

Cultural Identity in Roman Celtiberia:
The evidence of the images and monuments,
300 BC – AD 100

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ABSTRACT

Cultural Identity in Roman Celtiberia: The evidence of the images and monuments, 300 BC – AD 100

This thesis presents a study of changing constructions and perceptions of cultural identity over the period 300 BC to AD 100 in the region of northern central Spain known in antiquity as Celtiberia. Its primary focus is iconography, with images of male and female figures of particular interest. The iconography is used to map the continuities and discontinuities in a sense of Celtiberian identity, and considers the effect that interaction with non-Celtiberians, including Celts and Iberians but especially with Romans, had on this identity. A theoretical framework in which to study 'cultural identity' is proposed in the *Prolegomena*. After the *Prolegomena*, the thesis is divided into six chapters.

Chapter One, Celtiberia in its Historical and Cultural Context, examines the development of Celtiberian culture and Celtiberian settlements over time, and the changes that occurred after the arrival of Romans. Chapter Two, Metallurgy and Metal Objects, looks at three categories of metal objects (fibulae, *hospitium tesserae*, and armaments) and asks whether the horseman motif, an important iconographic element in this thesis, is emblematic of a 'warrior aristocracy'. Chapter Three, Human and Animal Figures on Painted Pottery, studies the range of human figures found on Celtiberian ceramic vessels, considering the types of scenes and figures that were most popular. Chapter Four, Coins from Pre-Roman and Early Imperial Celtiberia, traces the development of numismatic images in the region. This chapter emphasises the so-called transitional coins, which represent the first time that Celtiberian cities were publicly identified with Roman authority on official media. Chapter Five, Men's Funerary Monuments, returns to critical analysis of the horseman motif, focusing on *stelai* with relief images of male figures on horseback. Chapter Six, Women's Funerary Monuments, examines the most popular visual language for Celtiberian women, the 'funerary banquet,' and places *stelai* bearing this theme in their wider social context.

A concluding section discusses Celtiberian iconography as a whole. It also considers the role that language – Celtiberian and/or Latin – played alongside the images, and whether the phenomena of bilingualism and Latinisation of names bear 'cultural identity' significance.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Journals in the bibliography are abbreviated according to the conventions of *L'Année Philologique*. The abbreviations given here refer to works cited frequently in the thesis.

<i>AEA</i>	<i>Archivo Español de Arqueología</i> (Madrid)
<i>BAR</i>	<i>British Archaeological Reports</i> (Oxford)
<i>BSAA</i>	<i>Boletín del Seminario de Arte y Arqueología</i> (Valladolid)
<i>Cerámicas</i>	Romero Carnicero, F. 1976: <i>Las cerámicas policromas de Numancia</i> (Valladolid)
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (Berlin)
<i>CIVE</i>	Domínguez Arranz, A. 1979: <i>Las cecas ibéricas del Valle del Ebro</i> (Zaragoza)
<i>CNA</i>	<i>Congreso Nacional de Arqueología</i> (Zaragoza)
<i>EJA</i>	<i>European Journal of Archaeology</i> (London)
<i>Fíbulas</i>	Almagro-Gorbea, M. and Torres Ortíz, M. 1999: <i>Las fíbulas de jinete y de caballito</i> (Zaragoza)
<i>HA</i>	<i>Hispania Antiqua</i> (Madrid)
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of European Archaeology</i> (London)
<i>MM</i>	<i>Madrider Mitteilungen</i> (Mainz)
<i>MNE</i>	<i>Memoria Numismático Español</i> (Madrid)
<i>NAH</i>	Villaronga, L. 1979: <i>Numismática Antigua de Hispania</i> (Barcelona)
<i>NH</i>	<i>Numario Hispánico</i> (Madrid)
<i>OJA</i>	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i> (Oxford)
<i>RABM</i>	<i>Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos</i> (Madrid)
<i>RPC</i>	Burnett, A., M. Amandry and P. Pau Ripollès 1992: <i>Roman Provincial Coinage</i> (London and Paris)
<i>Vives</i>	Vives y Escudero, A. 1924-6: <i>La moneda hispánica</i> . 2 vols. (Madrid)
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i> (Bonn)

