

ARMING LANDSCAPES: CONNECTIVITY AND RESISTANCE IN NORTHWESTERN IBERIA IN LATE PREHISTORY

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Abstract: The presence of petroglyphs, statue-menhirs and warrior statues in northwestern Iberia in Late Prehistory (2250/2150 BC-AD 100) prompted the emergence of semiotic ideologies which created *armed* landscapes. This paper contextualizes these iconographies and suggests relationships amongst them. By comparing them we may gain a greater understanding not only of the type of personages and ways of being-in-the-world they contributed to producing in their respective contexts, but also of their persistence over time and of the long-term connections between them.

Keywords: Monumental landscape, Iron Age statues, statue-menhirs, rock-art, mobility, hybridization, warfare, long-term, archaeology of performativity, northwestern Iberia.

1. Introduction

Two overall assumptions have generally been accepted by archaeologists when analyzing material images. The first, commonly considered iconography as a by-product of the society it sprang from. From this perspective, images were viewed as material forms that simply convey a given meaning. This approach reduced petroglyphs or statues to mere representations of ideas or things, precluding any active role their materiality may have played in the creation of sense and meaning. The second prevailing assumption, closely linked to the first, typically took material images for granted, considering their physical forms to be the limits of what they represent. From this viewpoint, material images appeared isolated, stable and ready to be accepted as simple material events within a timeline.

Research on material culture has contributed a number of fresh approaches: material semiotics (Pierce, 1998; Preucel, 2006), material agency theories (Gell, 1998), biographical perspectives (Kopytoff, 1986) or object-oriented ontologies (Latour, 1993). Recent advances in archaeology thus move from traditional views to exploring material images from quite a different angle (Meskell and Joyce, 2003; DeMarrais *et al.*, 2004; Tilley, 2004, 2008; Gosden, 2005; Miller, 2005; Fowler, 2008; Boivin, 2009; Bradley, 2009; Morphy, 2009; Knappett and Malafouris, 2010; Olsen 2010; Hodder, 2012; Malafouris, 2013). Recent analyses bring into focus ‘materiality’ rather than concentrating on abstract symbols. From this perspective visual imagery, through its

materiality, does not simply convey a meaning but actively contributes to producing, maintaining and reformulating it in the various socio-material contexts into which it is incorporated throughout its existence, thus functioning in different forms, with diverse meanings and ultimately contributing to producing identity.

This paper challenges ‘representationalist’ approaches to the meaning of visual images, contending that these are more than mere passive forms. Visual images are not mere sign vehicles revealing a ‘set of cultural beliefs inscribed in them and read off them’ (Alberti and Marshall 2009). They do not simply possess a meaning to be decoded but provide ‘the stimulus and constitute the technology for meaning’ (Malafouris, 2013: 117). To this end, a number of iconographies that arose in northwestern Iberia during Late Prehistory are explored, focusing on how they emerged within different contexts and how the material properties of the medium played a part in their semiotic meaning. Furthermore, it will be argued that these material images are more than material events occurring at specific points throughout a linear history. Their lives extended beyond the time when they were produced and they intersected with people and other material cultures at different points. As Hodder has stated, ‘an entanglement between people and material forms at one point in time directs where future actions can take place’ (2012: 100). Thus, material heritage acts as a ‘non-absent’ past within the landscape, stimulating and partaking in the creation of new material images.

Consequently, a material history exists, a history of material projections which must be taken into consideration. From this point of view, petroglyphs, statue-menhirs and warrior statues must be analyzed as a whole. A better understanding of their sense in the Late Iron Age may be grasped when bearing in mind the material and visual heritage of the region from which they emerged. Phenomena of long-term dependency and co-presence that have given and continue to give historical depth to the landscapes of northwestern Iberia would otherwise be overlooked. These material images take on an inevitable historical dimension which must be examined more closely, not only because of their material and formal properties, but also in terms of how individuals responded to them. This paper contextualizes each of them within their respective entanglements and places them in relation to each other. Through comparison it is possible to understand not only the type of personages and ways of being-in-the-world that they helped to produce in their respective contexts, but also their persistence over time and the long-term connections passing between them.

2. Archaeological region under analysis

Northwestern Iberia is one of the outermost Atlantic European regions. Together with Brittany, Cornwall or Wales, it has traditionally been considered one of Europe’s Atlantic *finis terrae*. Archaeological data, however, reveal that communities from this area established strong connections with other Mediterranean and Atlantic regions in Late Prehistory. A particular area in this region between the Duero and the Miño rivers—the

area corresponding to modern southern Galicia and northern Portugal—is the main point of the aforementioned connectivity process.

Bronze Age in the region conventionally spans c. 2250/2150-850/800 BC. Unfortunately, very little evidence exists from the beginning of that period hence the Early Bronze Age (c. 2250/2150-1550 BC) is not well known. Nonetheless, the archaeological record suggests the existence of a way of life similar to transhumance (Méndez, 1994). This period features individual burials in pits or cists with grave goods made up of plain pottery vessels and objects in the Bell Beaker tradition and Carrapatas halberds (Lull *et al.*, 2013). It was at this point, if not earlier, when a remarkable open-air rock-art depicting weapons emerged in the region as a form of appropriation and construction of landscape (Bradley *et al.*, 1994; Fábregas and Rodríguez, 2015: 56). Also, social transformations took place over time, gradually evolving from semi-sedentary communities to more stable and sedentary human ones which would bring about changes of forms of subsistence as agriculture and shepherding gained prominence.

Data contributed by various archaeological sites reveals that the growth of agriculture involved the appearance of open settlements located on slopes or small hills with cultivation areas from the Late Bronze Age (c. 1550-1300 BC) to the Final Bronze Age (c. 1300-850/800 BC). Sites consist of pits and the remains of dwellings and underground structures that were used as silos to store grain (Almeida *et al.*, 1995; Bettencourt, 2000). Simultaneously, northwestern Iberia witnessed the emergence of the bronze industry, especially in the Late and Final Bronze Age (Fábregas, 1998; Comendador, 1998). From that moment on, extensive circulation of metal objects throughout the landscape such as palstaves is documented (Monteagudo, 1977). The demographic and productivity growth and the participation of northwestern communities in Atlantic interchange networks fostered competition for the best land and for control of the interchange networks and of mineral resources such as tin. All these factors combined resulted in the creation of hierarchies within and between communities and in the emergence of strong competition between individuals. As in other Atlantic regions, a male warrior elite appeared in the Late Bronze Age. It should be noted that an important characteristic of the Late Bronze Age, and also of the Iron Age, is the absence of any evidence of graves in the archaeological record (Bettencourt, 2010). Yet, new forms of warrior iconography became widespread: the so-called statue-menhirs. Significantly, in the last period of the Late Bronze Age (9th - 8th century BC), alongside open villages, a new type of settlement appeared in the region: settlements situated in prominent positions with good natural defenses—commonly called proto-hillforts.

After the collapse of the Atlantic networks and the beginning of the Iron Age, open villages vanished from the landscape. The so-called Castro Culture (c. 850/800-400 BC) emerged in the Iron Age: the conspicuous *castros* or hillforts became the only type of settlement in the region up until the Roman period. Typically located in prominent

positions and fortified by artificial structures such as ramparts or ditches, they usually covered areas of up to 2 hectares (Carballo, 2002). The form of subsistence was based on agriculture. In terms of social structure no evidence exists of a hierarchical structure similar to the earlier one (Rodríguez-Corral, 2009: 11-29).

From the beginning of the Late Iron Age onwards (c. 400-100 BC), transformations were triggered by demographic and productivity growth as well as by the reincorporation of northwestern communities into supraregional exchange networks. Agriculture surpluses and the new flow of imported goods generated inequality, instability and social complexity. Southern areas in northwestern Iberia witnessed a gradual monumentalization process in settlements. Rome's presence in western Iberia from the mid-2nd century BC onwards boosted this process: large hillforts appeared which were up to 20 times larger than previous ones featuring massive defensive walls and communal and ritual buildings (Rodríguez-Corral, 2009: 57-58). From that moment on, dwellings became more self-contained and independent in relation to the rest, some of them visibly more important than others. In this context, once again, a new iconography was built in stone (Calo, 1994).

3. Contextualizing the issue

People in northwestern Iberia repeatedly used distinctive war iconographies during the Bronze and Iron Age. Various 'semiotic ideologies' (Keane, 2003) resulted from petroglyphs, statue-menhirs and warrior statues displayed in the territory. This concept generally refers to the meanings and ideological codes linked to material icons. Despite the fact that these three types of iconographies shared a very specific territory (the Northwest), a typical motif (weapons) and a similar purpose ('arming' the landscapes), they have traditionally been studied separately, as part of independent research fields because they belong to different periods. No analysis has been conducted regarding any possible connections between them. These types of material images have been considered by scholars as passive conduits of messages. From this perspective, petroglyphs (Sanches *at al.*, 1998; Bradley *et al.*, 1994; Vázquez, 2000; Peña and Rey, 2001), statues-menhir (Bettencourt, 2005; Díaz-Guardamino, 2006: 21-23) and warrior statues (Silva, 1986; Calo, 1994) have been typically interpreted as territorial markers or representations of personages—local chiefs or warriors, prominent individuals, deified eponymous heroes, tutelary divinities for votive or honorific purposes, etc.

