STUDIA CELTICA, XL (2006), 1–22

The Iron Age Iberian Sanctuary of 'El Pajarillo' (Huelma, Jaén) and its Sculptural Narrative[1]

TERESA CHAPA BRUNET
Departamento de Prehistoria, Universidad Complutense Madrid

MANUEL MOLINOS MOLINOS and ARTURO RUIZ RODRIGUEZ
Centro Andaluz de Arqueología Ibérica, Universidad de Jaén

JUAN PEREIRA SIESO
Área de Prehistoria, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha Toledo

VICTORINO MAYORAL HERRERA
Instituto de Arqueología de Mérida, CSIC

Iberian Culture and the origins of Iberian stone sculpture

The 'Iberian Culture' is scarcely known outside Spain, even though its material culture attains spectacular levels of quality, especially in the field of iconography, metallurgy and pottery manufacture. The local character of most publications dealing with this topic is probably responsible for this unfamiliarity, but there are now a number of works accessible to English-speaking readers that can provide knowledge of this culture (Nicolini 1974; Harrison 1988; Cunliffe and Keay 1995; Ruiz and Molinos 1998). A good summary of the situation can be also found in the French and German catalogues of the important exhibition 'Iberians, Princes of the West', that was shown in Paris and Bonn (Ibères 1997), alongside other introductory works (Rouillard, Mohen and Eluère 1998).

The chronological boundaries of this culture are placed between the sixth century BC and the Roman domination, definitively established in the second half of the second century BC. As to the spatial dimension, most of the human groups inhabiting the Mediterranean and southern areas of the Iberian Peninsula, from the Languedoc to Andalusia, are considered by modern scholars as 'Iberians', although this vast territory never developed any political unity in Iberian times. So, what we usually call 'Iberian

[1] This article is a result of the research project BHA2003- 02881: 'Landscape, economic activities and social models during Iberian times along the upper course of the Guadalquivir river' (Spanish Ministry of Education).

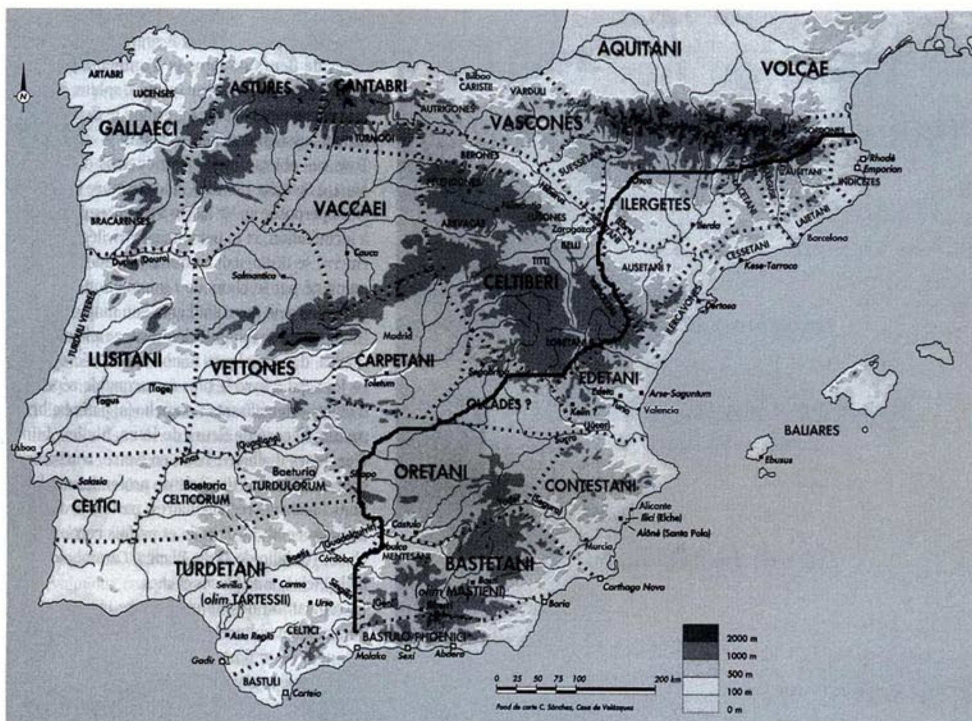


Fig. 1. Main groups inhabiting the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the Iron Age according to Greek and Roman texts. Iberian Culture spreads along the Mediterranean area (Source: P. Moret and the authors).

Culture' is a modern construct and not a reflection of a supposed Iberian self-recognition. Neither is it a heritage of the texts provided by ancient Greek or Roman authors (Domínguez Monedero 1983; Moret 1996: 33–47). Thucydides and Avienus mention a land called 'Hibería', organized around the river 'Hiber', and inhabited by a 'Hiberian' tribe. But the latter locates this population on the eastern part of the Iberian Península, along the present Júcar basin, while the former places it on the extreme south-west, around the rivers Tinto and Odiel. Another river on the north-east, the Ebro, has preserved this name to this day. With the arrival of the Romans, those terms expanded to include the whole Iberian Peninsula, so that the Greek name 'Hibería' corresponded to the Latin 'Hispania'.

Archaeologically, the common label that can be applied to the eastern and southern areas of the Iberian territory is the 'Mediterranean style', contrasting with the central and western part of the Iberian Peninsula, where local traditions mix with western European contacts and influences, and show limited links with the Celtic world (Almagro Gorbea and Ruiz Zapatero 1993).

The important internal changes that took place during the Final Bronze Age were accompanied by a deep-impact event that occurred during the ninth century BC: the arrival of Phoenician colonists with a twofold purpose in mind: firstly, to gain access to

important economic resources that would allow them to fulfil the heavy demands imposed on the main Phoenician towns (Tyre, Byblos and Sidon) by Assyrian kings; secondly, to provide an outlet for the population surplus that was increasingly troubling the Phoenician kingdoms (Aubet 1993). The result of this process was a dense net of colonies spreading right from the east coast, with La Fonteta at the mouth of the Segura river, to the Portuguese west. The important city of *Gadir* and the surrounding south-west Tartessian territory was the political focus of this complex colonization process.

The development of Phoenician cities and *emporia* had a major effect on local populations. Between the eighth and sixth centuries BC, most groups in the southern and eastern part of the Iberian Peninsula underwent profound social and economic changes. We find evidence of mining intensification, as well as industrialized wine production (Quesada 1998) using *amphorae* of Phoenician type. The presence of several Phoenician products in the hinterland shows limited contacts between these areas and the coastal settlements. The old village communities changed gradually to a nucleated model, extending the base of a more hierarchical society. New elites tried to attain new levels of power, through the control of surplus production, distribution and trade. Such change needed a strong ideological basis. At the beginning, Iberian rulers found Near Eastern models especially inspiring, stone sculpture being the best way to represent their new position. One of the first Iberian stone monuments is the tomb of 'Pozo Moro' (Albacete), whose 'oriental' appearance has been frequently noted (Almagro Gorbea 1983).

After the Tartessian collapse, during the sixth century BC, Iberian trade was reoriented towards the Greek networks through *Emporion*, a Massalian foundation on the north-east coast of the Iberian Peninsula. This opened new routes for iconographical inspiration, and new eastern Greek models were adapted to Iberian tastes. The extraordinary group of sculptures found at Porcuna (Jaén), dated to the fifth century BC, have even been identified as 'Phocaeian' (Blázquez and González Navarrete 1985), although this opinion is not widespread among specialists (Croissant 1998).

