vigo	Tools	Arrangement with stone slabs	Near the beach. Estuary of Vigo – Circular arrangement
Ourense (unknown)	Ornaments	–	–
Toén, Ourense	Ornaments	–	Buried
Alto da Pedisqueira, Chaves	Ornaments	–	Buried
Monte da Saia, Braga	Ornaments	–	–
Sequeade, Barcelos	Ornaments	Pottery vessel	Buried
Ourense	Ornaments	–	–
Goiós, Barcelos	Ornaments	–	Buried
Cantonha, Guimarães	Ornaments	Pottery vessel	–
Arnozella, Fafe	Ornaments, Scrap metal?	–	Buried beside a rock.
Gondeiro, Amarante	Ornaments	–	–

Source: Ruiz-Gálvez, 1984; Singul & Suárez, 2004; Monteagudo, 1977.

manifested and legitimized by the possession of metal objects, like those depicted or found in grave goods and hoards. Part of the symbolic world was selected and given priority over visually significant places in order to ostensibly display and render effective the values proposed (Peña and Rey 2001:17).

Bradley had already suggested that the Galician weapon carvings follow many of the same conventions as the weapon deposits, including elements of appropriation of spaces and resources as well as elements that shape the social landscape (Bradley1998), similar to what Larsson (1986:193) had observed in Scandinavia. Although the deposits are hidden (occultation strategy), this does not necessarily imply that the place is not marked culturally, possibly through rites and memory.¹³ Perhaps we can go so

far as to establish a few hypothetical lines of investigation that interrelate both phenomena in the ideological and social ambience.

Selective location: An analysis of the characteristics of the occupation in several zones of Galicia over time regarding changes in certain periods, would prompt us to consider the possibility that we are dealing with sacred spaces, with a long time validity. On the basis of the distribution of the petroglyphs across the landscape and the fact that the arrangement of the motifs on the panels is not by chance, Santos (2005a: 97), proposes that, in the zone of Rianxo, there could be a ritual area similar to those that he has defined in Tourón (Pontecaldelas, Pontevedra) and Caneda-Fentáns (Campolameiro). The application of this Nordic model¹⁴ in Galicia is a very

¹³ About the concept of memory (Kristiansen and Larsson op. Cit.: 284-285; Connerton 1993).

¹⁴ In Sweden rock carvings with figured depictions are located in three centers without any evidence of settlement sites (Larsson 1986).

Tab. 9.2. Rock carvings and metal depositions in North-western Iberia. Main features

PREHISTORIC ROCK CARVINGS	METAL DEPOSITIONS
Selective location in landscape	Selective location in landscape
Selective depiction in different panels	Selective deposition in different contexts
Motifs in codified composition	Objects in codified arrangement
No depictions of daily life scenes (Selective depiction)	No deposition of daily life use objects (Selective deposition)
Male	Gender?
Defined style (specialist)	Technological domain system (specialist)
Semantic code, linked with symbolic world	Semantic code, linked with symbolic world
Visualization strategy	Occultation strategy

interesting perspective. Nevertheless one of the arguments for the characterization of these zones -the absence of settlement sites in recent Prehistory- must be considered with great caution, as they are poorly visible settlement sites in the archaeological record (Costas *et al.* 2006).

Styles and territories, Technological transmission and the elite: We can include these archaeological manifestations (rock carvings and metalwork) into different styles or technological system domains. This is not absolutely necessary, but the idea might be useful as a point of departure when discussing the transmission of symbols and knowledge. Both phenomena entail a tradition of behavior that can be studied from a stylistic standpoint, which involves an implied social dimension and could be related to identity. Here we have different possibilities for “ideological transmission” in the Bronze Age. Different features spread during different periods of time, but they were related to the elite classes. Emphasis is placed on the role of specialists. The decoration of metal objects might be an abstract representation of cosmological ideas. Their significance is also related to the ritual and the social role of objects. The goldsmiths were not only responsible for executing the ornamentation, but for relaying the message of these motifs as well. The same was true for the rock carvers. The transmission of style implies a movement of the artists themselves. We might suspect a possible sacralization of the technological knowledge, or at least a ritualization of the process, not to mention of the person in possession or control of this type of knowledge (Perea 2005; Kristiansen and Larsson op. cit.: 287).