Moreover, abiding by a linear conception of time, the three types of images have been construed as material events occurring at very specific moments in prehistory. In this regard, research has mostly focused on drawing parallels between the objects depicted in the monuments and metal items in the archaeological record (Jorge and Jorge, 1993; Almagro-Gorbea, 1993; Diaz-Guardamino, 2010; Rodríguez-Corral, 2015), or on

comparing such monuments to supposedly contemporaneous and similar ones in other regions. Thus, for instance, scholars have focused on looking at parallels for Early Bronze Age rock-art (Fábregas and Bradley, 1999) and Late Bronze Age statue-menhirs (Bueno, 1983; Jorge, 1986; Barceló, 1989) from other European regions rather than on investigating connections between these two types of monuments. Or, they have compared Iron Age warrior statues to provincial Roman art (Calo, 1994) and Central European Iron Age statuary (Schattner, 2003) instead of analyzing their possible connections with local material forms from the Bronze Age. These parallels ultimately encouraged synchronic approaches to the detriment of diachronic approaches within the same regional context. This in turn overlooked the fact that long-term approaches provide a more holistic view so as to explore the role material heritage played in the emergence of a type of visual image.

4. Bronze age iconographies

Two types of visual images emerged closely associated with the spread of metal weapons in the Bronze Age: petroglyphs and statue-menhirs. Depicting arms was central in both cases, co-creating a newly iconographic landscape in that period. However, major differences in terms of socio-material strategies may be noted in the depictions of arms in rocks and monuments.

Firstly, these phenomena did not happen simultaneously. While weapons were carved on rocks from the Early Bronze Age, statue-menhirs typically occurred in the Late and Final Bronze Age (ca. 1400/1200-850 BC) (Díaz-Guardamino, 2010: 53; Rodríguez-Corral, 2015: 155-156). Secondly, they seem to give rise to two dissimilar phenomena. Weapons pertaining to more than one individual are frequently depicted on rocks. Statue-menhirs, conversely, as anthropomorphic material forms, are equipped with an individual panoply. Thus, while carved rocks seem to materialize semiotics concerning group activities, statue-menhirs materialize a semiotic focus centered on particular individuals. Finally, both types of visual images also reveal different but complementary locations. While rocks featuring carved weapons are found to the north of the river Miño—concentrated in the province of Pontevedra, Galicia—statue-menhirs are dispersed further southwards, mainly in the area between the river Miño and river Duero and beyond.

A contrast may thus be noted between these two kinds of iconographies in northwestern Iberia. On the one hand, carved rocks outwardly materialize the collectivity throughout the Bronze Age in an area located to the north. On the other hand, statue-menhirs materialize individual personages by the end of the Bronze Age in an area located further south. It may therefore be concluded that while arms carved on rocks represent the spread of metal weapons and armed groups in the landscape since the Early Bronze Age, and even earlier, statue-menhirs are linked to the emergence of elites in the northwestern hinterland during the Late Bronze Age. In other words, statue-menhirs

appeared in the contact zone between the northwest and the south and, by extension, between the northwest and the Mediterranean, when the so-called pre-colonial interactions started to develop (**fig.1**).

4.1. Arming rocks: moving beyond representation

Inspired by Saussure (1986), archaeologists have tended to project a linguistic semiotic model onto the realm of visual images. In this sense, a visual image perceived as a sign is supposed to consist of two main parts: the signifier (the carving) and the signified (the idea in people's heads). Following this dual logic, an engraving works as a type of external representation or as part of a larger representational structure. Thus, petroglyphs would be no more than an instance of a 'communicative event' (Leach, 1976), a form of symbolization of thoughts and ideas in their makers' heads.

This semiotic model has followed two main interpretative lines in the study of Early Bronze Age rock-art in northwestern Iberia. The first views engravings as a communication system between groups used to negotiate key issues such as access to specific resources within the territory (Peña y Rey, 2001). The second understands them as signs that play a part on a stage where rites of aggregation of warriors were performed (Vazquez, 2000). In both cases engravings are considered primarily a medium for the conveyance of information. Additionally, it has been argued that some representations of metallic objects might have worked similarly to artifacts deposited as hoards on rocks (Bradley, 1998). Should this be the case, engravings, as metaphors of ritual deposits, would still act as representations or substitutes for actual weapons. This proposal, however, differs from the two aforementioned lines in two aspects. On the one hand, rocky outcrops play an active role: they are the reason why weapons are depicted on their surface. On the other hand, the dichotomy between the makers and the audience seems weaker—meaning and significance of the engravings rest on its ritual manufacture rather than on perceiving it as a finished piece of work.

While these aspects should be kept in mind, moving from Saussurian assumptions could yield interesting conclusions. Rather than focusing on *what* an engraving is, we ought to reflect on *how* it works. In other words, we should explore how material images 'instantiate' complex ideas. The notion of *instantiation* is used here to underline the fact that the material sign brings forth an idea, rather than simply representing it (Malafouris (2013: 97). As Pierce (1998; also see Preucel, 2006) pointed out, meaning is not only a matter of an arbitrary relation between the signifier and the signified, but also a matter of the physical and performative properties of the images (material sign). Rock-art or sculptures can also operate powerfully at a non-discursive level, bringing their material qualities into play to create meaning. As Malafouris (2013: 95) argues, the materiality of signs 'affect[s] human cognition in ways that are rarely explicitly conceptualized'. Thus, rather than attempting to decode the possible meanings of engravings, the goal is to

perceive engravings as material signs which belong within a material engagement.

The analysis of petroglyphs faces two issues stemming from a strict emphasis on linguistic analogy. Firstly, by assuming such an analogy, the semiotic operation concerned does not contribute anything new but simply stands for something that previously exists. Secondly, by equating a petroglyph to a linguistic sign—or a set of engravings to a text—the petroglyph becomes dematerialized: its materiality (stone) is ignored and reduced to a mere passive support of the message; the landscape where they are set is a mere backdrop for the message conveyed. The traditional model reduces culture to a set of ideas about the world separated from the physical world. Beyond these analogies, two further notions may be considered. Firstly, engravings and rocks should work together from a material and conceptual viewpoint. That is, they ought to be conceptualized as *armed* rocks rather than mere engravings on rocks (**fig. 2**). Secondly, following the abovementioned considerations, these *armed* rocks do not simply embody communicative logic in the landscape, but an enactive one. *Armed* rocks constitute a socio-material engagement ultimately creating meaning or an effect on the landscape.

The *armed* rock does not stand for a pre-existing idea or social construction but rather substantiates the idea or social construction itself. A material signifier, it does not refer to something existing independently from its own materiality, but is rather a constitutive element of what it inspires. In this sense, following an enactive perspective, physical attributes do matter in the semiotic equation: stone, rock and engravings compound a material entanglement which ultimately creates sense and meaning. As has been recently noted (Fábregas and Rodríguez, 2015: 56), the arms on the rocks may have acted as a metonymy of the group of warriors. However, so as not to fall into a ‘dualistic trap’ this metonymy ought not to disregard the material affordances contributed by the rock itself (Tilley, 2008). The rock as a real-world structure, resulting from its apparent pre-existence on Earth, encourages potential meanings such as durability, resistance, immobility or immutability in the landscape (Tilley, 2004; Robb, 2009). In this sense, stone itself may have been appreciated as a sensually potent material due to its hardness and durability (Hamilton *et al.*, 2011). The symbolic and the material co-exist in an immanent manner so that ‘the one does not make sense without the other’ (Renfrew, 2001: 98). The features of a warrior, such as hardness or resistance, have no meaning in a disembodied sense. Hardness emerges as a symbol through an embodied meaningful experience. If stones have often been linked in the past to men’s bodies and acted as a recurrent symbol of lineage and ancestry (Parker Pearson and Ramilisonina, 1998), it is because stones, given their characteristics, work as action-constitutive forces (Byers, 1992: 414-415).

Armed rocks should be perceived as proxies or ‘material anchors’ (Hutchins 2005) producing conceptual blends rather than acting as stone mirrors of pre-existing ideas and socio-political relations. Physical objects become material anchors, enhancing and

tightening conceptual blends in a memorable and durable manner. Through this process, the material sign constitutes a meaningful entity, not because of what it represents but because of what it brings forth: the possibility of a meaningful engagement (Malafouris, 2013. 104). In this sense, *armed* rocks do not only signify the armed collective body but also help to interpret what the group of warriors is.

4.2. *From the armed rock to the armed bodies*

The emergence of statue-menhirs in the early Late Bronze Age reveals a significant shift in iconographic practices: rocks are replaced with monoliths as the basic material form of depicting arms. A blending process took place whereby different elements of the ‘armed’ rocks and the so-called phallic menhirs were combined in a new way. Firstly, they are called ‘statue-menhirs’ not only because of their ‘family resemblance’ to ancient menhirs, but also because some statue-menhirs were made reusing old menhirs. That is to say, some phallic menhirs were reshaped to take on a human body shape (Bettencourt, 2005). Secondly, the carving of weapons and other items on the surfaces of statue-menhirs involved the use of a new iconography in the Bronze Age which focused on the human body arrayed with a warrior panoply.

