

mica iniciada en 1905 con la celebración del primero de estos congresos en la ciudad de Périgueux, estando muy focalizados en el conocimiento regional de las distintas áreas en las que se celebran y con una cierta apertura a contextos geográficos adyacentes.

Giot, P.-R. (ed.) 1963: *Les civilisations atlantiques du Néolithique à l'âge du fer. Actes du premier colloque Atlantique (Brest 1961)*. Laboratoire d'anthropologie préhistorique. Rennes.

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Joana Valdez-Tullett. *Design and connectivity. The case of Atlantic Rock Art*. British Archaeological Reports International Series 2932, New sub-series Archaeology of Prehistoric Art 1, BAR Publishing. Oxford, 2019, 286 pp., 172 figs. (31 in colour), 61 graphs (39 in colour). With additional material online (figures and graphs). ISBN 978 1 4073 1662 8 (paperback).

The theme of Prehistoric Atlantic connectivity supported by rock and megalithic art during the Neolithic-Bronze Age, has been a classic theme of the European Atlantic façade archaeology for a century (Twohig 1981; Fábregas and Rellán 2012). Throughout the times, the interpretations of that connectivity were strictly related to the state of the graphic record (which was more extensive in some regions than in others), to the knowledge that was available in relation to other complementary archaeological contexts (settlement and funerary evidence) and, evidently, to the researcher's ideology i.e. in his understanding of that which needs to be questioned.

This book starts off from the following hypothesis: (i) a shared repertoire focused on specific and repetitive abstract motifs –cup-marks, cup-and-rings, penannulars, radial grooves, spirals, wavy/linear lines– materializes the more noticeable face of Atlantic rock art (the quintessential motifs), (ii) which are linked to a knowledge –technical, formal, etc.– developed and socially transmitted through time. Both (the classical “package” and the knowledge related to it) would have been shared (by cultural exchange) in different coastal Atlantic regions, which is why the author selects 5 case studies: Monte Faro and Barbanza (NW of Iberia), Machars (SW of Scotland), Rombalds Moor (North of England), and Iveragh (SW of Ireland), a total of about 250 rocks make up this case study. J. Valdez-Tullett uses previous records from these 5 regions, which she complements with personal observations and analysis. Despite concluding that further investigation is required in order to fully understand if the “Atlantic rock Art” could be considered a widespread unified phenomenon that would materialize culture exchange

in Prehistory, this is an innovative must-read work on the subject of the Prehistory of the European Atlantic façade. It exposes and discusses, in a very honest, clear, and detailed way (and with excellent illustrations and images), the premises, data (and their variation) in each case study, along with the arguments for the existence of stronger or weaker relationships among each of the five considered regions. These conclusions and the analysis of the data that support them are without a doubt the main contribution of this work to the study of the art of the recent Prehistory on the European Atlantic façade, hence it is quite perplexing to understand the exclusion of the pivotal region of Brittany/Morbihan (France) (e. g. Bueno and Balbín 2002), whose Atlantic relations have been documented mainly since the middle Neolithic.

The recording and analysis methods used –GIS, RTI, SfM/photogrammetry, SNA– together with their careful empirical manipulation, constitute robust analytical tools. In short, they create new key data for interpretation, mainly because they are always used in a very thoughtful and critical perspective and, cumulatively, the way they are manipulated, provides the human/empirical scale for the perception of the sites and of the landscape. Very briefly, the author's questioning is based on an accurate (and hierarchical) multi-scalar analysis that comprises 11 main categories and 341 attributes. It is precisely this rich and dynamic multi-scalar analysis that allows her to identify, in each region, levels of variation between motifs, motifs' techniques and their configurations, (types of) compositions, rock surfaces, sites, relationship between sites and the surrounding landscape, etc. From this relational method (SNA), similarities and differences emerge in the interregional comparison. In this way, and synthetically, the author expresses the following interpretations. The Atlantic rock art has a relative monothematic character, being its “package” composed mainly by cup-and-marks, cup-and-rings, radial grooves and wavy/linear grooves that connect designs; spirals are rare but are present in all case studies. There are motifs that do not “define” Atlantic rock art, such as animals, idols and weapons, rosettes, keyholes and enclosures, being specific to some of the regions. Carving by pecking is the preferential technique used but its application differs regionally. For example, in Iveragh a large percentage of the panels were carved by very rough pecking (as some of the megalithic art); in the regions of Monte Faro and Rombalds Moor some carvings are sculpture-like (have a 3D character). Unlike superimpositions that are rare (or even absent), the overlap of images is frequent. The majority of the rocks have simple compositions (1 to 3 motifs) and the use of grooves that inter-connect them with each other and with the rock microtopography is very exceptional (occurring only in complex compositions). In different quantities all regions use an identical type of depiction/relation with the rock surface, being all of the “practitioners” more interested in the rock surface than in the landscape that surrounded the rock. However, for ex., the animals in Iberia are in harmo-