Relation to the symbolic and astral world: Following the theory of Kristiansen and Larsson (2006), the institutions materialize in concrete and recurrent forms and from them we can learn about their cultural and historic formation and transmission in time and space. We focused our analysis not on the typological studies of shapes and styles, but rather on the adoption of a new set of values and their structured materialization in iconography, prestige goods, etc. As regards symbolic aspects, not only rock carvings, but also hoards, have been related to ritual depictions of a *religion* of the Bronze Age. In rock carvings, it has been suggested that

some circular motifs may be related to a solar cult.¹⁵ The European gold cones and vessels are also considered to express a specific religious imagery, revolving around a central object which is the sun. In studies on the symbols decorating the Berlin cone’s surface, interpreted as the sun and half-moon, Menghin (2003) suggests a semantic code which would correspond almost exactly to the so-called “Metonic cycle” discovered by the Greek astronomer Meton in 432 b.C. which explains the relationship between moon and sun years. There is also pictorial evidence of the razor blades from Scandinavia and northern Germany, with depictions of recurrent images that could establish evidence for a solar myth. We might be able to see this symbol in the Leiro decorations, and also possibly in the stars at the bottom of two of the vessels of As Silgadas (Caldas de Reis) that produce this effect when they are raised for drinking (Fig. 9.4). Motifs seen on the golden ritual objects also appear on artifacts made from other materials and in another form, as well, such as a chariot wheel seen on the bronze object found with two gold bracelets at A Urdiñeira (A Gudiña, Ourense) (López 1958).

At present, in our contemporary mythical landscape, rocks, rock carvings and “treasures” are linked by **oral tradition**.¹⁶ This maritime gateway was Christianized through the Jacobean Route of the *Mar de Arousa*, signaling the access to this space by means of stone crosses that were also set up as milestones representing the appropriation of the territory and the route also arranged on the rocks, such as the crosses of *Praia das 13 Cruces*, or the cross of *Punta Grandoiro*, with diverse oral tradition. The idea of a mythical continuity of the past is created from the present through the use of images.

¹⁵ There are depictions with clearly associated quadrupeds and circular combinations. At *Praia das Cunchas*, a quadruped drags a circular combination with his tail. Vázquez Rozas (1997:192) believes that we cannot rule out the idea that some of these engravings may be depictions of quadrupeds dragging the solar disc, representations known in prehistoric European iconography. About symbolic decoration in pottery, see Garrido & Muñoz (2000). About solar cult and depictions, see Kristiansen and Larsson (op. cit.:320, 321). About petroglyphs as calendars in Alonso (1981) and Monteagudo (1981, 1996).

¹⁶ Like the one of Pedra Leirada (Quintáns, Rianxo) “...*De Campo de Porcos a Pedra Leirada, hai un tesouro de sete reinados, tempo a de vir e tempo virá, que as patas das cabras os descubrirán...*”.