This conceptual integration produced a new hybrid assemblage with a new meaning. While a synecdoche was in operation in the phallic-shaped menhir as the principal symbol of identity, the new statue-menhirs instantiated a fresh kind of male identity granting the body more relevance. Statue-menhirs seem thus to work not only in a metonymic but also in an iconic way. They materialized a social rather than an anatomic body and acquired the attributes of the stone. Since aesthetic qualities such as movement, naturalism or gestures were nonexistent in these representations, no attempt was made at defining a biography beyond a direct link between arms, emblems and the human body. Likewise, the material affordances of the stone played a part in the creation of meanings. While features such as hardness or permanence were key to the meaning of statue-menhirs, others such as immobility—archetypical in *armed* rocks—lost relevance. Nonetheless, such qualities endowed statue-menhirs with a time scale different from the human one, which allowed them to substantiate a concept of ancestry.

The new identity was probably created by putting weapons in connection with the individual body—rather than with a collective body—, and the body in connection with the qualities of the stone. This entanglement might instantiate the qualities of the individual identity of the Late Bronze Age warrior. In this respect, the sense conveyed by statue-menhirs is different from that of ‘armed’ rocks. While ‘armed’ rocks denote the expansion of warrior morality in the landscape linked to the emergence of metal weapons, statue-menhirs represent networks, stories and connections between people and their material world at a superregional level. Statue-menhirs appeared not only because of the higher relevance of metal weapons but also because of the emergence of elites acting in

pre-colonial mobility networks from the second half of the second millennium BC onwards. Thus, *armed* rocks seem to be linked to the logic of internal construction of regional landscapes, whereas statue-menhirs transcend regional borders. The latter are dispersed further southwards mostly in the area between the river Miño and river Duero and beyond, participating in extraterritorial interaction processes which connect the northwest to south-western Iberia and, by extension, to Mediterranean backgrounds.

Material logic and dissemination in the territory suggest that mobility, interaction, exchange and violence were central to the identity of the elite. All these aspects are embodied in statue-menhirs. In this regard, these material images reveal the existence of individuals who travel between regions, from the northwest to the south of Iberia and *vice versa*. Likewise, they show the emergence of individuals who share the same symbols at a supraregional level. Firstly, they extended beyond their nuclear area in regions such as Beira Alta and Beira Baixa (Portugal) and in the province of Salamanca (Spain), even reaching the southwest of the Peninsula—should we accept, as discussed later, that the monument of Mouricos (Beja) is a statue-menhir (Gomes, 1994). Such dispersion confirms that the elite tended to move beyond regional borders. Secondly, most statue-menhirs shared so-called sub-rectangular motifs (**fig. 3**) construed as the insignia or emblems of power (Almagro-Gorbea, 1993: 126; Jorge and Jorge, 1993: 41; Vilaça *et al.*, 2001: 76; Bettencourt, 2005). Thus, groups of individuals could have shared common symbols which extended into the western half of Iberia (Díaz-Guardamino, 2011: 78).

Statue-menhirs also evince the hybridization between elites from different Iberian regions. While the notion of hybridity has been recently criticized (Jimenez, 2011), it remains a useful tool for the analysis of material culture. Ontological and epistemological reasons can be argued. Latour (1993) accurately points out that the more one strives for classificatory purity, the more ‘hybrids’ will begin to multiply. Yet we can reverse this idea and claim that hybridity enables us to ‘deconstruct’ and rethink classificatory purity, frequently encouraged in recent research. Additionally, at an ontological level, the notion of hybridization may be used to refer to a social practice (Van Dommelen, 2005) and to a process to refer to moments of ‘transformations [...] and creativity at the hands of the social actors’ (Silliman, 2015: 286).

Material connections suggest clear links between statue-menhirs and southern stelae and shared material identities between the northwest and the south of Iberia. Some can be found in the weapons these people of stone were represented with. Statue-menhirs, such as those of Chaves and Ataúdes, illustrate well this phenomenon. The statue-menhir of Chaves (**fig. 4**) shares with the Alentejo stela of Gomes Aires—found in Beja alongside a Late Bronze Age warrior stela with Tartessian writing (Almagro Basch, 1966: 120)—the same long and rectangular figure, in an identical position, which has been interpreted as a sword hanging from a belt. Moreover, the same dagger depicted in the statue-menhir of Chaves appears in the warrior stela of Tres Arroyos (Alburquerque, Badajoz). In fact,

this iconographic connection is far from exceptional, inasmuch as it was common in the regions between northwestern and southern Iberia (Beira Baja, Beira Alta, Badajoz and Cáceres) where this type of sword was frequently depicted.

The statue-menhir of Ataúdes (Guarda) and the stela of Mouricoes (Beja) contribute further evidence of connection between materialities between northwestern and southern Atlantic Iberia as exactly the same sword tip is represented in both monuments (**fig. 5**). The statue-menhir of Ataúdes depicts the sub-rectangular emblem while the stela of Mouricoes has traditionally been considered an Alentejo stela though it was found broken, probably due to re-use in an early Iron Age necropolis (Ourique, Beja). Owing to this, and also because it shares the same tip with Ataúdes, it has been maintained that it could actually be a statue-menhir (Diaz-Guardamino, 2010). In any event, in both cases a material link may be established: while the first interpretation argues a common iconography in the ‘Alentejo’ stela (the southwest) and statue-menhirs (the northwest), the second would directly imply the presence of a statue-menhir in southern Iberia.

Garments also contribute substantial information regarding interaction processes. Some statue-menhirs, such as Ermida, Nave 2 or Millarón, feature the same fishbone pattern as found in many metal objects that circulated in the Late Bronze Age in Atlantic-Mediterranean networks (Vilaça, 2004). The statue-menhir of São João de Ver (Aveiro) was portrayed with a Mediterranean-style helmet (Queiroga, 2003: 85). Other statue-menhirs, for their part, share clothing elements with Late Bronze Age stelae from southern Iberia (**fig. 6**). The monuments of Nave 2, Faiões or Alto de Escrita wore the same belts and necklaces as those of the warrior stelae and the so-called pebble stelae from the southwest (Celestino, 2001). Likewise, these necklaces find parallels both in the Mediterranean—for instance, necklaces from the Balearic Islands (Delibes and Fernandez-Miranda 1988: 122)—and in Atlantic archaeological records—for example, the necklaces of Sintra (Armbruster, 1995). It should be noted that ancient Atlantic pieces were reused and combined in the Sintra necklace to create a final Mediterranean-style product.

The group of stelae of San Marinho (Castelo Branco) (Celestino, 2001), situated in Beira Baixa, also provides evidence in terms of connectivity. The group consists of three monuments found on the slope of a Late Bronze Age hillfort—a large number of artifacts such as palstaves, trunion axes or Mediterranean gold objects decorated with a fishbone pattern were found in this settlement and nearby. Piece number 1 is a stela portraying two individuals with horns—or wearing horned helmets. Piece number 2 is a reused menhir depicting a hunting scene, an elbow fibula and a mirror. Monument number 3 shows two material connections. On the one hand, the monument adopts the logic of a statue-menhir and of a stela at the same time. While the human figure pictured on the front seems to indicate that the monolith could function as a support for the image—namely, as a stela—the belt and kilt engraved under the image seem to use the monolith itself to represent the human body. On the other hand, the sub-rectangular motif

represents the human figure. This entails, firstly, that stelae and statue-menhirs became hybridized and, secondly, that the sub-rectangular emblem transcends the world of statue-menhirs in transition regions between the northwest and the south.

Additionally, supraregional north-south connections are also detected in the presence of material indicators of the southern elites, such as warrior stelae in the northwestern area (**fig. 7**). Pedra de Atalaia (Guarda) is found in the northern sector of Serra de Estrala, in Beira Alta (Vilaça *et al.* 2011). The stela of Tojais (Vilaça *et al.*, 2001) originates further north, on the western edge of the Chaves mass (Vila Real). Its location is relevant for three reasons. Firstly, it was found in northern Portugal in a region rich in tin where this mineral and gold were mined in ancient times. This fact supports the link between warrior stelae and networks of access to mineral resources (Senna-Martínez 2011: 293). Secondly, the Tojais stela shares a landscape with the statue-menhir of Cruz de Cepos (Alves and Reis, 2011), both situated on the border passage. Thirdly, arriving from the south, this highland landscape is the last point reached before descending towards the floodplain of Tâmega, the traditional area of communication and catchment of southern artifacts (González-Ruibal, 2006-2007).

Finally, Pedra Alta (Castrelo do Val, Ourense) is situated on the northernmost point of this floodplain, home to a great number of statue-menhirs. On its surface can be seen engravings of a sword, a v-notch shield and a cart (Reboreda and Nieto 2012). The cart, far from being exceptional in the northwest, could also be present in some of the ‘armed’ rocks, if we take into account the undeniable similarity between some shield shapes and etched carts in warrior stelae (**fig. 8**). At any rate, the monument of Pedra Alta could be a hybrid between the iconography of warrior stelae and anthropomorphic statue-menhirs (**fig. 9**). A similar case is found in the monument of La Barranca del Águila (Talavera) (Celestino, 2001: 355), in the intermediate communication area joining northwestern and southern Iberia. Also a statue-menhir, it contains the iconographic features of warrior stelae—with no evidence of previous engravings. These hybrid monuments could either express the prestige attached to the southwestern panoply by the elites depicted in statue-menhirs or the adoption of the new form of portraying the elites in the southwestern panoply. Be that as it may, they seem to instantiate a well-established milieu shared between elites.