Iberians continued creating sculptures until Roman times. The beginning of the fourth century BC was an especially prolific period in this respect, as the development of towns brought a concomitant increase in funerary display at cemeteries. Sculptures were quite frequent, decorating individual tombs as well as ritual areas inside the necropolis. In this context, sanctuaries were also good candidates for the display of sculptural work, but nothing was known about this facet until the accidental discoveries that took place at 'El Pajarillo' (Jaén, eastern Andalusia) in 1994. This was the first time that Iberian sculptures belonging to a sanctuary had been found and studied in their archaeological context. This has been crucial, not only to establishing their chronology, but also to understanding their meaning and function within the political and economic model developed in this area at the beginning of the fourth century BC.

The site and its geographical context

The Iberian sanctuary of 'El Pajarillo' (Jaén, Spain) is situated on a hill in the centre of the Jandulilla valley, close to the source of the river of the same name (Figures 3–5 and 12). This hill, which obliges the river to form a meander, takes on the appearance of an island in the middle of a small floodplain during times of heavy rainfall. With an altitude of 872 m (2860 ft) it is the lowest hill in the area; indeed, within a radius of 5 km, altitudes can

Fig. 2. Funerary monument of Pozo Moro (Albacete)
(Source: National Archaeological Museum of Madrid).

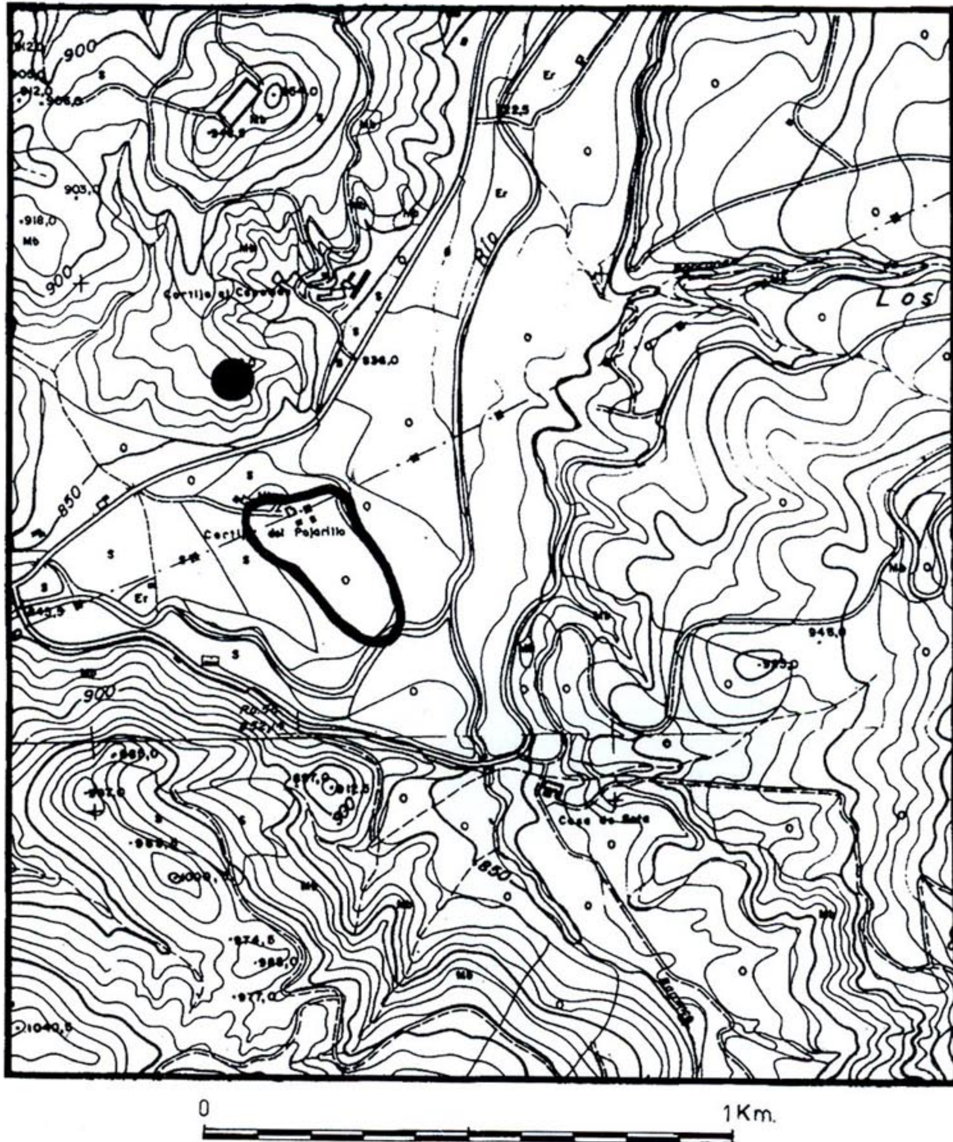


Fig. 3. 'El Pajarillo' hill in the floodplain of the Jandulilla river. A dot marks the necropolis area.

reach as high as 1800 m (5906 ft). The landscape of the region is dominated by the peaks of the nearby *Sierra Mágina*, the highest of which are over 2000 m (6562 ft) high.

The Jandulilla valley links the high mountain areas of Granada to the south with the upper course of the river Guadalquivir to the north. It has been important at several moments in history but was especially so during Iberian times, allowing both regional movements and long- distance travel from the coast towards the interior – a factor of great importance to the traffic in commercial goods. The valley also allowed access from inland

areas with important resources to the route leading to the large Carthaginian colonies of Almería and Cartagena, on the south-east coast.

The site of the sanctuary of 'El Pajarillo' occupies the narrowest and wildest part of the Jandulilla valley (Figure 12). As the river flows on and the valley widens, the first important Iberian sites are found, such as La Loma del Perro in Jódar. The Jandulilla's confluence with the River Guadalquivir was dominated by an extensive Iberian settlement, Úbeda la Vieja, which in Roman times would be re-founded as *Colonia Salaria*. Leading from this colony a strongly guarded route led to *Castulo* (Linares), the mining capital of the Sierra Morena (Figure 4). The nearby mountains of the Sierra de Mágina and Sierra de Cazorla would have provided abundant wood, pasture and hunting, while the areas closer to the Guadalquivir would have provided important agricultural land. Other critical resources, such as salt, are abundant in this territory.

Nowadays the landscape of the valley and the lands surrounding the site are intensively developed, with large areas given over to the production of crops. This has encouraged erosion, and in the lower parts of the valley there are now quite remarkable badlands. The hill where the sanctuary itself is situated shows the devastating effects of intensive olive-production. Composed of red sandstone and Triassic limonites, the hill is particularly susceptible to erosion. In recent years the highest area has been prepared for the installation of a large irrigation tank, and the entire surface of the hill has been worked for the planting of olive trees and the laying of irrigation infrastructure. The result is that the entire hill is bereft of its original plant-cover (Figure 5.1).