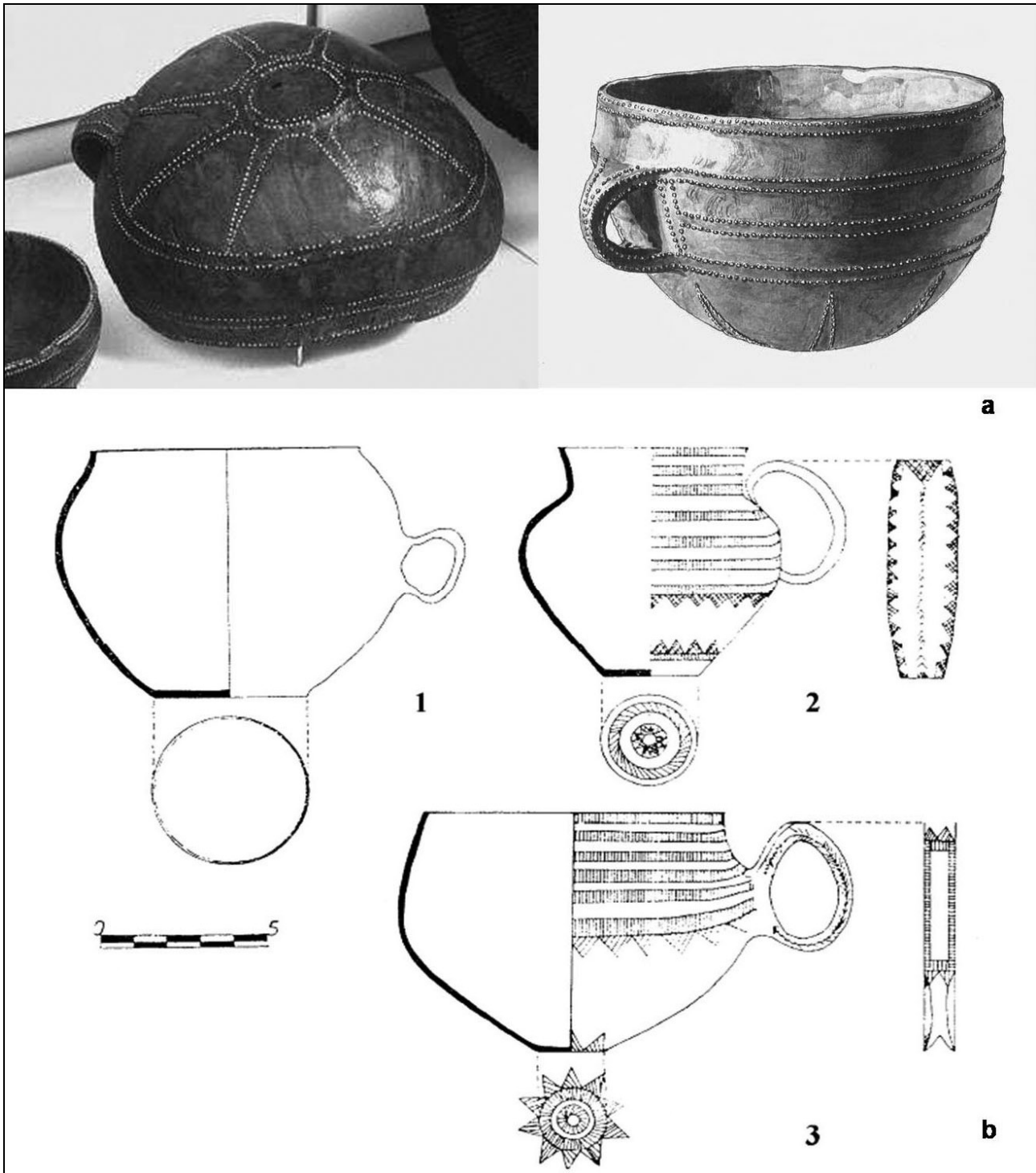


Fig. 9.4. a. Stars at the bottom of the wooden vessels tin riveted from Tell Guldhøj (Vamdrup, Jutlandia, Dinamarca) From [On line]. WWW:_URL:<http://www.guderoggrave.dk>; b. Stars at the bottom of the golden vessels from Caldas I (As Silgadas, Galicia, Spain). Pontevedra. (From Ruiz-Gálvez, 1978)

It is somewhat paradoxical to note that images of both archaeological phenomena also inspired the modern political discourse of Galician identity. The Logo of the macro-exposition *Galicia Terra Unica* was a symbiosis of the circular motifs on the petroglyphs and those decorating the Leiro object. The latter was on display at the exhibition *Celts and Vettones* which was the first

attempt in Spain to present a panoramic view of the Celtic peoples, highlighting those from Hispania.¹⁷ The process of memory, power and construction of identity to legitimize an existing social order continues.

¹⁷ Exhibitions organized by the Provincial Governments of Galicia and Avila (Almagro 2001) respectively.