4.3. Socio-material transformations

The distribution of statue-menhirs and their hybridization with stelae from regions further south may correlate with other Late and Final Bronze Age objects. In this regard, an interesting example can be found in palstaves or Atlantic Iberian axes. Some of these axes (30D, 31C, 34a; 35a, 35C, Monteagudo, 1977) circulated from Galicia and the north of Portugal towards the south of the Tajo basin. Simultaneously, the trunnion axe—of Mediterranean background—circulated from the south towards the north of the Tajo basin (Martín, 1999: 59-61; see also Díaz-Andreu, 1988). Both models of axes shared

interaction networks in the context of Late Bronze Age gift economies. It was during this process that Atlantic axes arrived in Italy or the Balearics and Sardinia, while Mediterranean axes reached northwestern Iberia (Giardino, 1995).

The circulation of palstaves and trunnion axes encouraged hybridization processes between them similar to those in operation between statue-menhirs and stelae. This phenomenon may be observed by comparing what happened in Iberia's Atlantic region and northern plateaus. While both models feature narrow bodies with almost parallel edges, in the Atlantic network the bodies are more stylized while the edges expand distally in the northern plateau (**fig. 10**). Additionally, the existence of axes with loops and trunnions is a sign of hybridization. Isomorphism and intermingling between trunnion axes and palstaves can only be explained in terms of material convergences within particular interaction networks. Their co-presence in two different exchange networks contributed to a 'family resemblance' in each geographical area. Axes must have been valued as worthy elements for exchange and for the creation of relations between people. While the movement of the axes indicates a bi-directional type of Atlantic connectivity between the northwest and the south, their isomorphism and hybridization seem to evidence the integration of social agents in the context of supraregional interactions.

Material connections are also noted in the production and circulation of gold objects. Mediterranean and Atlantic jewelry are frequently found together in the same deposits (Vilaça, 2008). Nevertheless, hybrid pieces emerged by the Late Bronze Age as interaction and connectivity intensified. The bracelet of Cantonha (Silva, 1986), found in the nuclear area of statue-menhirs, illustrates this phenomenon well. The artifact was made from three old bracelets of the Sagrajas-Berzocana and Villena- Estremoz style—the two characteristic types of technology in Atlantic Bronze Age in Iberia—also using Mediterranean processing technology, as Perea and Armbruster (2008) demonstrated. Therefore, objects created with technologies from different backgrounds and which had different pasts were united to build a new object. In this regard, the new object seems to substantiate a new reality—a new hybrid identity—befitting the new situation at the time.

This hybridization ought to be perceived as an instance of the consolidated interaction between agents from different contexts co-creating a shared milieu. A situation which would dramatically change by the Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age. Hybrid objects such as the aforementioned bracelet of Cantoha and the necklace of Sintra were replaced in the archaeological record with Mediterranean female products such as those of the Malhada (Campeã) and Baião deposits (Porto). The presence of these new objects seems to result from new types of connectivity and mobility brought about by the Phoenician colonization of the Atlantic coast and the establishment of a maritime route covering the coast of northwestern Iberia from Gadir to Onuba. From the 8th century BC onwards, Phoenician settlements were located at the mouths of the Portuguese rivers (Arruda, 2002). These enclaves served to establish relations with inland communities that

controlled mineral resources such as tin (Pellicer, 2000: 99-100). The notions of host and guest were essential and inherent to the creation of relationships as “trading outside of one’s own area could be risky”, marriage being the most archetypal form of agreement to create structured relationships which secured mobility and peaceful interchange (Strathern and Stewart, 2005: 235). Thus, items in this period corresponded to dowries in a context of trade pacts and alliance between Phoenicians and local communities (Ruiz-Gálvez, 1992: 238; González-Ruibal, 2006-2007: 245).

In northwestern Iberia, the Rías Baixas became the main interaction area to the north of the Miño River. Two types of evidence exemplify this new situation. Firstly, a remarkable item was added to the traditional corpus of depicted objects in northwestern art-rock: Mediterranean boats (Costas Goberna *et al.*, 2006; **fig. 11**). The cart had been the main form of transport during the Bronze Age. As noted above, it was represented along with weapons in rocks, stelae and other hybrid material forms. However, at some point a new means of transport, the boat, was also included in the iconography in line with the new situation. Secondly, outposts with baetylic temples emerged in small peninsulas or islands within the same area (González- Ruibal, 2006). These religious and trading points materialized the new form of interaction and exchange from the 8th to the 6th century B.C. Tellingly enough, this can also be observed in changes in the distribution of palstaves. While axes had been circulating throughout the Atlantic Iberia landscape in the Late Bronze Age, they now accumulated in large deposits in northwestern coastal areas (Galán, 2005). The logic behind this new maritime trade has little to do with the dynamics of gift economics whose purpose was to maintain and reinforce solidarity between elites.

Palstaves no longer seem compatible with the new interaction model, more focused on exchanging commodities. The new situation fostered the shift from a bidirectional system of connectivity into another, unidirectional, between northwestern and southern Iberia. The new interaction model allowed local communities to relate to Mediterranean agents within their own regions. The presence of members of these local communities became therefore less conspicuous beyond regional borders. As the Phoenicians had acted as the elite of the Late Bronze Age, former supraregional movement and hybridization gave way to a model which locally reinterpreted products and influences mostly transported by maritime routes.

After the dismantling of the Late Bronze Age gift economies and the collapse of the supraregional system of elites, the local community became the new protagonist in the Northwest and a more ‘communal’ model arose (González-Ruibal, 2006-2007). Small hillforts constituted the only habitat model in the region. While social differences must have existed in terms of rank and gender, these hillfort communities did not shelter individuals directly linked to arms (warriors). In the archaeological record, a new material culture becomes apparent—the sword is replaced by the dagger—and material semiotics

associated to arms no longer exist. The conflict now is managed within the framework of a ‘warrior society’ (Clastres, 1989; see also González, 2009), where violence is a matter that concerned all the members of the community.

5. Iron Age iconographies

It is not until the 2nd century B.C. that a new iconographic entanglement was introduced into the landscape: the so-called Galaico-Lusitanian statues (**fig. 12**). These consist of a large group of stone warriors which, alongside other material symbols, played a part in the creation of a new semiotic ideology in a large area around the river Miño and river Duero. Two reasons for their appearance can be put forward. Firstly, the stone warriors emerged in an area that was to be the most rapidly affected by the pressure exerted by Rome in the Northwest. Secondly, closely linked to the first, this was the area where massive settlements appeared and where members of the local communities participated directly in raids and military expeditions. Nevertheless, while these circumstances are evidently central to the development of this warrior elite, they do not fully explain the appearance of stone warriors and their symbolism. The reason is simple: similar historical conditions in other regions of Iberia did not produce an equivalent monumental iconography. As the new stone warriors are a distinctive feature of this specific area, it seems reasonable to believe that material heritage could have played a part in their emergence. Statue-menhirs and ‘armed’ rocks worked as the essential socio-material framework—that is, as the conditions of possibility (Foucault, 1969)—for the appearance of the stone warriors in the Late Iron Age.

The warrior statues arose in the same nuclear area as that of statue-menhirs (**fig. 13**). Despite the fact that this concurrence has traditionally been undervalued (Calo, 1994: 779- 780) based on the time gap between the two phenomena, a number of factors would support a link between them. Firstly, Calo’s appreciation is based on an erroneous premise: whereas he assumed that the statuary corresponded to provincial Roman art from the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, they have currently been dated to the 2nd century BC (González-Ruibal, 2004, 2006-2007; Rodríguez- Corral, 2012: 84-86). Secondly, this author overlooks the fact that while statue-menhirs primarily appeared in the Late Bronze Age, they remained in the landscape into the Iron Age. Their presence lasted over time in different ways. The monument of São João de Ver, dating from the 6th century BC, is one of the oldest statue-menhirs (Queiroga, 2003). Likewise, the statue-menhir of Marco (Vila Real, **fig. 14**) appears *in situ* next to a Roman road (Lopes *et al.*, 1994), while statue-menhirs such as Chaves, Ermida or Faiões were found in the vicinity of the hillforts (Díaz-Guardamino, 2010: 423). These locations indicate that many statue-menhirs were visible in the landscape during the Iron Age. In fact, they continued to be used by local communities at the beginning of the Roman period. For instance, the statue-menhir of Muiño de San Pedro (Verín) was reutilized in the 1st century AD given that a Roman epigraph was added to it (Taboada, 1988-1989). This kind of recycling can also be

detected in Late Iron Age stone warriors (Rodríguez-Corral, 2012). The relationship existing between stone warriors and statue-menhirs becomes yet more evident when looking at the northernmost territory. In this area, where no evidence exists of statue-menhirs and ‘armed’ rocks, the emergence of the elites in the Iron Age led to the appearance of objects of prestige such as those depicted in warrior statues, but no monumental sculptures exist similar to those found in the southern region around the river Miño and River Duero. They only emerged in areas where a prior sculpture tradition had existed.