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Errata

- p. 23 1st full ¶ 5th line: change ‘ritual’ to ‘rituals’; 8th line: change ‘ritual’ to ‘practice’
- p. 24 3rd line from the top: should read ‘the general term used for zones...’
- p. 40 1st ¶ 4th line: Delete ‘It,’ remove square brackets, capitalise ‘metallurgical’
- p. 48 2nd ¶ under 3. *The rider*, 1st line: change ‘comes’ to ‘came’
- p. 52 2nd full ¶ last line: delete comma after ‘importance’
- p. 55 last ¶ 2nd line: delete ‘has been’
- p. 62 1st full ¶ 1st line: delete apostrophe from ‘weapons’ technology’
- p. 70 1st ¶ 7th line: change ‘Numantia’ to ‘Numancia’
- p. 94 2nd ¶ under heading *Archaeological context*, 3rd line: change ‘the city’ to ‘Numancia’
- p. 98 1st full ¶ 1st line: should read ‘A scene that is probably of religious meaning occurs on...’;
1st full ¶ 4th line: change ‘practice’ to ‘practiced’
- p. 104 1st ¶ 8th line: change ‘Celtiberians’ to singular
- p. 107 1st full ¶ 10th line: delete ‘from’
- p. 111 3rd ¶ 8th line: delete ‘as minting activity suggests’
- p. 114 2nd ¶ 1st line: delete ‘Bilbilis’; 3rd ¶ 1st line: should read ‘the town of Osca’
- p. 149 6th line from the top: insert ‘by Abásolo’ before ‘La Escuela Noble de Lara’
- p. 152 3rd line from the top: change ‘names’ to ‘name’
- p. 153 4th line of the inscription: change *Elavus* to *Elavi*
- p. 165 1st ¶ 5th line: delete ‘not’
- p. 167 lines 4 – 6: lists of authors should be in alphabetical order
- p. 168 3rd ¶ 2nd line: delete ‘then’
- p. 175 1st ¶ 12th line: change ‘demonstrates’ to ‘demonstrate’
- p. 185 1st ¶ 6th line: change ‘Optatia’ to ‘Optatila’
- p. 191 last ¶ 1st line: change ‘Roman’ to ‘Latin’
- p. 196 3rd ¶ penultimate line: change ‘emphasis’ to ‘emphasise’
- p. 197 last ¶ 3rd line: delete ‘is’
- p. 201 1st ¶ 4th line: change ‘is’ to ‘as’

PROLEGOMENA

In the year 25, during the reign of Tiberius, the *praetor* of the province of Tarraconensis was assassinated. Tacitus reports:

Isdem consulibus facinus atrox in citeriore Hispania admissum a quodam agresti nationis Termestinae. Is praetorem provinciae L. Pisonem, pace incuriosum, ex improviso in itinere adortus uno vulnere in mortem adfecit; ac pernicitate equi profugus, postquam saltuosos locos attigerat, dimisso equo per derupta et avia sequentis frustratus est. Neque diu fefellit: nam presso ductoque per proximos pagos equo, cuius foret cognitum. Et repertus cum tormentis edere conscios adigeretur, voce magna sermone patrio frustra se interrogari clamitavit: adsisterent socii ac spectarent; nullam vim tantam doloris fore, ut veritatem eliceret. Idemque cum postero ad quaestionem retraheretur, eo nisu proripuit se custodibus saxoque caput adflixit, ut statim exanimaretur. (*Annales* 4.45)

Under the same consuls, a terrible crime was committed in *Hispania Citerior* by a peasant of the Termestine tribe. Suddenly attacking the praetor of the province, Lucius Piso, as he was travelling in peace, the peasant killed him with a single wound. He then fled on a swift horse, and reached wooded countryside, where he parted with his steed and eluded pursuit amid rocky and pathless wilds. But he was soon discovered. His horse was caught and led through the neighbouring villages, and its owner ascertained. He was tortured in order that he might reveal his accomplices, (but) he shouted in a loud voice, in the language of his country, that it was in vain to question him. His comrades might stand by and look on, but the most intense agony would not wring the truth from him. Next day, when he was dragged back to torture, he broke loose from his guards and dashed his head against a stone with such violence that he instantly fell dead.