CONCLUSIONS

We propose, from a *longue durée* perspective, that at the mouth of the river Ulla the iconography of rock carvings has perpetuated mythical stories during the Bronze Age, as a part of a ideology, in order to conserve the memory and thus reproduce and legitimize the power of the elite and social inequality. The deposition of prestige goods/ritual objects in marked places may have served the same purpose. This has given rise to a ritual cosmological landscape with archaeological categories of analysis not included in this work. For a better understanding of the Bronze Age conception and use of space more information is needed on where people lived and how they used the land.

As Bradley wrote: *rock art is identified by the marking of places with signs, whereas hoards were identified through offerings that were deposited there. In both cases, the significance of a particular location becomes archaeologically identifiable through that activity, and yet there is every reason to think that the place itself had achieved a special significance before either of these events occurred.*

References

- ABUIN, M. (1997) – Paixase mítica de Arousa. Legado histórico de F. Bouza Brey. Vilagarcía de Arousa: Concello. 228 p.
- ALMAGRO-GORBEA, M. (2001) – El arte celta en la Península Ibérica. In *Celtas y Vettones*. Ávila: Diputación Provincial. p. 159-169.
- ALMEIDA, M.; BOVEDA, M^aJ.; VILASECO, I. (1994) – Galicia Different Place: Da cronoloxía do ouro precastrexo e outros tópicos. In *Historia Nova*. Santiago: Asociación Xoves Historiadores de Galicia. III: p. 25-33.
- ALONSO, F. (1981) – El calendario ritual de Laxe das Rodas (Louro, Muros). In *Actas de la I Reunión Gallega de Estudios Clásicos 1979*. Compostela: p. 32-45.
- ARMBRUSTER, B. (1995) – Rotary motion- lathe and drill. Some new technological aspects concerning Late Bronze Age goldwork from southwestern Europe. In *Morteani, G.; Northover, J.P. eds.-Prehistoric Gold in Europe*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers. p. 399-423.
- ARMBRUSTER, B. (1999) – Techniques d'orfèverie préhistorique des tôles d'or en Europe atlantique des origines à l'introduction du fer. In *L'Or dans l'Antiquité*. Supplement Aquitania. 9: p. 237-250.
- ARMBRUSTER, B. (2000) – Goldschmiedekunst und Bronzetechnik. Studien zum Metallhandwerk der Atlantischen Bronzezeit auf der Iberischen Halbinsel. Montagnac: Editions Monique Mergoïl. 232 p. (Leiro, p. 207; Caldas, Taf. 39, 40; Caldas II, Taf. 41).
- ARMBRUSTER, B. (2002-2003) – A metalurgia da Idade do Bronze Final Atlântico no castro de Nossa Senhora da Guía de Baiões (S. Pedro do Sul, Viseu). Viseu: Estudos Pre-Históricos. X-XI, p. 155.
- ARMBRUSTER, B. [et. al] (2003) – Tools and tool marks. Gold and bronze metallurgy in Western Europe during the Bronze and Early Iron Ages. In *Archaeometallurgy in Europe*. Milano: Associazione Italiana di Metallurgia. I, p. 255-265.
- BONILLA, A.; PARGA, A.; TORRES, A. (1995-96) – Prospección intensiva de grabados rupestres en el Ayuntamiento de Rianxo (A Coruña). *Boletín del Museo Provincial*. Lugo. 7: II, p. 71-103.
- BOUZA BREY, F. (1928) – O puñal do Museu Antropológico de Madride. Nós. Sociedade Nós. Santiago de Compostela. 61: p. 2.
- BRADLEY, R. (1998) – Invisible warriors – Galician weapon carvings in their Iberian context. In *Fabregas, R. ed.- A Idade do Bronze en Galicia. Novas Perspectivas*. Sada: Castro. p. 243-258. (Cadernos do Seminario de Sargadelos; 77).
- BRADLEY, R. (2000) – An archaeology of natural places. London. New York: Routledge. 177 p.
- CALO, F.; GONZÁLEZ, X.M. (1980) – Estación de arte rupestre de Leiro (Rianxo, A Coruña). *Gallaecia*. 6, p. 207-216.
- COMENDADOR, B. (1999) – Los inicios de la Metalurgia en el Noroeste de la Península Ibérica. A Coruña: Museo Aqueológico e Histórico. 262 p. (Monografías, 11.).
- COMENDADOR, B. (2003) – Der Schatz von Leiro (Galicien): Ein Eizelfund?. In *Springer comp.- Gold und kult der Bronzezeit*. Nürnberg: Germanische Nationalmuseum. I, p. 175-188.
- CONNERTON, P. (1993) – Como as sociedades recordam. Oeiras: Celta.
- COSTAS, F.J.; NOVOA, P.; HIDALGO, J.M. (1999) – Los grabados rupestres de las inmediaciones de “Praia das Cunchas” en Rianxo (A Coruña). *Castrelos*. Vigo. 12, p. 47-65.
- COSTAS, F.J. [et. al] (2006) – Panorámica sobre el arte y el paisaje. El final de la ilusión. *Arqueoweb* [On line]. Madrid. 8 (1) [Consult. 30 Jun. 2006]. WWW:_URL:http://www.ucm.es/info/arqueoweb
- FERNÁNDEZ, J.A.; PIÑEIRO, P.; CES, R. (1993-94) – Un complexo de gravados rupestres en Rianxo – A Coruña. *Brigantium*. A Coruña. 8: p. 199-244.
- GARRIDO, R.; MUÑOZ, K. (2000) – Visiones sagradas para los líderes. Cerámicas campaniformes con decoración simbólica en la Península Ibérica. *Complutum*. Madrid. 11: p. 285-300.
- GERLOFF, S. (1995) – Bronzezeitliche GoldblechKegel von Typ Shifferstadt und der atlantischen “Goldschalen” der Form Devil’s Bit und Axtroki. In *Jockenhovel, A. (Ed.) Festschrift für Herman Müller-Karpe zum 70. Geburtstag*. Bonn. p. 153-195.