Outcrops were a further element from the Bronze Age material heritage incorporated into this new semiotic ideology. Stone warriors were placed on top of these at the entrances to the settlements (Rodríguez-Corral, 2012: 87-88). As argued above, we must move beyond representationalist approaches and abandon the idea of the statue as a material form perfectly defined with a significance *per se*, placed in an exposed, neutral space with no significance attached to it. The stone warrior and the rock worked together to produce a new type of *armed* rock in the context of the Late Iron Age. The relationship between the rock and the stone warrior must have had a complex meaning. The ensemble made up of the rock and the stone warrior ought to be construed as a process of conceptual integration on two levels: the rock as a place and the stone as a material. The immutability and permanence of rocks throughout different life-cycles in the landscape affecting individuals, animals or vegetation, renders them a perfect material for creating meaning. Outcrops are the main form in which stone appears in the landscape. They are therefore the primary places where the qualities of the stone can be experimented with. Properties such as hardness or durability, emerged as symbols in that context conveying meaning. As argued above, the *armed* rocks worked as a solid metaphor with which people actively constructed their worlds. Because of their genealogical, sacred and protective nature they functioned in the late Iron Age as places of legitimization and co-creation of new landscapes. Hillforts appeared precisely in these landscapes of the Late Bronze Age and their connections with the rocks and carved rocks are evident in many cases (González-Ruibal, 2006-2007: 552).

As the rock’s pre-existence endows it with a different timescale, it has been frequently associated with the warrior groups or elites, acting as a material symbol of lineage and ancestry (Hamilton *et al.*, 2011). In this sense, the images of warriors placed on rocks must have generated an extremely powerful metaphorical ensemble, creating the impression that the warriors sprouted out of the rock (Rodríguez-Corral, 2013). These stone warriors actually came from the rocks they were fashioned from and rocks had been crucial spots for warriors ever since the Bronze Age. Therefore, the material setting could convey the idea that these individuals perched on the rocks constituted an intrinsic part of the landscape, generating a strong context of sacredness and time depth in Late Iron Age communities.

Late Iron Age images combine the features of statue-menhirs and of *armed* rocks producing a synthesis of both. On the one hand, they adopt the tri-dimensional nature of statue-menhirs. A shift from bi-dimensional images typical of Bronze Age petroglyphs to three-dimensional images takes place in the Late Iron Age. On the other hand, stone warriors broadly share the same nuclear area as statue-menhirs. However, while some statue-menhirs were dispersed beyond that area, stone warriors shared with ‘armed’ rocks a fully regional distribution. It may thus be claimed that locating stone warriors on rocks meant the warrior’s return to the collective body. The regional nature of this phenomenon, in contrast to the tendency of statue-menhirs to transcend their borders, can also be noted in terms of iconography. While statue-menhirs contain elements in common with material forms of warrior stelae from the southern regions, stone warriors feature their own regional iconography. While statues-menhir illustrate a supraregional model in operation in the Late Bronze Age, stone warriors illustrate a regional model in the Late Iron Age. However, the close relationship between stone warriors and their material symbolic framework, which will be discussed later, reveals the syncretism and local reinterpretation of exogenous elements at regional level; more specifically from the Mediterranean.

The location of stone warriors in the landscape is quite different from that of statue-menhirs despite the fact that both are displayed in liminal places. While statue-menhirs were set in places of mobility such as rivers and roads, stone warriors stood in settlement areas nearby walls and entrances. Statue-menhirs were linked to connectivity landscapes whereas stone warriors belonged in landscapes of resistance. They respectively instantiated dependence and independence sublimated in art through a specialized technology used to achieve specific effects (Gell, 1998). Additionally, the role of stone ‘warriors’ on rocks could be somewhat similar to that played by *armed* rocks in the Bronze Age. Both types of artifacts seek to *arm* landscapes, emotionally touching individuals who access their field of action. While *armed* rocks do so by strategies in semi-sedentary landscapes, stone warrior statues act in sedentary landscapes.

The regional nature of stone warriors is associated with a role in the co-creation of landscapes very different from that played by statue-menhirs. In order to understand the meaning of these images and the part they played in their setting, we must expand our view. The stone warriors, three-dimensionally displayed on rocks, belong in a wider context of walls and entrances to the hillforts with a very specific audience (**fig. 15**). The audience in this theatrical stage featured three characteristics (**fig. 16**): firstly, the observer was outside the hillfort; secondly, he approached the settlement towards its gateway; and thirdly, he observed the statue in motion, its position varying as his viewpoint gradually changed. In contrast to the observer’s movement, the logic of the material, the hieratism and symbolism accentuate the warrior’s static position. While a simple relationship between body and weapons existed in statue-menhirs, in stone warriors arms and body became entangled by critical gestures. This gesticulation and the

symbols of clothing were essential elements in this theatre.

The two most noteworthy elements are the shield and the right hand holding the sword (Rodríguez-Corral, 2013). The warrior shows the shield to the visitor arriving in the area surrounding the entrance to the hillfort. This position may be linked to the symbolic role the shield played in the ancient world: they conveyed independence and announced a willingness to defend that independence, a material metaphor of protection. Its loss meant that the defeated group relinquished the social limits they had so far maintained. This responds to the concept of the shield as a mobile frontier separating the individual, the group and the Others' territory (Lincoln, 1991: 143). Great significance is attached to the right hand by indigenous societies. The most important gestures materialize through it. The material gesture of the *fides* is made using the right hand. It also directs war. It carries the sword, is the deliverer of violence and the conveyor of the capacity of the individual and by extension, of the community, to defend themselves and subdue the other.

The symbolism attached to the shield and the right hand became highly significant. We know through Strabo (3, 3, 6) that northwestern native communities cut off "the hands of the prisoners and consecrated the right hands". In addition, iconography in Iberia illustrates these practices in stelae from the 2nd and 1st century BC, depicting the amputation of the right hand and the loss of the shield. Archaeological evidence also exists concerning these practices. The inhabitants of the settlement of La Hoya (Laguardia, Álava) were beheaded and had their right hands cut off during a siege in the 3rd century BC (Rodríguez-Corral, 2009: 208-210). This violent mutilation constituted a clear synecdoche in Iberian communities in the Late Iron Age: the right hand as the signifier of the social capacity of individuals renders them useless if amputated. If the relevance of the shield and the right hand as material metaphors of political and military independence is accepted, then it makes sense for stone warriors sprouting out of the rock next to the walls to adopt these gestures. This powerful performance enabled the warrior to act as a material assemblage in the construction of landscapes of resistance and protection. By emphasizing critical features, suppressing particular details and diluting time constraints this material ensemble thus encouraged the audience to believe things that would never otherwise have been believed or imagined. Stone warriors conveyed their meaning in a dual liminal space: their position near walls and gateways created boundaries with the present (Rome perceived as a foreigner), whereas their location on rocks involved breaking boundaries with the past (ancient people as ancestors).

Finally, the relationships between the elites and local communities during the Late Iron Age in contrast with those of Late Bronze Age must be considered. The iconographies of statue-menhirs and stone warriors reinforced two different forms of social interaction. In the case of statue-menhirs, the symbols depicted (e.g. the sub-rectangular motif), the decoration patterns (e.g. the fishbone motif) and the objects (weapons and jewelry) operate in the construction of a milieu of shared cultural values

among elites at a supraregional level. Social ties were formed and reinforced, knowledge was shared and positions of status were established within this supraregional connectivity environment. The co-presence and hybridization of traits from different backgrounds in terms of material culture and material images directly ensued, as argued above. However, the solidarity of the elites, represented by statue-menhirs, not only encouraged supraregional cohesion with other elites, but also led to social distance at an intra-community level. Long-distance travel, access to exotic knowledge and prestigious goods plus external social links generated differences between the elites and the local community. Somehow, the prestige attached to the elites portrayed in statue-menhirs did not directly result from the part those elites played in the community but from their separation thereof.

Stone warriors in the Late Iron Age portrayed a very different kind of elite from that of statue-menhirs. The style, symbols and objects represented in stone warriors worked in exactly the opposite direction creating regional and local landscapes of cohesion and resistance. On the one hand, a ‘pervasive style’ (DeBoer, 1991) is incorporated into an expanded art system of interconnection between hillforts of the region. A large group of hillforts shared not only the presence of stone warriors, but also the same material symbols and decoration patterns (Gonzalez-Ruibal, 2004). This iconography emphasized regional identity under Rome’s dominion. At a local level, this pervasive style seems to act in hillforts as the framework for symbols that support a form of sociability different from that of the statue-menhirs. The repetition of objects, symbols and patterns at different scales suggests a fractal conception of regional sociality in the Late Iron Age. Symbols and patterns appear on the bodies of warriors, on the walls of houses and at the entrances to hillforts where warriors stood. The same pattern, therefore, operated within the realms of the individual (body), the family (house), and the community (settlement). Subsequently, these warriors may have functioned in these hillforts as a category of person who acts for the whole community as both a collective and singular person (Fowler, 2008). The community and family act as a person on a different scale, the single individual thus becomes a fractal equivalent of the family and the community. Stone warriors constitute a sort of elite whose power, unlike that of statue-menhirs, is deeply rooted within their own communities.