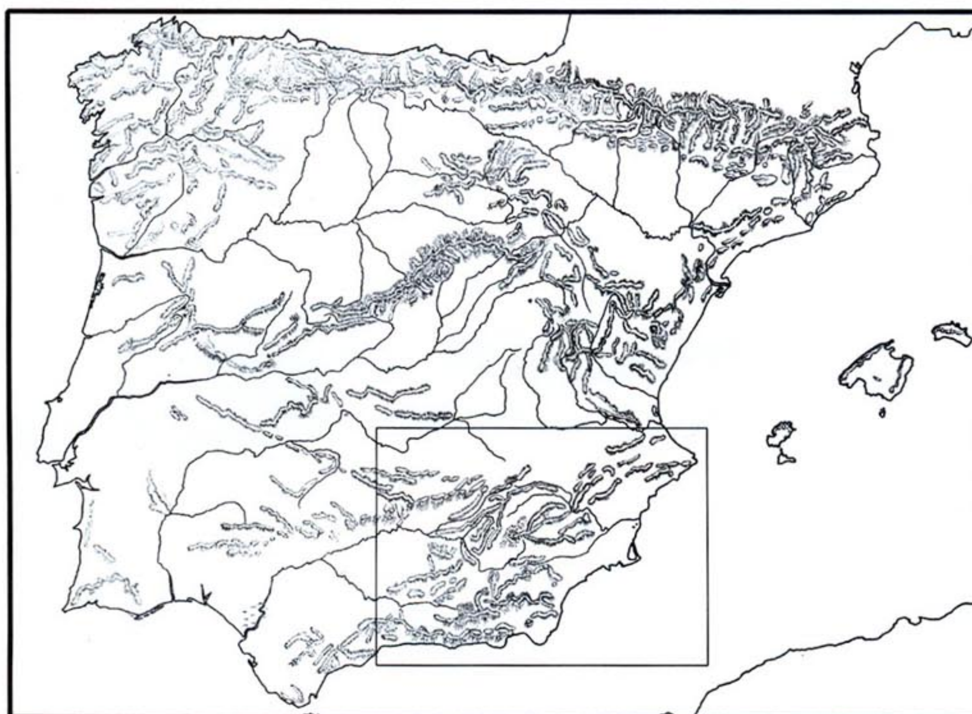
These developments on the hill led to the extraction of a great volume of rock, which the local growers discarded in a large trench dug at the foot of the hill. During the digging of this trench, two important pieces of sculpture were unearthed, one representing a human figure, the other the body of a lion. Years before, in 1933, the erection of a bridge over the river had made use of stones belonging to some Iberian constructions at the foot of the hill. This had led to the discovery of part of a griffin's head and the body of another lion. These were deposited at the Jaén Provincial Museum. The remains of Roman and medieval constructions in the area are quite abundant at the surface and parts of their walls and other architectural elements such as columns and large ashlar blocks, have been taken away and can be found around present-day farmsteads.

The discovery of Iberian sculpture with good contextual information is rare. The relatively good condition of the 'El Pajarillo' statues, and the prospect of conservation on the monument to which they belonged, provided a good opportunity for studying such sculpture under archaeological conditions. Excavations were therefore undertaken with the aim of establishing a broader understanding of the site and its iconography.[2]

The Iberian sanctuary

The excavations undertaken revealed a series of architectural structures on the lower part of the hill's western slope. The main element was a wall over 80 m long, orientated

[2] These excavations were authorized by the *Consejería de Cultura de la Junta de Andalucía* and directed by Drs Manuel Molinos and Arturo Ruiz (*Universidad de Jaén*), Teresa Chapa (*Universidad Complutense de Madrid*) and Juan Pereira (*Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha*), and by archaeologists Carmen Rísquez Cuenca, Antonio Madrigal Belinchón, Ángela Esteban Marfil, Victorino Mayoral Herrera and Montserrat Llorente López.



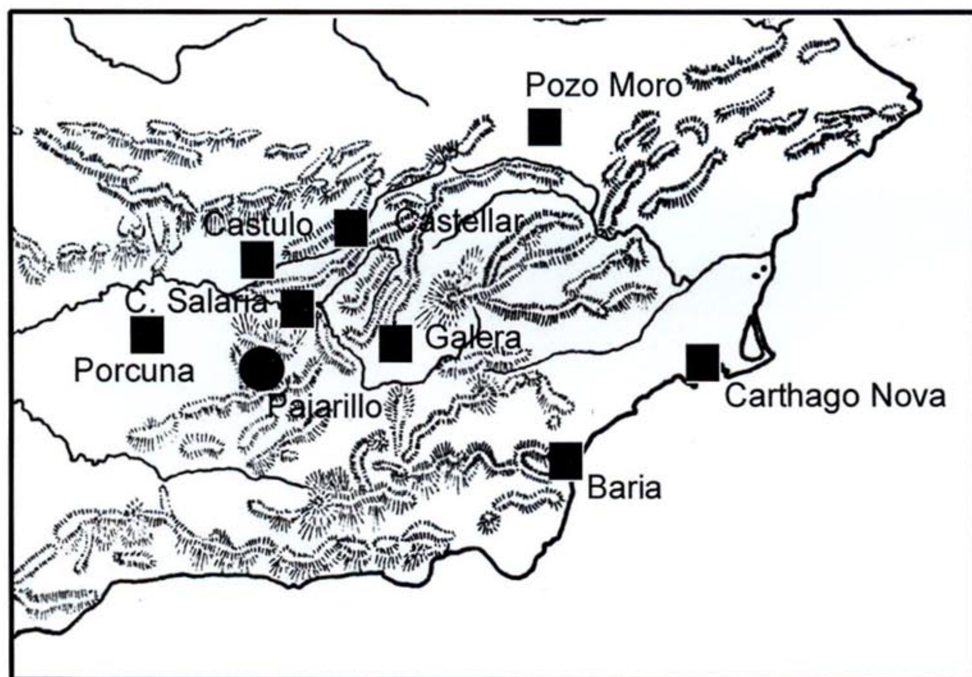


Fig. 4. Main Iberian sites mentioned in the text.

1

2

Fig. 5. 1.- Aerial view of 'El Pajarillo'; 2.- Tower, stairs and front wall of the monument.

north–south and facing west. It was built with medium-sized irregular stones whose flat sides face outwards. The interior spaces were filled with mud or smaller stones. On top of the central part of the wall, a square tower and a stair were found, breaking the pattern of construction. The stones used to build the tower were smaller than those of the wall and not prepared with a dressed outward face, since the surface was originally rendered, as confirmed by the numerous remains of plaster mixed with clay filling. A narrow platform or ledge parallel to the tower and connecting with the stairs allowed entrance from the exterior. Several similar-sized rooms opening off a corridor were constructed in the interior of the walled area to the south of the tower (Figure 6.1).

The sanctuary, dated by the Attic pottery found at all levels of excavation, was erected around 400 BC (Sánchez Fernández 1998). Around 350 BC, a number of circumstances led to the destruction and abandonment of the original Iberian construction work. Sculptures were finally broken and fell on to the lower part of the slope. They were rapidly covered by stones and other building materials that helped to protect them from surface erosion.

Small rural houses dating from the time of the Roman Empire were built on the Iberian ruins, reusing stones collected at the surface. The construction of a bridge in 1933 and

Fig. 6. 1.- Plan of the excavated area; 2.- Distribution of the sculptures. A and B are within the recent stone-burial trench.

the modern agricultural activity mentioned above have finally eliminated any lines of stones on the surface. Only the most solid or most deeply buried structures have remained.

One may deduce from the positions in which the statues were found that they had probably belonged to the tower and the stairs (Figure 6.2). The sculptural group which may be reconstructed from them would have provided, at the top of the tower, a mythological and symbolic scene to match this landscape dominated by rivers and surrounding high mountains (Figure 8).

The lion found during the present excavation was found fallen in the area in front of the entrance-way steps, and the human figure in front of the central part of the tower. Other pieces were also found at the south-west corner of the tower (Figure 7). These included the claws and back legs of a carnivore, part of the body and head of a griffin, the belly and thighs of a naked child, the head of a wolf, and a number of indeterminate fragments. In front of the entrance-way, small fragments belonging to the bodies of animals, the jaws of carnivores, and the nose and chin of a man were found, probably part of the figure unearthed when the trench was dug to bury unwanted rock (see above).