- GERLOFF, S. (2003) – Goldkegel, Kappe und Axt: Insignien bronzzeitlichen Kultes und Macht. In: Springer, T. (ed.). *Gold und kult der Bronzezeit*. Nürnberg: Germanisches National Museum. 1: p. 191-203.
- GRELA, E.M. (1995-96) – Un puñal inédito del Bronce. *Brigantium*. A Coruña. 9: p. 9-12.
- GUIZIÁN CASTROMIL, J.; GUIZIÁN RIVERA, X. (2001) – Arte rupestre do Barbanza. Noia: Toxosoutos.
- KRISTIANSEN, K.; LARSSON, T. (2006) – La emergencia de la sociedad del bronce: viajes, transmisiones y transformaciones. Barcelona: Ediciones Bellaterra. 496 p.
- LARSSON, T. (1986) – The Bronze Age Metalwork in Southern Sweden. Aspects of Social and Spatial organization 1800-500 B.C. University. Umea.
- LOPEZ, F. (1958) – Un disco solar. Santiago de Compostela: Cuadernos de Estudios Gallegos. XIII, 41: 292-296.
- MEIJIDE, G. (1988) – Las espadas del Bronce Final en la Península Ibérica. Santiago de Compostela: Arqueohistórica, 1. Universidad de Santiago. 182 p.
- MENGHIN, W. (2003) – Goldene Kegelhüte – Manifestationen bronzzeitlicher Kalenderwerke. In: Springer, T. (ed.). *Gold und kult der Bronzezeit*. Nürnberg: Germanisches National Museum. 1: p. 221-237.
- MONTEAGUDO, L. (1977) – Die Beile auf der Iberischen Halbinsel. Munich: Prähistorische Bronzefunde IX, 6. C.H. Beck. 312. p.
- MONTEAGUDO, L. (1981) – Petroglifo de Lagea das Rodas (Louro, SW. prov. Coruña). En “Actas de la I Reunión Gallega de Estudios Clásicos 1979”. Compostela, 1981: p. 46-100.
- MONTEAGUDO, L. (1996) – La religiosidad callaica: estela funeraria romana de Mazarelas. Cultos Astrales, Priscilianismo y Outeiros. Betanzos: Anuario Brigantino. 19: p. 11-118.
- NAVEIRO, J.; CAAMAÑO, J.M. (1992) – El depósito subacuático del río Ulla. El material romano. In: Acuña, F. comp.- *Finis Terrae*. Santiago de Compostela. Universidade: p. 257-295.
- PEÑA, A. de la (1985) – Nuevas armas de la Edad del Bronce dragadas en el río Ulla (Pontevedra). *Actas II Coloquio Galaico-Minhoto*, Vol. II: 313-318. Santiago.
- PEÑA, A. de la (1988) – Nuevos elementos de orfebrería prehistórica procedentes de Caldas de Reis (Pontevedra). *Gallaecia* Santiago de Compostela. 9-10: p. 221-227.
- PEÑA, A.; REY, M. (2001) – Petroglifos de Galicia. A Coruña: Via Láctea. 276 p.