6. Persistence beyond prehistory

The system of dispersed symbols where stone warriors operated started to crumble by the end of the 1st century BC. Stone warriors seemingly lost their function as local communities were incorporated into Rome’s provincial system. From that moment on, symbols on houses were eliminated or hidden under new constructions. Much of this decoration was reused as construction material or was covered or hidden by other constructions, which indicates that it lost its cognitive and symbolic value and its apotropaic function. The walls of many of the hillforts were no longer repaired from that moment onwards, the inner space was abandoned or gradually lost its population, and

houses began to proliferate outside the walls (Rodríguez-Corral, 2012: 75). At this point, the stone warrior of the hillfort of Sanfins was taken down from the rock and moved to an enclosure at the top of the settlement.

The meaning of rocks and warrior statues to local communities changed rather than disappeared. In the 1st century BC, not only some stone warriors from the Late Iron Age but also some statue-menhirs (Rodríguez-Corral, 2012: 83) and warrior stelae (García-Sanjuán *et al.*, 2008: 124) from the Late Bronze Age acquired new meanings conforming with new historical circumstances. It is at this point that funerary epigraphs in Latin were added to them. Likewise, in the same region where statue-menhirs and stone warriors stood, rocks continued functioning as ritual spaces in the Late Iron Age and during the Roman period. The adoption of epigraphy as a ceremonial form used in the outcrops reveals that the ritual and sacred value attached to them persisted into the 1st and 2nd century AD. In Villar de Perdices (Montealegre), Cabezo das Fraguas (Guarda), Lamas de Moledo (Viseu) or Panoias (Vila Real), animal offerings to native gods were made accompanied by inscriptions in Lusitanian or Latin and, in some cases, in both languages. As Alfayé and Marco (2008: 229) pointed out, the use of the vernacular language could have acted as a mechanism of ideological subversion. Likewise, the rocks with hybrid inscriptions could reveal identities in conflict with the process of transformation these communities was experimenting.

The materialities which had contributed to building the landscapes of the Bronze Age and Iron Age thus continued to play a major role as mechanisms of resistance in landscapes under Roman colonization in the 1st century AD. At a time of anxiety and reconstitution of identities in the northwest of Iberia, the use of these places and material forms needed to act as *mnemotopos* (Assman, 1992) encapsulating past ideas (Rodríguez-Corral, 2013: 288). However, rocks and monuments began to lose their function when the new imperial identity expanded in the Flavian period. From this moment on, some warrior sculptures and statue-menhirs were reused as material for building pavements and other constructions (Almeida, 1974: 9; Varela, 1997: 270). Simultaneously, rural ritual areas such as Cabeço das Fráguas were also replaced by other 'more Roman' sacred environments. Nevertheless, in some cases, the use of pre-roman places, such as Panoias, could be prolonged a little (Alföldy, 2002).

7. Conclusions

Various issues regarding representational approaches to the meaning of the material images have been pointed out. Petroglyphs, statue-menhirs and warrior statues have traditionally been perceived as mere material forms, used simply to convey specific ideas or to represent personages at a point in time. Archaeologists have failed to analyze how iconographies appeared and became prevalent in various contexts, and how their materialities partook in the creation of meaning over time. I propose looking beyond these

traditional views and exploring material images from a different angle. In my opinion material images, far from being a passive reflection of pre-existing social actors, worked actively in the production and reproduction of semiotic ideologies. They ultimately provided the stimulus and constituted in their own right the technology for meaning, co-creating embodied imaginations. In this way, these iconographies guided the social practice within ‘armed’ and ‘rearmed’ landscapes.

The key point is not to decide whether these material images may have been used as mere iconic representations—for instance, of ancestors—or whether these visual entanglements themselves may have worked as the specific embodiment of ancestors themselves. The crucial issue is rather to accept that both options are equally significant. The emergence of war iconographies is not only closely related to specific types of social individuals within communities—that is to say, a simple portrayal of them—but also a consequence of the qualities of the material they were made of and of the material heritage within the region. As a result, as Knappett noted (2011: 68), we must reconcile two aspects of micro-scale interactions in order to understand these iconographies: the face-to-face social interactions in which material images appear to be in the background; and the individual-material image interactions in which the social interaction seems to fade into the background.

Specific connectivity models created the conditions for different types of armed elites to exist at different moments. Statue-menhirs and stone warriors in their respective areas of action reveal two different forms of elites in the Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age. During the Late Bronze Age, the consolidation of a pre-colonial model of interaction encouraged a type of elite embodied in statue-menhirs. At the beginning of the Iron Age, the emergence of Onuba, Gadir and Phoenician factories on the Portuguese coast transformed the traditional forms of mobility and gave rise to a new maritime model of interaction. This fact had profound consequences for the structure and social practices of western Iberia. Replacing pre-colonial mobility networks (by land) with a Phoenician colonial model (by sea) fostered the disarticulation of land interaction between statue-menhir elites and stelae elites in southern Iberia. The social ranking and stratification and the elites of the Bronze Age were replaced in the Early Iron Age by a social ideology which emphasized the collective. The disappearance of a hierarchical society and the emergence of communities with a tendency towards equality rendered Late Bronze Age iconographies unnecessary. This situation, however, changed again around the 2nd century BC due to instability and uncertainty caused by Rome’s military presence. This circumstance encouraged the emergence of large hillforts with massive defenses and a new warrior elite.

Statue-menhirs and stone warriors make sense in the context of interaction with these external agents in two different ways. Statue-menhirs acted within the economies of reciprocity of the Late Bronze Age that generated a model of bidirectional

supraregional interactions. In this scenario agents from different origins mutually influenced each other, shared elements and acted in landscapes of interaction. This model gave some individuals autonomy from the local community and fostered supraregional identities. Statue-menhirs materialized this social reality due to their territorial distribution, their location in the landscape and the common supraregional elements they incorporated. Stone warriors, for their part, operated within a framework of interaction with Rome which had brought about instability and alterations in the area. This type of interaction encouraged elites whose legitimacy was based on their ability to represent and defend their communities and produced regional and community identities as opposed to Roman identities. Stone warriors, as shown above, materialized this socio-political reality due to their location and association with walls of hillforts and their performative power.

This scenario, however, does not suffice to explain the appearance of rocks with warriors. While the whole of northwestern Iberia shared a common material culture and type of settlement during the Iron Age—the region may thus be defined as a homogeneous archaeological culture (the Castro culture)—rocks with warriors only emerged in the south of this archaeological area, where iconography tradition had operated since the Bronze Age. It could thus be argued that *armed* rocks and statue-menhirs acted as a past *not absent* in the Late Iron Age landscape, stimulating and participating in the creation of new warriors on rocks. Rocks with warriors syncretically adopted the material logic of *armed* rocks and statue-menhirs, yet not with the same meanings but operating in the context of interaction with an exogenous agent: The Roman Empire. Conceptual and physical relations produced material metaphors and worked as proxies for new social realities. The result was a fresh semiotic ideology. Statue-menhirs played a part in the construction of connectivity between diverse regions. Rocks with warriors worked in the construction of spaces of resistance within the region, instantiating a local material identity against Rome.

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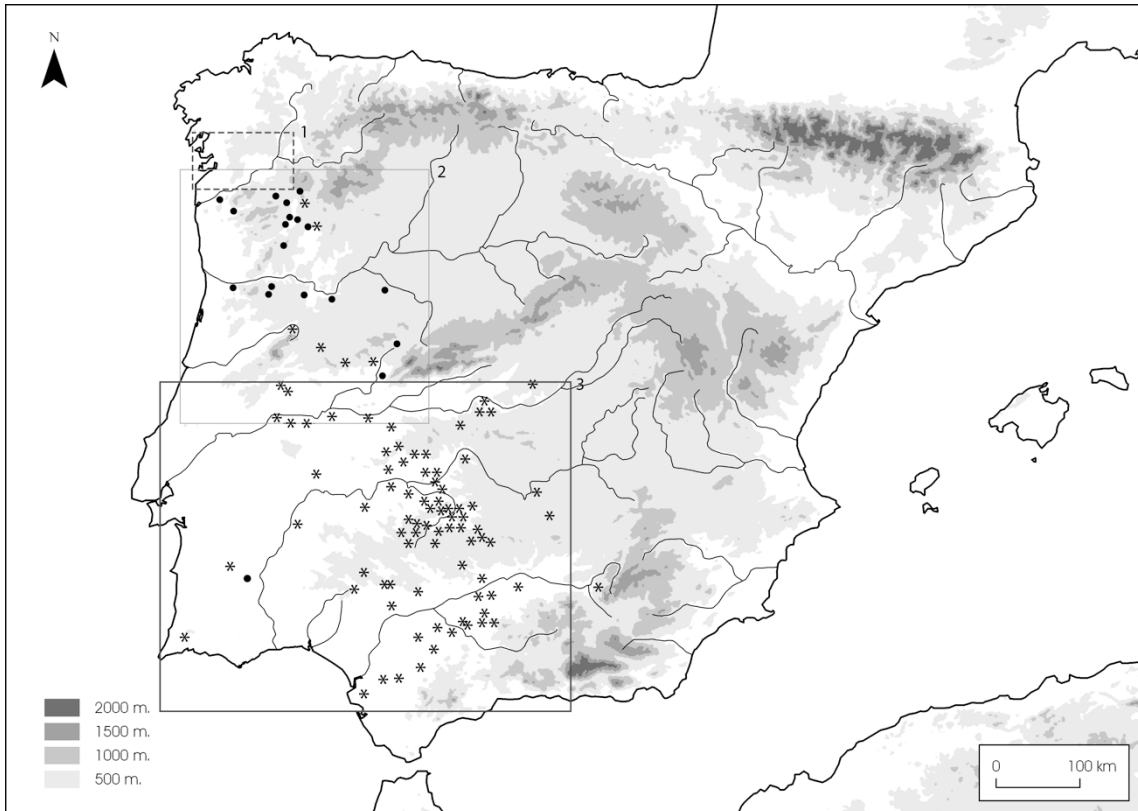


Fig. 1. Areas of distribution: 1. Carved rocks; 2. Statue-menhirs (dots) and 3. Southwestern stela (asterisks).