Archaeological work was then directed towards determining the phases of construction and use of the sanctuary, and excavations were undertaken in front of the tower area. A sequence was found that showed evidence of fire during the preparation phase. This burning may have had a ritual character and/or have been used to clear the area of vegetation for easier building. The burnt area was covered with two layers of small pressed stones and limestone on a base of compacted soil. Chemical analysis showed

Fig. 7. Stone sculptures, as found during excavation.

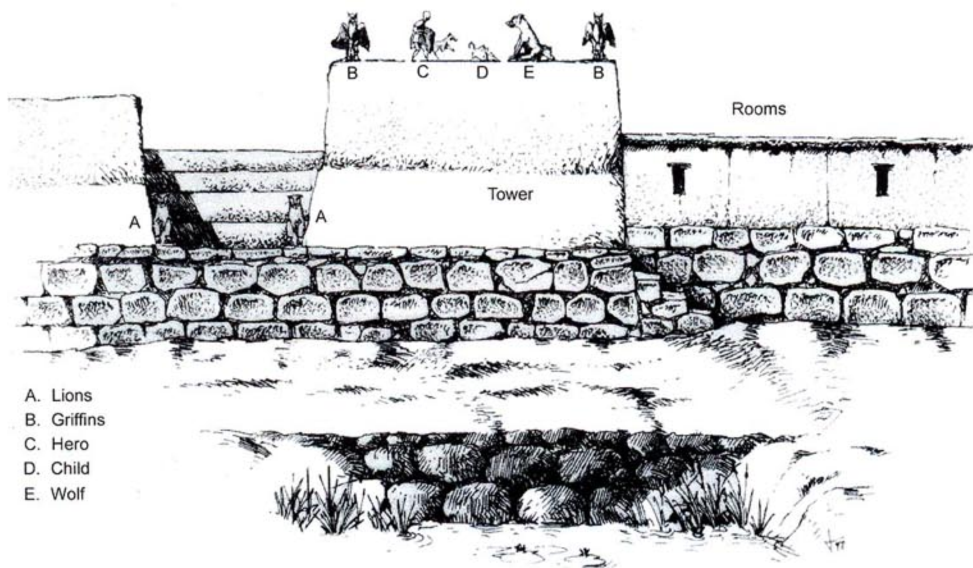


Fig. 8. Proposed reconstruction of the monument.

concentrations of phosphorus and organic material in several areas in front of the entrance-way, showing that this activity was continual in this area (Sánchez Vizcaino and Cañabate 1999).

Outside the sanctuary wall there was a system of terraces. The first of these, at the level of the plain, may be have been designed to provide protection from flooding since pollen studies at the valley floor show evidence of vegetation indicative of shallow-water environments (López García and López Sáez 1996).

The excavations were complemented by an intensive survey of the entire surface of the hill to determine the characteristics and distribution of archaeological features and finds. The area was divided topographically into 342 squares of 10 m^2. A mobile quadrat with sides of 5 m, subdivided into units of 1 m^2 (the final inspection unit employed), was used as an aid. Iberian remains were not found evenly spread over the area but in small concentrations that would appear to indicate dispersed activities around the hill, especially on the northern slope. Many fragments were found at these points, including parts of storage vessels, blowpipes and other remains of metallurgical activities. Studies of Iberian sanctuaries such as that at Castellar de Santisteban (Nicolini et al. 2004) have shown that these contained small, isolated buildings for worship, a model that appears to have been followed at 'El Pajarillo'. There was therefore no important human settlement at this site, only a few houses or constructions devoted to the ritual functions of the sanctuary.

The people who lived temporarily or permanently close to the site made use of a cemetery on a nearby hill to the north of the present road (Figure 3). The surface of this hill, which dominated the Jandulilla floodplain, is very eroded but has not recently been cultivated. The few materials found were all concentrated on the south-east slope, always

in areas with a good view towards (and from) the sanctuary. All were typical of an Iberian necropolis: fragments of painted Iberian, Attic red figure and black glazed pottery, a certain number of Iberian drinking vessels and Greek *kraterae*, remains of *falcatae* (typical short and curved Iberian swords), iron daggers, etc. Their age is coincident with that of the sanctuary, showing that most of the activity in the area was concentrated in the first half of the fourth century BC.

The statues as a group with symbolic meaning

One of the most remarkable features of this sanctuary is the presence of a large group of statues that the archaeological data show were probably erected on top of the tower and on the entrance-way steps, on the south-western perimeter of the site (Figures 5 and 8).

These figures were made in limestone, a characteristic feature of Iberian sculpture, which never had recourse to marble or other, harder substrates. All were carefully made and show the use of certain formal, expressive conventions. The apparent simplicity of their features, judged extremely elegant by today's taste, may have originally had a surface layer of paint, permitting hair and skin tones to be shown. The use of paint was common in such pieces, although it is hardly ever preserved.[3]

The main statues found include:

1) A pair of reclining lions (Figures 9.1–2). Given the position at which they were found, these were probably placed on the stairway leading to the tower entrance. Supporting this hypothesis is the fact that the left side of one and the right side of the other are shaved down, the size of this cut matching the dimensions of the steps. These twin pieces, therefore, would have flanked the way up to the area where religious duties were performed. Unfortunately neither of the heads was recovered; the bodies, however, show great technical quality within their conventional style. The mane is marked by a slight rise in relief above the neck, the ribs by uniform, parallel furrows, and the legs show the standardised musculature. The thick tails fall over the back legs, the claws of which (on the visible side) are thick and sharp. These sculptures, which are 1.20 m long and 0.50 m wide, show a taste for volume that developed in the Iberian world after the beginning of the fourth century BC. Sculptures dating from the previous century show a more schematic character, as can be seen on the sculptural group found at Porcuna (Blázquez and González Navarrete 1985; González Navarrete, 1987) (Figure 11.4).
2) A pair of seated griffins (Figures 9.3–4). All that remains of one of the heads is the back, with the ears and crest intact. This piece probably belongs with the hindquarters and front claws found on a base, with its male condition clearly indicated. When complete, the piece would be about 1m high. The statue shows the characteristic features of griffins – a toothless jaw ending in a hooked bill, and a crest running along the back of the neck. This type of griffin became popular around the beginning of the fourth century BC The nearest parallel can be found on the painting of a stone funerary box belonging to the nearby necropolis of Galera (Granada) (Figure 9.5),

[3] Some recent finds show the important role of painting in the final appearance of the sculptures (Chapa and Olmos 1999).