- PEREA, A. (2005) – Mecanismos identitarios y de construcción de poder en la transición Bronce-Hierro. *Trabajos de Prehistoria*. Madrid. 62: 2, p. 91-103.
- PINGEL, V. (1991) – El tesoro de Caldas de Reis y la orfebrería de la época del bronce. In *Galicia no Tempo*. Conferencias. Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia. P. 41-56.
- RUIZ-GÁLVEZ, M^a. (1978) – El Tesoro de Caldas de Reyes. *Trabajos de Prehistoria*, 35. Madrid: CSIC p. 173-192.
- RUIZ-GÁLVEZ, M^a. (1984) – La Península Ibérica y sus relaciones con el círculo cultural atlántico. Madrid: Universidad Complutense.
- RUIZ-GÁLVEZ, M^a. (1995) – Depósitos del Bronce Final: ¿Sagrado o Profano? ¿Sagrado y, a la vez, profano?. In Ruiz-Gálvez ed.- *Ritos de Paso y Puntos de Paso*. La Ría de Huelva en el Mundo del Bronce Final Europeo. Madrid: Universidad Complutense. p. 21-32.
- SANTOS, M. (2005a) – La caza ritual en la Edad del Bronce y su representación en el arte rupestre de Galicia. In. Santos, M.; Troncoso, A. ed.- *Reflexiones sobre Arte Rupestre, paisaje, forma y contenido*. Santiago de Compostela: Instituto de Estudos Galegos Padre Sarmiento. p. 83-100 (TAPA; 33).
- SANTOS, M. (2005b) – A arte rupestre da Barbanza. In Ayán, X.M. compil.- *Os castros de Neixón*. Boiro, A Coruña. Noia: Toxosoutos. p. 39-50.
- SANTOS, M. (2006) – Respuesta a la réplica firmada por F.J. Costas Goberna, R. Fábregas Valcarce, J. Guizián Castromil, X. Guizián Rivera y A. de la Peña Santos aparecida en el foro con fecha 23/01/2006 Arqueoweb [On line]. Madrid. 8 (1) [Consult. 30 Jun. 2006]. WWW:_URL:http://www.ucm.es/info/arqueoweb
- SINGUL, F.; SUÁREZ, J. (ed.) (2004) – Hasta el confín del mundo. Diálogos entre Santiago y el mar. Salamanca: Xunta de Galicia. 371 p. Catálogo.
- SPRINGER, T. (ed.) (2003) – Gold und kult der Bronzezeit. Nürnberg: Germanisches National Museum. 2 vol. 347 p.
- VÁZQUEZ ROZAS, R. (1997) – Petroglifos de las Rías Baixas Gallegas. Análisis artístico de un arte prehistórico. Vigo: Diputación Pontevedra. 270 p.
- VÁZQUEZ VARELA J.M. (1992) – A ourivería da Idade do Bronce. In Hércules ed.- *Arte Prehistórica e Romana*. A Coruña. p. 170. (Galicia Arte; 9).
- VÁZQUEZ VARELA J.M. (1994) – Ritos y creencias en la prehistoria gallega. Laracha, A Coruña: Xuntanza. 166 p.