Fig. 2. ‘Armed’ rock from Coto da Aspra, Pontevedra, Spain.



Fig. 3. The so-called sub-rectangular motif. Statue-menhir of Tameiron, Ourense, Spain (Photo: Beatriz Comendador).

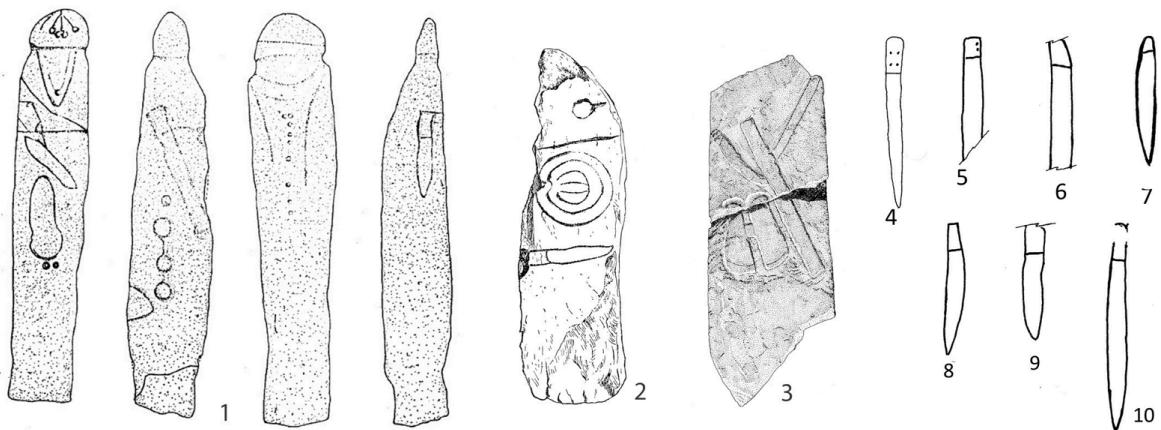


Fig. 4. 1. Statue-menhir of Chaves (Vila-Real, Portugal); 2. Warrior stela of Tres Arroyos (Badajoz, Spain); 3. Alentejo stela of Gomes Aires (Beja, Portugal). Other depictions of swords on southwestern stelae: 4. Eiras, (Sabugal, Portugal); 5 and 7. El Majar de los Puercos (Cáceres, Spain); 6. Salvatierra de Santiago (Cáceres); 8. El Oreganal I (Cáceres); 9. Tres Arroyos (Badajoz); 10. Los Herraderos (Cáceres).

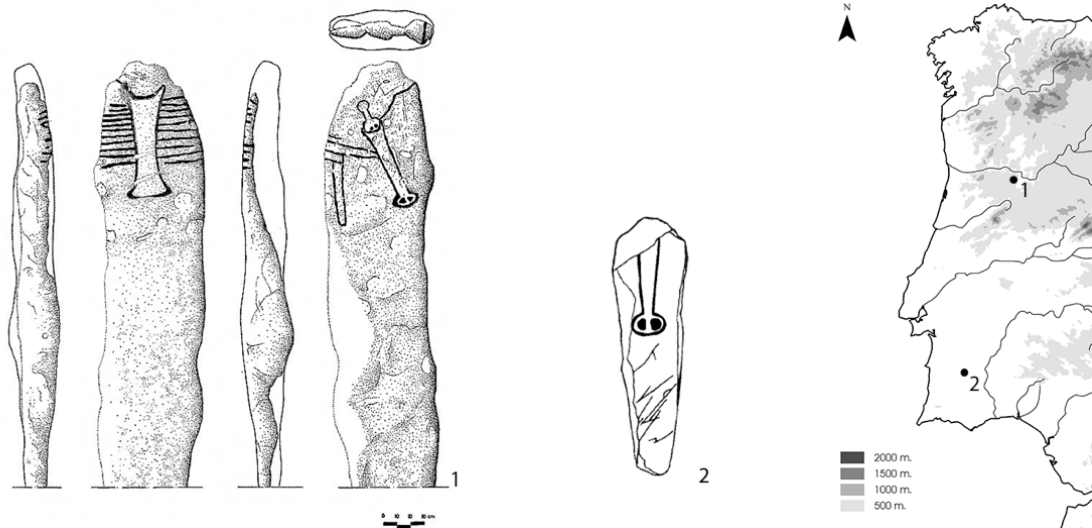


Fig. 5. 1. The statue-menhir of Ataúdes (Guarda, Portugal) (Vilaça et al. 2001) and 2. the stela of Mouricos (Beja, Portugal) (Díaz- Guardamino 2010).

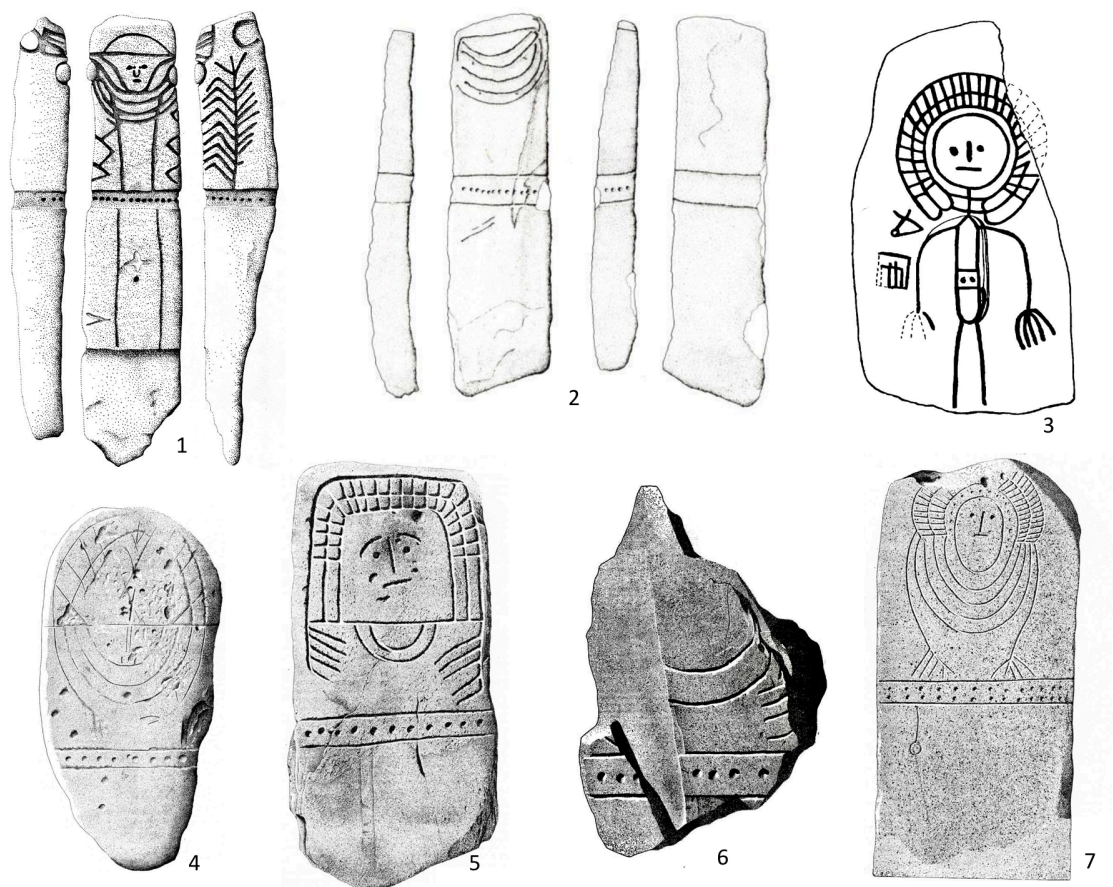


Fig. 6. Statue-menhirs and stela with 'multiple' necklaces and rivet belts: 1. Nave II (Viseu, Portugal); 2. Alto da Escrita (Viseu, Portugal); 3. Torrejón del Rubio II (Cáceres, Spain); 4-6. Hernán Pérez (Cáceres, Spain); 7. Granja de Tomiñuelo (Badajoz, Spain).