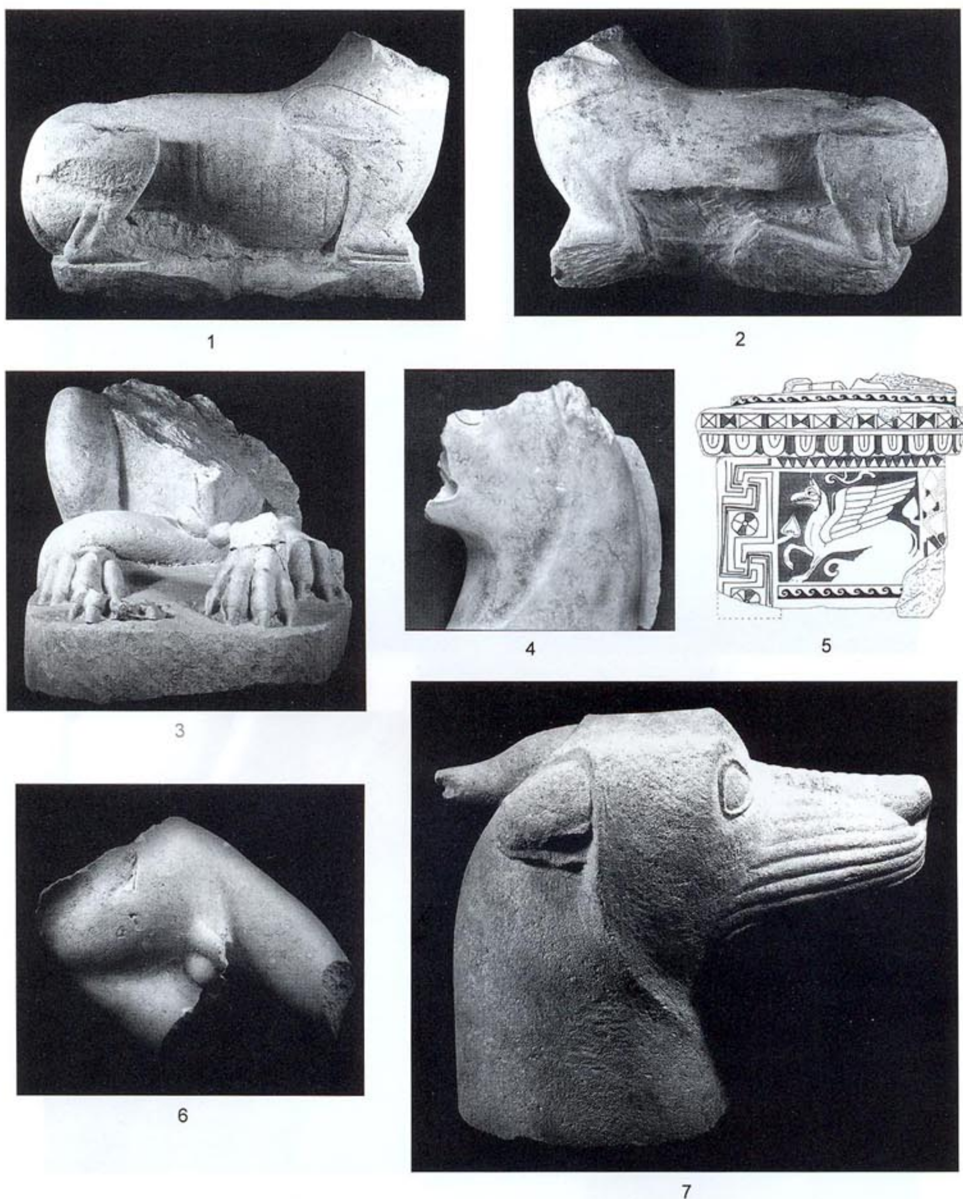


Fig. 9. 1-2: Sculpture of a lion. Note the roughly carved area under the body cut to fit the structure of the stairs; 3-4: Body and head of a griffin; 5: Griffin painted on a funerary box found at Galera, Granada; 6: Part of the body of a child; 7: Head of a wolf.

with the same features and a similar seated position. The present pair might have flanked the main stage area, giving it a supernatural dimension.

3) An armed male figure (Fig. 10). Only the body and upper legs remain, although part of what may have been the face was also found. The body is robust, and is clothed in

1

2

3

4

Fig. 10. Sculpture representing an armed man.

a short tunic with a v-shaped neckline and sleeves pushed up above the elbow. Around the waist is a belt adjusted with straps. A narrow band with crossed ends runs over the chest. The genitals are clearly visible below the tunic if viewed from below, which is very unusual among Iberian human sculptures. The back is covered by a thick cape, held at the right shoulder by a pin or brooch hidden from view by the fabric. Part of the cape is gathered over the left hand, possibly to offer protection against a threat. The right arm is bent to extract a sword – a typical Iberian *falcata* – worn on the belt. The straps holding the weapon have been slipped off, allowing it to slide from its scabbard. This movement would require a slight turning of the wrist which the sculptor captured. The arm muscles were also carefully studied. The position of the

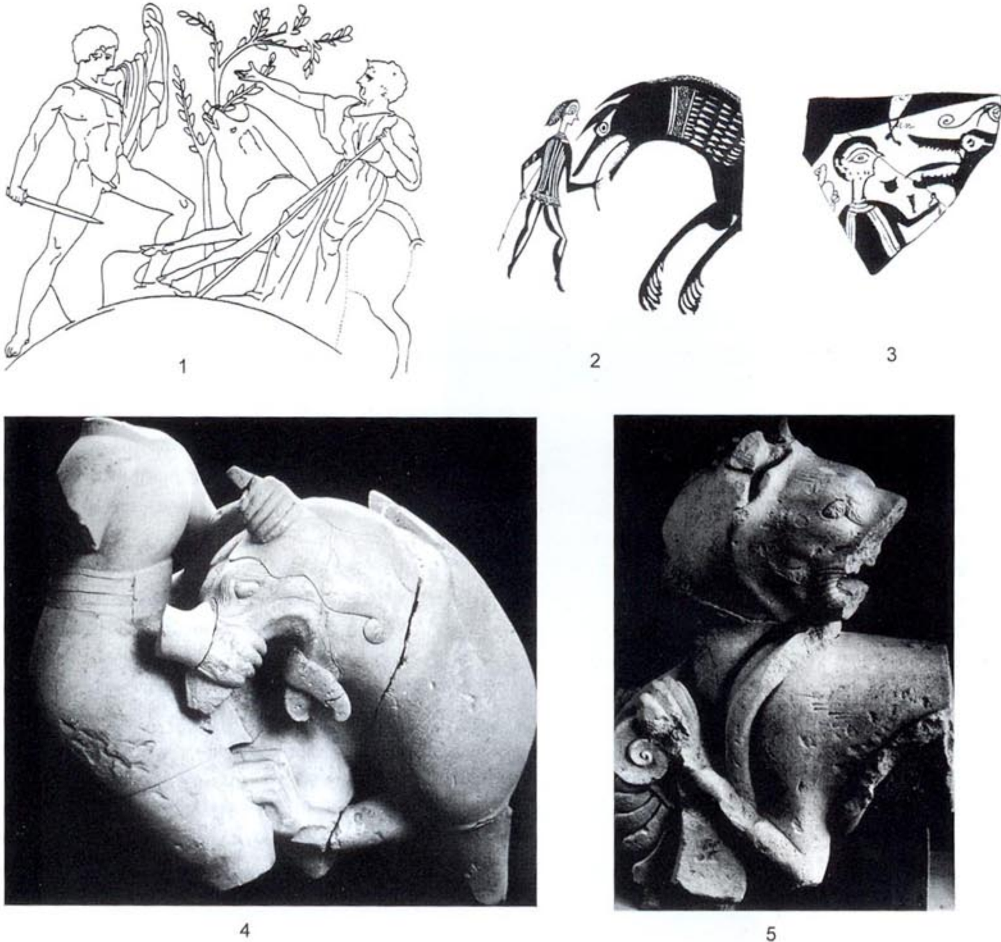


Fig. 11. 1: Theseus fighting with the Kromion boar. Red figure Attic Pottery. National Archaeological Museum of Madrid (Source: Olmos, 1992); 2-3: Young men fighting with wolves. Iberian painted pottery (2: La Alcudia, Alicante; 3: Liria, Valencia); 4: Unarmed man fighting with a griffin. Porcuna (Jaén); 5: Griffin with a palmette and a snake. Porcuna (Jaén) (Source: Jaén Museum)

thighs indicates that the subject was advancing the left leg to gain greater stability. The legs are protected by greaves. The surviving remains of this statue measure 0.96 m, suggesting that the whole piece would have been about 1.60 m in height.