Piso was murdered in the province of Tarraconensis and his assassin hailed from the Termestinae, a Celtiberian clan whose main town was Tiermes, near Numancia. This is the last episode of Celtiberian resistance to Roman rule attested in Latin literature. By AD 25, the region had been under Roman administration for some 243 years, and Roman *coloniae* and *municipia* had been in place for a century. Piso's murder underscores the difficulties faced by Rome in northern Spain, lending credence to Livy's comment that while *Hispania* was the first mainland province to be entered by Romans, it was the last to be completely subdued (Livy 28.12.1).

Tacitus's account reveals more than just the political instability of the interior region of an Iberian *provincia*. Close analysis of the account gives insight into how the author, and probably many of his élite Roman peers, perceived and identified the inhabitants of Celtiberia. The act is described as a *facinus atrox* – a terrible, frightful, or atrocious crime or outrage. Its perpetrator is an *agrestis*, a word for peasant or 'rustic' that connotes boorishness and lack of civilisation. This *agrestis* is associated with the *nationis Termestinae* – the people or tribe called Termestinae. This association categorises the assassin as non-Roman, indigenous, and incomprehensible.

The literary portrayal of Piso's assassin articulates and reinforces several stereotypes about the Celtiberian region of Tarraconensis and its inhabitants. The uncivilised *agrestis* is strong enough that he kills Piso with one blow (*adortus uno vulnere in mortem adfecit*). He escapes on horseback, in keeping with the widely held image of Celtiberians as excellent horsemen and equestrian warriors. The country is wild (*saltuosos locos*), and impenetrable for the search party: they must trawl through villages, unaccustomed as they are to the woods, for information on his whereabouts. The assassin is identified through his horse, underscoring the close link between Celtiberian and horse. Finally apprehended, on the way to torture, the *agrestis* shouts in the language of his country (*voce magna sermone patrio*) that he will not betray his accomplices (*socii*). He plays the Noble Savage – violently taking his own life (*saxoque caput adflixit ut statim exanimaretur*) rather than enduring further torture and execution. In suicide, he marks himself the standard-bearer of *devotio Iberica*, the legendary fidelity of Iberian warriors.

Tacitus's passage illuminates how one group of non-Celtiberians – educated and highly-ranked Romans – identified and characterised the Celtiberians. The array of stereotypes they employed was often applied to so-called barbarians from other parts of the Empire: wild countries inhabited by uncivilised men and women possessing brute strength and demonstrating self-destructive loyalty to comrades and chiefs. These ancient identity labels so profoundly affected outsiders' perception of the Celtiberians that they recur even in the 20th century, in otherwise sophisticated studies of Celtiberians.¹

My primary concern is not with the refutation of outmoded stereotypes of Celtiberians, though in the course of this study, some of them need to be addressed. The main questions posed by this study are: How did the Celtiberians perceive themselves? What evidence do we have for how they – not the Roman writers, colonists, or authorities – constructed cultural and social cohesion? How were artefactual and visual media used to construct key aspects of their identity?

This thesis examines Celtiberian cultural identity during the period 300 BC – AD 100. In this four hundred-year span, the region of northern-central Iberia, in which the so-called *Celtiberi* lived, was enrolled as a Roman *provincia* (218 BC) (Livy 21.17.1), embroiled in long wars with Roman armed forces (153-133 BC), and used as a battle ground for competing sides in the Civil War (49-45 BC) and the imperial crisis of AD 68/69. It was also during this period that Celtiberian society underwent significant changes: densely-populated cities replaced rural villages, local men turned from farming to mercenary fighting, the old clan structure was eroded, and Celtiberian élites took up Latinised names, set up Roman-style commemorative monuments, and became Roman citizens. Throughout this time, Celtiberians produced and used fibulae, decorated armaments, painted pots, coins, and stone funerary sculptures. It is my contention that this body of evidence gives insight to the mentalities and value system of the people that used them. Objects and images have been studied this way in the context of Iron Age Western Europe, Archaic Greece, and Rome, resulting in new perspectives on the culturally symbolic significance of the material record. These studies recognise the images and monuments as parts of an enlarged cultural history of the ancient world – ‘powerful expressive components of their own time, with distinct agendas, [which] actively shape our understanding of whole areas of ancient culture [...]’ (Smith 2002, 62). (Cf. Dietler 1995; Wells 1995; Whitley 2001, 195-230.)