Fig. 7. The warrior stela of Tojais, Vila Real, Portugal (Alves *et al.* 2011).

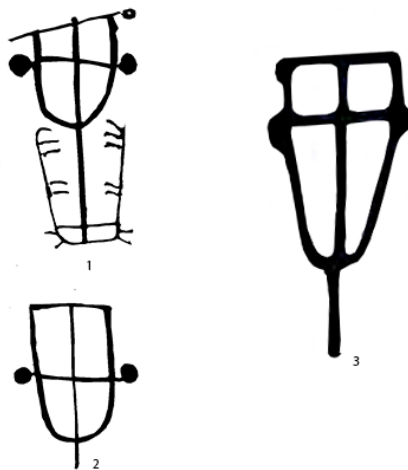


Fig. 8. Engravings of carts on : 1-2. warrior stela and 3. the armed rock of Agua da Laxe, Pontevedra, Spain (3).

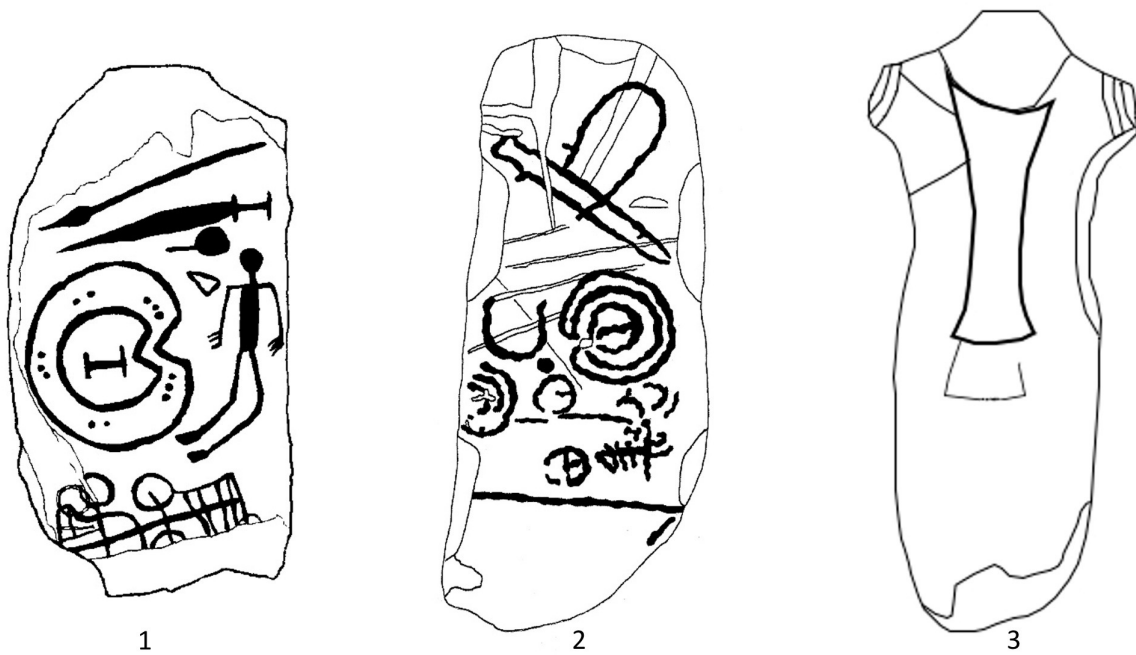


Fig. 9. Hybridation between statue-menhir (of a northwestern background) and warrior stelae (of a southwestern background): 1. the stela of Solana de Cabañas (Cáceres, Spain), 2. the hybrid monument of Pedra Alta (Ourense, Spain) and 3. the statue-menhir of Faiões (Chaves, Portugal).

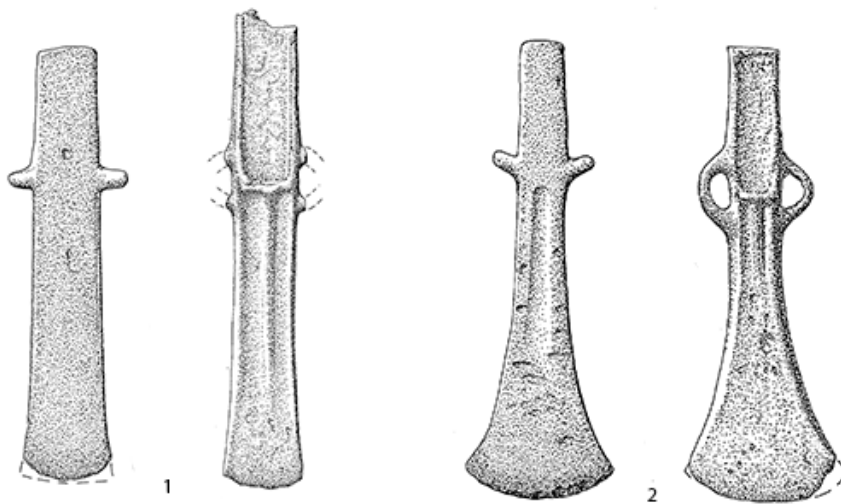


Fig. 10. Isomorphism between palstaves and trunnion axes in (1) the Atlantic network (840 and 1224, in: Monteagudo, 1977) and (2) the North plateau network (863 and 1263, in: Monteagudo, 1977).



Fig. 11. Engraving of a Mediterranean boat on the rock of Auga dos Cebros, Pontevedra (Spain)

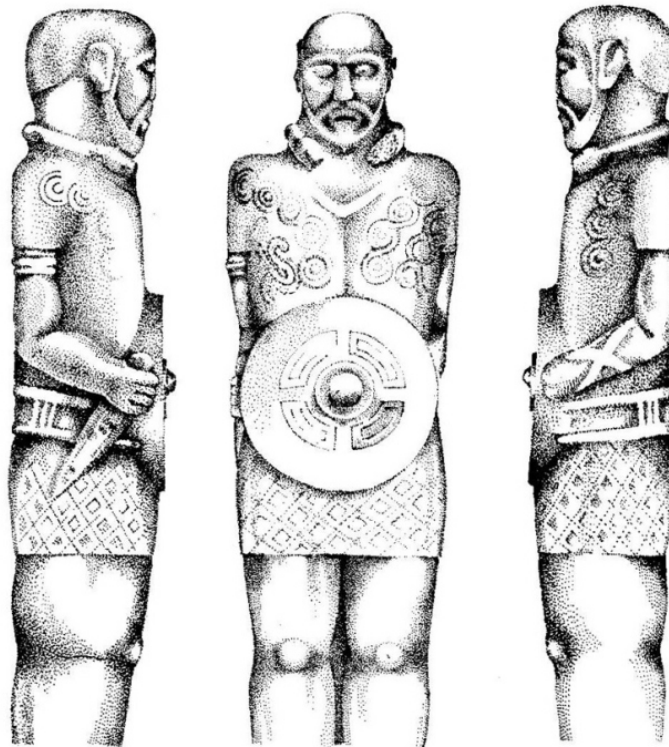


Fig. 12. Warrior statue from Lezenho, Vila Real, Portugal (Modified after Silva, 1986).

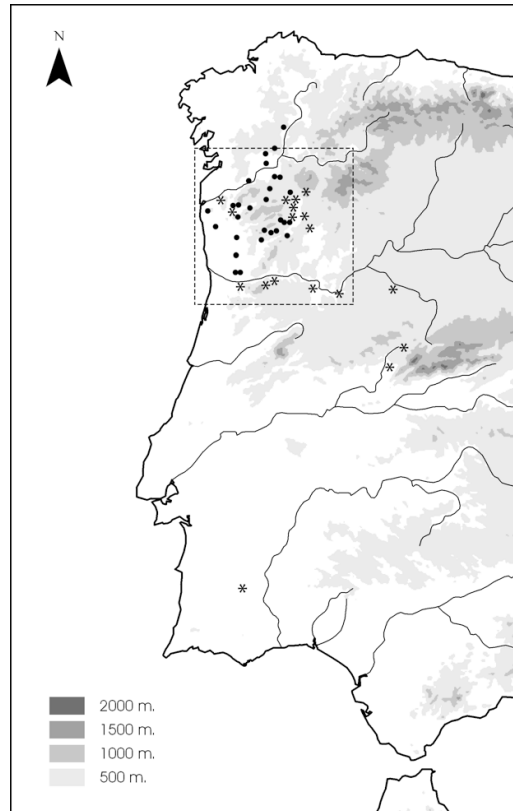


Fig. 13. Distribution map of statue-menhirs (asterisks) and warrior statues (dots).



Fig. 14. Statue-menhir of Marco located in situ (Vila Real, Portugal)



Fig. 15. Modern reconstruction of the stone warrior from the hillfort of Sanfins (Paços de Ferreira, Porto, Portugal) on the outcrop where the lower part of this statue was discovered. (Photograph: Sole Felloza).



Fig. 16. Modern copy of one of the stone warriors from the hillfort of Lezenho placed on the rock (Vila Real, Portugal) (photo: CEDIEC)