4) The head of a wolf (Figure 9.7). The facial area has a marked forehead that helps to emphasize the features. Although the bottom jaw is missing the mouth is clearly open, showing an exaggerated number of teeth. The canine teeth, which were much larger than the others, have broken off. The muzzle and nose are marked by thick grooves, which give a fearsome, snarling appearance. The frontal area is marked by large eyes and eyelids, and the forehead has a deep furrow running its length, a characteristic feature of carnivore figures. Despite the absence of the body, the large dimensions of the figure are apparent. Using the proportions of real wolves as a guide, the size of the head, 0.5 m from the tip of the nose to the back of the neck, suggests that the full figure would have been some 2 m long – an attempt to exaggerate the power of the animal, turning it into some kind of monster.
5) A reclining young male nude (Figure 9.6). The buttocks, the lower part of the slightly fat stomach, the male organ, one of the thighs and the top of the other are all that remains of this figure. Its small dimensions – the total height would have been about 0.43 m – and the nature of the genitals and stomach suggest the statue is that of a child. The position of the legs indicates an unnatural, forced position, as if the child was being pressed against the floor.

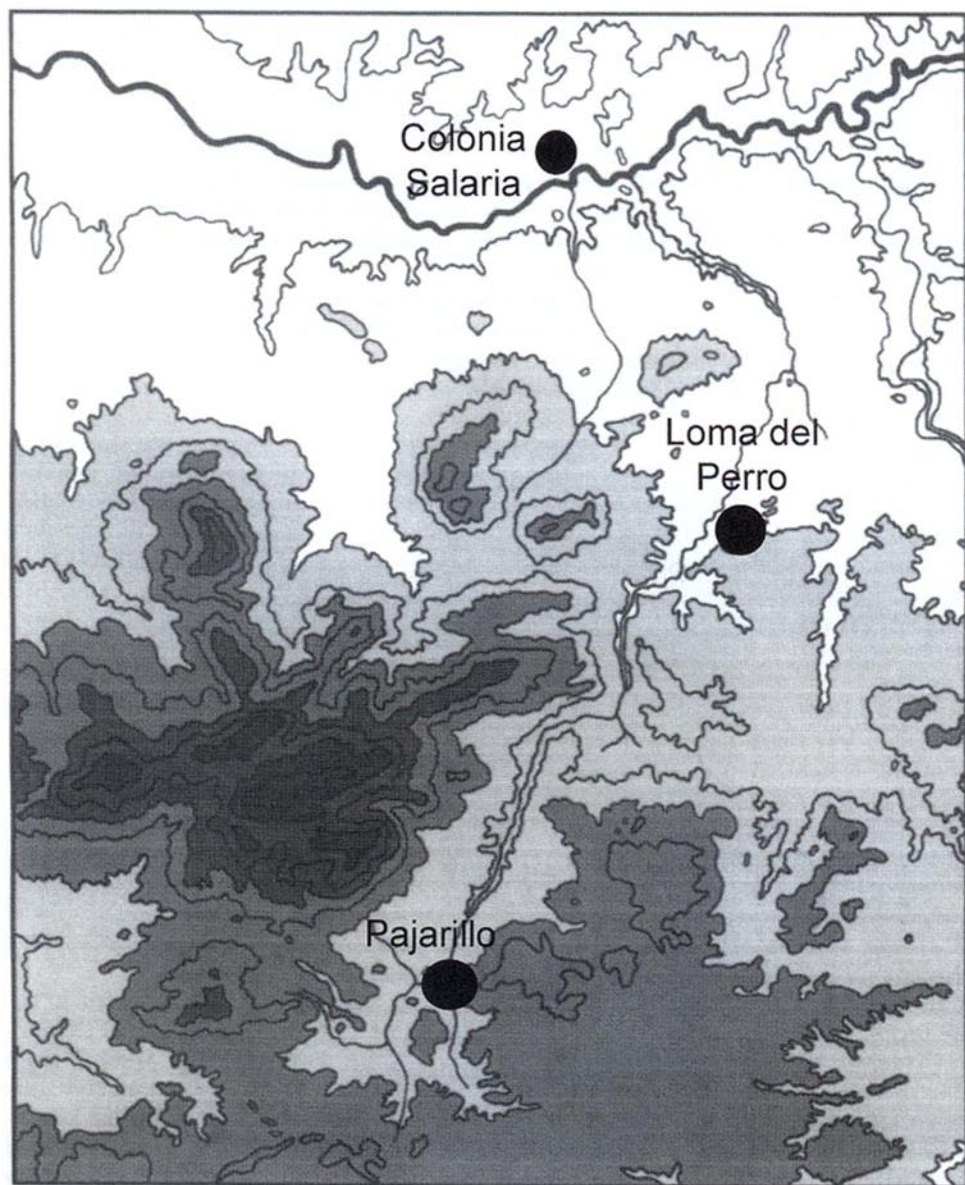
Many other pieces of sculpture were found, but these were too fragmented to be properly identified. Amongst them were small jaws from three or perhaps four other carnivores, as well as parts of their legs, bodies and tails.

To understand the work, it is necessary to differentiate each unit within the sculptural framework to which all belong. The paired animals (lions and griffins) are all in a static pose and placed at strategic positions. The other statues, the wolf, the warrior and the child, played a central role in the sanctuary's iconography, and were almost certainly the main characters in a scene with symbolic meaning.

Iberian iconography normally represented the lion in a recumbent position and facing forwards. The only sign of movement is in the open mouth that shows threatening canine teeth and the tongue draping over the lower jaw. This convention, used throughout the Mediterranean since ancient times, appeared for the first time in the Iberian Peninsula in the monument at Pozo Moro (Albacete, *c*.500 BC), where the lions have the architectural function of cornerstones following a markedly oriental style (Almagro Gorbea 1983) (Figure 2). From this moment onwards many such representations are found, although the styles were adapted to suit new fashions and local tastes (Almagro Gorbea 1999).

Griffins, however, were often represented as the protagonists in violent scenes. At Porcuna (Jaén), this fantastic animal is seen fighting with a man who grasps the animal by its ear and beak. Spinning around, the griffon plunges its claws into the man's thigh (Figure 11.3). This iconographic composition faithfully reflects the battle between the hero and the monster common to many Mediterranean cultures, with the difference that, in this Iberian representation, the man is unarmed (Chapa 1986). This figure, dated to the fifth century BC, and showing elements of style from earlier traditions, is a forerunner of the images discovered at 'El Pajarillo'. However, at the latter site, the story being told shows modifications and the style presents a number of innovations.

The key to the main scene at 'El Pajarillo' is provided by the male figure, whose subtle



0 10km

Fig. 12. Distribution of sites at the Jandulilla valley.

movements attract the attention of the viewer. The strength represented in his body, and the quality and delicacy of his tunic and cape are characteristics of a powerful man. His purposefulness shows him to be astute as well as strong; he is carefully preparing himself for a dangerous encounter. His legs are well separated to provide stability, and are protected against attack by greaves. The cape rolled up in his left hand acts both as a feint and a shield. The *falcata* in his right hand is his offensive weapon. The composition shows the typical position of someone entering combat with a sword or knife against another man or an animal. This last possibility is the more likely, as the man uses his cape and greaves to protect himself, forgoing a helmet, breastplate or a shield, which would be needed when fighting with other men.

It is important to notice that the sculptor has taken an original decision in this work: to represent the moment just prior to the fight, unlike at Porcuna, where combat has already begun. The moment that the monument commemorates freezes the image before confrontation begins, leaving the climax to oral explanation or, perhaps, to the imagination of the viewer.