Visual language is an important means of communication for societies, a theme developed by Hodder (1982; 1989) and others (Dietler and Herbich 1998; Shennan 1989). Since most Celtiberian-speaking tribes did not write words until the 2nd or 1st century BC, and then only rarely and at outsiders’ instigation, images are our best source of information about how the people we call Celtiberians saw themselves. Material culture may express ideologies, but objects are not static reflectors of identity. In the case of one particular image – the horse-riding, male figure – group and individual identities were changed by the proliferation of objects bearing that image (Chapters 2, 4, 5).

Celtiberia is an interesting region for a study of cultural identity because of its position between two discrete cultural zones. To the north and west were Asturians, Galicians, and other tribes with strong linguistic and social links to Celtic peoples of Gaul and the British Isles. Generally speaking, these people resisted Roman rule and remained largely ‘unRomanised’ long after other Iberian peoples had adopted the Latin language and Roman ‘ways of life’. To the south and east of Celtiberia, Romans and Romanised Iberians participated in a variety of Mediterranean practices. Celtiberians were aware of a wide range of cultural and social practices;

¹ Cf. Curchin 1991 (162-4) on *fides* or *devotio Iberica*; García Moreno 1988 and Mangas 1986 on the stubbornness and pride of Celtiberians; Camón Aznar 1954 (803) on Celtiberian sculpture as markers of

their multifaceted identity, constructed through negotiation with ‘foreign’ elements, is easily accessed via their visual culture.

The cultural dynamism of the Celtiberian region explains its popularity as a subject for historical and archaeological works. In the twenty-six years since the end of the Franco régime (and, therefore, the end of Franco’s almost total control of academia [Díaz-Andreu 1993]), Spanish scholars have produced hundreds of books and articles on various aspects of Celtiberia. Three symposia on the Celtiberians, held in 1986, 1988, and 1991, generated over 100 papers on the architecture, art, battle tactics, burial practices, religious beliefs, mythology, and clan structure of the people of Celtiberia. Two comprehensive books on the Celtiberians, both entitled, *Los Celtíberos*, were published in 1997 and 1998 (cf. Lorrio and Burillo Mozota, respectively). The rate of publication of journal articles on Celtiberia is accelerating. Although much of this scholarship studiously avoids the ‘Noble Savage’ stereotypes, there is still a belief that Celtiberians are the patriots *par excellence* of ancient Iberia – exemplars of independence and resistance to Roman rule.² The Roman siege of the Celtiberian town of Numancia and the mass suicide of the Numantines continue to be exalted as a heroic act of nationalism, a legacy of 19th century romanticism that sought to establish a glorious past for Spain (Díaz-Andreu 1996, 57; Zapatero 1996, 180).

Why another study now, given the considerable body of work on Celtiberia? As Simon Keay observes, ‘Much of the great data explosion in Spanish and Portuguese archaeology during the 1980s and 1990s consists of little more than the accumulation of data for its own sake. The new discoveries regularly reported in periodic journals [...] have little, if any, impact upon the “national” histories of Roman Iberia’ (Keay 1997, 193). One question rarely asked of the Celtiberian material evidence is: what does it reveal about cultural identity in the context of great social change?³ It is clear that shields and weapons were important to Celtiberian men, vases were painted with abstract figures, and both ‘Iberian’ and ‘Celtic’ artistic and social practices influenced the Celtiberian visual vocabulary.⁴ Little discussed is what all of this says about the culture and social structures with which Celtiberians identified even as Roman ways flooded their society. This thesis writes a visual history of the Celtiberians.

innate bellicosity; Bouchier 1914 (62) on Celtiberians’ joy in dying on the battlefield.

² The so-called Noble Savage is a discursive construct invented in 1609 by Marc Lescarbot, a French lawyer-ethnographer, as a concept in comparative law (and not, as long believed, in the mid-18th century by Jean-Jacques Rousseau). The term was resurrected in 1859 by John Crawfurd, later the president of the Ethnological Society of London, and was thereafter applied to a mythic personification of natural goodness and romanticised savagery. (Ellingson 2001, xv, 1.)

³ Works by Ricardo Olmos Romera are notable exceptions (1986; 1992a; 1992b).

⁴ Álvarez Gracia *et al.* 1990 on weapons; García-Soto Mateos & de La-Rosa Muncio 1990 on painted ceramic vessels; Celtic and Iberian elements: Lenerz-de Wilde 1995; Marco Simón 2001.