ny with the overall compositions, and different regional characteristics in the five case studies enables the recognition of regional identities. Barbanza and Monte Faro regions (which are very close to each other in Northwest Iberia) share an extremely high specificity in the typology of motifs, which are absent in the remaining 3 Atlantic regions. Interestingly, the author collects more intercomparable data from the technical and morphological analysis of the carved motifs and of the *chaines operatoires* (following current trends in the study of “artifacts”) (Jones and Díaz-Guardamino 2019), than from that analysis guided by the usual analytical data of landscape archaeology, which leads her to question –although ending up with a positive response– if there is a global comprehension of the style in all the regions considered. She suggests that the structured cultural exchange –by imitation and/or teaching, instead of mere spontaneous contacts–, that was occurring during Neolithic (from the middle of the 4th millennium BC onwards), would have been the mode of transmission. Therefore, the author admits that –under its apparent similarities– the Atlantic rock art may have represented different ideologies, beliefs and messages. Rock art is difficult to date. Despite some positive data in recent open-air rock site excavations in the UK and Ireland, the megalithic contexts have been those that have contributed the most to the absolute and relative chronology. If Atlantic rock art in Ireland can be contemporary (and possibly “older”) than some megalithic monuments like Loughcrew (Twohig 2012), this chronological relationship is, in our opinion, also defensible in the NW of Iberia and Brittany, since the end of 5th mill. BC (Bueno and Balbin 2002). In reality, the spatial distribution of “artefacts” over more restricted, or wider, distances, as indicators of cultural exchange (or their absence), requires demands broader programs of contextual studies to which, certainly, this work cannot respond in a complete way, but for which it makes a decisive contribution by opening the door, in our opinion, to the possibility that these material forms and Neolithic artistic practices could have been adopted because they were not intrinsically linked to a specific socio-economic formation. However, it raises some questions. If the rock art of NW of Iberia integrates in a coherent articulated way both the so-called quintessential motifs of Atlantic rock art, as well as animals and idoliforms –the same ones that (excluding spirals) are found in the dolmens of the end of the 5th and 4th mil. BC–, this will be, in its own right, “the style” of rock art of this region, that is, one of the supreme ways of expressing its cultural identity. The same is true for Ireland and other regions considered in this study. As a result, the name that can be given to this rock art –Atlantic; Galician-Atlantic; Ibero-Irish Atlantic; cup-and-ring style; Galician-Portuguese–, seems to me less important than the regional study of chronology, of social and cultural processes (including the mobility of people), of modes of transmission, as well as the temporality and meaning of the evoked phenomena. However, we repeat, the work

Design and Connectivity is an excellent reflection that cuts across all the themes discussed here.

- Bueno Ramírez, P. and Balbín Behrmann, R. de 2002: “L’Art mégalithique péninsulaire et l’Art mégalithique de la façade atlantique: un modèle de capillarité appliqué à l’Art postpaléolithique européen”. *L’Anthropologie* 106: 603-646.
- Fábregas-Valcarce, R. and Rodríguez-Rellán, C. 2012: *A Arte Rupestre no Norte do Barbanza*. Andavira Editora, S. L. Santiago de Compostela.
- Jones, A. and Díaz-Guardamino, M. 2019. *Making a Mark: image and process in Neolithic Britain and Ireland*. Oxbow Books. Oxford.
- Twohig, E. S. 1981. *The megalithic art of western Iberia*. Clarendon Press. Oxford.
- Twohig, E. S. 2012: “Inside and outside: visual culture at Loughcrew, Co. Meath”. In Cochrane and A. Jones (eds.): *Visualising Neolithic*. Oxbow Books. Oxford: 125-139.

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Harald Meller y Kai Michel. *El disco celeste de Nebra. La clave de una civilización extinta en el corazón de Europa*. Traducción de Jorge Seca. Prefacio Roberto Risch (pp. 7-10). Antonio Bosch Editor. Manacor, Barcelona, 2020, 397 pp. ISBN: 978-84-949331-0-3.

The remarkable discovery of the copper disc with gold inlays of the moon and stars from Nebra (Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany) sparked world wide interest. Subsequent studies, the copper and gold objects associated with it, its context and wider cultural importance, triggered a spate of research projects and publications. This account by Harald Meller, who was largely responsible for its rescue and recognised its importance from the beginning, and Kai Michel, traces the story of its discovery and investigation. It is a real-life detective drama, complete with police action, deceit, cloak-and-dagger negotiations, court judgements, allegations of falsification, crafty characters, tricky lawyers, and much more. It is a novelist’s dream. This lucid account, deftly written, intends to reach a wide public, and share the excitement of Prehistoric research. It also makes large statements for the importance of prehistory in general, and argues for a political formation of a “State” in the Early Bronze Age, roughly 2000-1600 BC. But, to paraphrase Carl Sagan, such extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence; so we should look at it.

The book is in two parts; an exercise in positivism, then lengthy conjecture. The first describes the discovery and technical aspects of the disc and its hoard. From the beginning, it required strenuous coordination between archaeological scientists, metallurgists, and experts in palaeogenetics and field archaeology, showing how the “Natural Sciences Revolution” in archaeology actually operates. From this emerges a picture of a sophisticated