Therefore, the hero's enemy was probably the wolf, a beast of monstrous size and an impossible foe for most mortals. This combat and its iconography fit surprisingly well with the legends of the Greek world, of which there are many similar images from Greece itself and *Magna Græcia* although they were not generally represented on monumental sculpture. The model or type to which this iconography alludes corresponds to a hero who liberates human societies from an oppressive tyranny, perhaps imposed by another human, but usually by some animal or monster that threatens both people and their belongings.

In the Greek world the hero is usually naked, which contrasts with Iberian tastes, although in the present case the sculptor allows himself the concession of showing the genitals below the tunic, and by so doing brings his work closer to the Greek model. Another element characteristic of Greek sculpture is that the hero attacks the monster sword in hand, protecting the other with his cape. One of the heroes most commonly represented in this pose is *Theseus*; he is seen thus in several battles with monsters but particularly in his battle with the Boar of *Kromion*, a common scene on Attic red figure pottery (Figure 11.1). The hero liberates the territory from the terror of this animal that no one else could destroy (Calame 1990: 213; Schefold 1992). This iconographic model of *Theseus* appears to have its origin in the sculpture of the Tyrannicides who killed Hipparchus and liberated the city of Athens (Bérard 1983: 28).

To understand the role of the child among these statues requires us to examine the Mediterranean legends of the time that gave rise to local worship cults: those of Delphos in Greece and of Temesa in southern Italy (Pausanias VI, 6; Strabo VI, 1, 5; see Visintin 1992). Both involve a large wolf (a man dressed as a wolf in the Temesa legend) that terrorised people's everyday lives. Avoidance of the monster's wrath required that a sacrificial victim be handed over, a young or infant girl or boy. The action takes place in a wild landscape in which there is a river and a spring. This spring, known as Lykas in the Temesa legend, is associated with the monster *Lyka* and its characterization as a wolf. In both legends a liberating hero then arises, Eurybatos in Delphos and Euthymos in Temesa; he battles with the beast and throws him into the water, where he drowns (Lepore and Mele 1983: 853–69). This type of legend is repeated with variations in many other areas (Visintin 1992).

This provides a possible explanation for the scene at 'El Pajarillo', in which we see a

hero, a wolf and a young boy. The site of the sanctuary may also be significant. Delphos and Temesa were both rural areas linked to the mountains, and their legends and indeed their sanctuaries are strongly linked to rivers, springs and water in general. Euthymos of Lokris, the hero of Temesa, was even the son of a river. The 'El Pajarillo' site certainly lies in a wild area and is dominated by the birth and formation of a river valley, and at the times of greatest rainfall the plain surrounding the sanctuary would be flooded.

The absence of Iberian writings prevents our direct understanding of the rich painted and sculpted images this era produced, and recourse to Greek texts concerning other areas of the Mediterranean is not without risk. However, if the sculptures at 'El Pajarillo' had appeared at Temesa or Delphos, there would have been little doubt that they represented a scene of the local hero saving the people from their particular beast.

The historic and economic significance of rural Iberian sanctuaries

The work undertaken at the sanctuary and its immediate surroundings was complemented by an extensive survey along the entire length of the river Jandulilla. The only settlement found that lasted throughout the entire Iberian period was Úbeda la Vieja (the later Roman colony of *Colonia Salaria*), which appears to have exercised control over the valley. It was precisely at the time of the building of the 'El Pajarillo' sanctuary, at the turn of the fifth and fourth centuries BC, that a second settlement appeared about 10 km away along the course of the Jandulilla river in the direction of 'El Pajarillo'. Known as the 'Loma del Perro' this was a smaller village occupying little more than 6 ha, and its presence was directly linked to the fertile agricultural land of the area and the proximity of a second river in the neighbouring Guadiana Menor valley (Figure 12). This site has never been excavated, but its surface features show that the village was walled and that the houses inside were laid out in an orderly way. The Attic pottery found at the site is similar to that at 'El Pajarillo'. Everything would appear to indicate that the Loma del Perro site represents a new settlement founded by people from Úbeda la Vieja, a development that implies a hierarchical segmentation of territory and a process of upstream agricultural colonization.

At the same time, at the narrowest point of the valley and close to the river's source, the sanctuary was built and decorated with statues. Again, this has echoes of the Greek world, and brings to mind the work of Polignac (1984) on the meaning and siting of sanctuaries in Ancient Greece. According to this model, rural sanctuaries dependent on towns were sometimes sited at the limits of the territory, close to rivers, springs, caves or sacred woods. The appearance of Greek rural sanctuaries was linked to agricultural expansion across the plains, which reduced the importance of hunting and animal herding in the mountains. Agriculture and the control and exploitation of the landscape were reinforced, in stark contrast to the surrounding mountains. Extra-urban sanctuaries therefore marked the limit of the humanized territory, and thus could be seen as a symbolic wall, defending those within from the disorder of the world beyond (Polignac 1984: 43–5).

The main justification for the foundation of a sanctuary, however, was the performance of religious rites, the objects of devotion being different divinities or heroes. In Greece, the most venerated gods were Artemis and Apollo, who assisted those undergoing initiation rites, protected wild animals in order to provide food for humans, and were involved in the interaction of the wild and the civilised worlds (Schachter 1992: 50). Hero

cults, on the other hand, were closely related to the changing concept of the city. The great dynasties recognised the values represented by the hero and tried to make them their own, thus affording themselves prestige (Bérard 1982: 97). The justification of their power was therefore based upon an epic hero or other character, perhaps a real or imagined ancestor, whose extraordinary feats had benefited the community. City founders, powerful ancestors, war lords or liberators were all appropriate models for the warrior aristocracy (Snodgrass 1982: 117; Hägg 1999). These elites were therefore especially interested in affording sanctuaries a monumental flavour (Kyrieleis 1993: 152).

The turn of the fifth and fourth centuries BC in the Iberian world was a time of important social change, manifested by the general access of the population to some sort of formal burial and the building of urban and extra-urban places of worship. Large necropolises, where men were commonly buried with their arms, began to appear, and hundreds of offerings of all types were received at sanctuaries. From an economic point of view, this was the period when iron agricultural tools became available, leading to an important intensification of production. At the same time, imported materials such as Attic pottery reached these territories, clearly showing the ease with which long-distance trade was maintained. All this would appear to correspond with a time of population growth accompanied by political and territorial reorganization, a detailed description of which is provided by Ruiz and Molinos (1998).

The siting of 'El Pajarillo' at the head of the valley suggests that this sanctuary was indeed a marker on a territorial frontier, the boundary of the area controlled by Úbeda la Vieja at the other end of the valley, which was undergoing expansion, as shown by the Loma del Perro settlement. The sanctuary would therefore be a symbol of territorial identity for those living within it and for those outside it. River basins are precisely the type of geographical unit that seem to have marked political territories. The geographical diversity offered by its valley sides would provide different economic opportunities and the rivers themselves would afford the possibility of intra- and inter-territorial communication (Chapa et al. 2004).

The legend manifested in the sculptures at 'El Pajarillo' speaks of an undoubtedly Iberian hero who meets a monster in combat and is, presumably, victorious. His victory would have an important impact for the community, which at long last would be free of the beast's tyranny. The 'El Pajarillo' sanctuary also provides proof of the social, economic and ideological changes that occurred in Iberian society at the end of the fifth century BC, including town growth, the colonization of new agricultural lands, and the definition of new political territories.

The study of 'El Pajarillo' has provided a framework within which we can understand both earlier and later Iberian monuments and their iconography. The older and more important Porcuna complex, linked probably with an urban or peri-urban sanctuary, is now better understood as reflecting a similar story with different spatial and temporal coordinates. The man fighting with a griffin – a monster of mythology, unlike the wolf – is placed on a different, supernatural plane, free of a precise historic reference. He is an old and mythological hero. New aristocracies, linked with the development of towns, create their identity through the power of their military victories, but always using old legends as an ideological background, perhaps to minimize the importance of the social changes introduced. We should remember that the Porcuna sculptures were hidden around an old orientalizing necropolis.

The 'El Pajarillo' legend, and the type of hero at its centre, was probably a model for

Iberian men in the following centuries; pottery from the third and second centuries BC often show young men battling huge wolves, as though the original feat were repeated or emulated in rituals or initiation ceremonies (González Alcalde and Chapa 1993) (Figures 11.2–3). A few brooches from Portugal also show a Celtic warrior battling with a large carnivore (Stead and Meeks 1996). The sculptures of 'El Pajarillo' are perhaps the first manifestation – and certainly the most spectacular – of an iconography with many levels of meaning, including the story itself, the symbolism it embodies, and its role in their social and political context.

References

Almagro Gorbea, M. 1983. Pozo Moro. El monumento orientalizante, su contexto socio-cultural y sus paralelos en la arquitectura funeraria ibérica, *Madrider Mitteilungen*, 24, 177–392.

—— 1999. *El Rey-Lobo de La Alcudia de Elche* (Alicante).

——, and Ruiz Zapatero, G. (eds). 1993. *Los Celtas: Hispania y Europa*. (Madrid).

Aubet, M. E. 1993. *The Phoenicians and the West. Politics, Colonies and Trade*. (Cambridge).

Bérard, C. 1982. Recupérer la mort du prince: héroisation et formation de la cité, in G. Gnoli and J. P. Vernant (eds) *La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes* (Paris and Cambridge), pp. 89–105.

—— 1983. Iconographie – Iconologie – Iconologique, *Revue de la Faculté de Lettres*, 4, 5–37.

Blázquez, J. M. and González Navarrete, J. 1985. The Phokaian sculpture of Obulco in southern Spain, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 89, 61–9.

Calame, C. 1990. *Thésée et l'imaginaire athénien. Légende et culte en Grèce antique*. (Lausanne).

Chapa, T. 1986. Influences Phocéennes dans la sculpture Ibèrique, *Parola del Passato*, 104–7, 347–92.

——, and Olmos, R. 1999. El busto de varón de Baza (Granada), una propuesta de lectura, in *El guerrero de Baza* (Granada), pp. 33–40.

——, Mayoral Herrera, V.; Uriarte González, A., and Vicent García, J. 2004. Long-term occupation of the Guadiana Menor river valley (SE Spain): a geoarchaeological study, in H. Dobrzanska, E. Erzsébet Jérem and Th. Kalicki (eds), *The Geoarchaeology of River Valleys*, (Budapest), pp. 9–26.

Croissant, F. 1998. Note sur le style des sculptures de Porcuna, in *Los Iberos, Príncipes de Occidente. Estructuras de poder en la sociedad ibérica* (Barcelona), pp. 283–286.

Cunliffe, B. and Keay, S. (eds). 1995. *Social Complexity and the Development of Towns in Iberia. From the Copper Age to the Second Century AD*, Proceedings of the British Academy 86 (Oxford).

Dominguez Monedero, A. 1983. Los términos 'Iberia' e 'Iberos' en las fuentes greco-latinas: estudio acerca de su origen y ámbito de aplicación, *Lucentum*, II, 203–24.

González Alcalde, J. and Chapa, T. 1993. 'Meterse en la boca del lobo'. Una aproximación a la figura del carnassier en la religión ibérica, *Complutum*, 4, 169–74.

González Navarrete, J. 1987. *Escultura Ibérica de Cerrillo Blanco, Porcuna, Jaén* (Jaén).

Hägg, R. (ed.). 1999. *Ancient Greek Hero Cult*. Proceedings of the Fifth International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult (Stockholm).

Harrison, R. 1988. *Spain at the Dawn of History: Iberians, Phoenicians and Greeks* (New York).

Ibères, 1997. *Les Ibères.* (Barcelona) [exhibition catalogue].

Kyrieleis, H. 1993. The Heraion at Samos, in N. Marinatos and R. Hägg (eds), *Greek Sanctuaries. New Approaches* (London). pp. 125–53.

Lepore, E. and Mele, A. 1983. Pratiche rituali e culti eroici in Magna Grecia in *Modes de Contact et Processus de transformation dans les sociétés antiques* (Pisa, Roma), pp. 847–898.

López García, P. and López Sáez, J. A. 1996. Degradación antropogénica de la vegetación de Sierra Mágina (Jaén) durante el Holoceno reciente, *Nova Acta Cientifica Compostelana (Bioloxia)*, 6, 11–20.

Molinos, M., Chapa, T.; Ruiz, A., and Pereira, J. 1998a. *El santuario heroico del Cerro de 'El Pajarillo' (Huelma, Jaén).* Diputación Provincial, (Jaén).

—— 1998b. El santuario heroico del Cerro de 'El Pajarillo' (Huelma, Jaén), in M. Pearce and M. Tosi (eds) *Papers from the EAA Third Annual Meeting at Ravenna 1997. Volume I: Pre- and Protohistory*. BAR Int. Series 717, (Oxford), pp. 192–7.

Moret, P. 1996. *Les Fortifications Ibériques de la fin de l´Âge du Bronze à la Conquête Romaine,* Collection de la Casa de Velazquez 56 (Madrid).

Nicolini, G. 1974. *The Ancient Spaniards* (London).

——, Rísquez, C., Ruiz, A. and Zafra, N. 2004. *El santuario ibérico de Castellar. Jaén. Investigaciones Arqueológicas 1966–1991,* Arqueología Monografías, Consejería de Cultura de la Junta de Andalucía (Sevilla).

Olmos, R. (Coord.) 1992. *Coloquio sobre Teseo y la Copa de Aison,* Anejos de Archivo Español de Arqueología 12, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Madrid).

Polignac, F. 1984. *La naissance de la cité grecque. Cultes, espace et société VIII–VII siècles avant J.-C.* (Paris).

Quesada, F. 1998. From quality to quantity: wealth, status and prestige in the Iberian Iron Age, in D. Bailey (ed.) *The Archaeology of Value. Essays on Prestige and the Processes of Valuation*. BAR International Series 730 (Oxford), 70–96.

Rouillard, P., Mohen, J. P., and Eluére, C. 1998. *L'ABCdaire des Ibères* (Paris).

Ruiz, A. and Molinos, M. 1998. *The Archaeology of the Iberians* (Cambridge).

Sánchez Fernández, C. 1998. La cerámica ática, in Molinos, M. et al., 1998a, pp. 101–9.

Sánchez Vizcaino, A. and Cañabate, M. L. 1999. Identification of activity areas by soil phosphorus and matter analysis in two rooms of the Iberian sanctuary 'Cerro El Pajarillo', *Geoarchaeology,* 14 (1), 47–62.

Schachter, A. 1982. Policy, cult, and the placing of Greek sanctuaries, in O. Reverdin and B. Grange (eds), *Le Sanctuaire Grec. Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique*, XXXVII (Vandoeuvres, Genève), pp. 1–64.

Schefold, K. 1992. *Gods and Heroes in Late Archaic Greek Art* (Cambridge).

Snodgrass, A. 1982. Les origines du culte des heros dans la Grèce antique, in G. Gnoli and J. P. Vernant (eds), *La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes* (Paris and Cambridge), pp. 107-119.

Stead, I. M. and Meeks, N. D. 1996. The Celtic warrior fibula, *Antiquaries Journal* 76, 1-16.

Visintin, M. 1992. *La vergine e l´eroe. Temesa e la leggenda di Euthymos di Locri* (Bari).