Conceptualising cultural identity

'Culture' and 'ethnicity' are sometimes used interchangeably (Barth 1969, Patterson 1977), but I want to differentiate between them in this study. Ethnicity often connotes race, or a racial group whose members are linked by biology. The term can also be associated with social practices, but it should in no way be assumed to represent shared physical traits. Culture connotes the way of life of a society or group, their distinctive customs, products, practices, and outlook. Cultural identity refers to affinity for, or adherence to, that way of life. Members of a group that share cultural identity may not share ethnicity or ethnic identity.

Cultural identity is not a one-sided phenomenon: its existence depends on Self-Other opposition (Chapman *et al.* 1989; Cohen 1978; Ringer and Lawless 1989; Shennan 1989). The ancient Greek world-view utilised specific terminology to categorise groups of 'others' considered linguistically or politically different. A group of Greek speakers who were classified by city (*πόλις*) separated themselves from all non-Greek speakers who were classified by 'nation' and related to each other through biology, or *ethnos*. The word *ethnos* was used by the Greeks to name groups of animals and non-Greek people, while *demos* was reserved exclusively for the Greek population of free men and women. Similar to the Greeks' use of *polis*, the Romans used *civitas* to refer to the Roman community life. Romans also introduced words that represented conquered civilisations: *gentes* and especially *nationes*, referred to particular socio-political factions, either territories with human and animal populations, or groups sharing a common 'birth' and biological kinship links, or a combination of these elements.

In developing theoretical analyses of cultural identity, Paul Graves-Brown, Sian Jones and Clive Gamble argue that there is no one-to-one correlation between language, culture and ethnicity, and that group identity is, moreover, historically contingent (Graves-Brown, Jones and Gamble 1996, 7). Similarly, Marie Louise Stig Sørensen emphasises 'socially constructed identity' as the key to understanding how people are categorised irrespective of their multiple, personal identities. '[Identity] refers to the characteristics of an individual or group that are assigned and assumed by the group and others as a result of perceived differences from and similarities to others. These identities are created and assigned *qualities*, which result in both cohesion and separation, and material culture is employed in a variety of ways to express them' (Sørensen 1997, 94). Implicit in both theories of identity is the tendency of humans to observe and categorise each other, recalling words or phrases to place others in groups according to dress, age, sex, accent, and gestures.

We do not know what words or phrases Celtiberians used to differentiate themselves from non-Celtiberians. In any case, the names 'Celt' and 'Celtiberian' come to us through Greek

and Latin writings, not from the people thus designated. As Peter Wells observes in a study of ‘Celtic’ and ‘Germanic’ identity, ‘there is every reason to think that they did not have any such names, nor any conception that they all belonged to a common people’ (Wells 1995, 170; see also Markey 1986). Nor do we have first-hand testimonials from Celtiberian men and women discussing cultural identity. For some scholars this lack of written evidence eliminates the possibility of understanding how Celtiberians felt about their behavioural norms, customs, and social practices, and what negotiations they made (willingly or not) when non-Celtiberian practices entered the region. However, this is where the material record *can* be of use, especially in the case of objects with human and animal figures. The way in which figures are represented – their dress, activities, artistic conception – gives insight to the roles of men and women and to the significance of certain animals.

There was no universal Celtiberian attitude to Rome, or to Romans. Lucius Piso’s assassin may have represented a small minority of indigenous resisters, or a silent majority of Celtiberians dissatisfied with Roman administration. But his action did not represent the way in which every Celtiberian felt about Rome, because by AD 25 many of them had Latinised names, chose to live in *coloniae* and *civitates*, and had adopted Roman ways of life. Similarly, there was no monolithic Celtiberian culture. In the pre-Roman period, the tribes of the Celtiberian region were stratified by clan, ruled by chieftains, and shared religious rituals. But there were differences in economic practices (some tribes were primarily dependent on cultivation, some on livestock, others on trade), urban sophistication (the Arevaci built large towns before Roman-style urban dynamism came in; the Celtiberians in Soria preferred small villages of under 100 people), and artistic themes.

In the larger of the Celtiberian settlements there was a hierarchy that distinguished chieftains and horse-owners (and their families) from farmers and labourers. Metallurgy introduced several levels of jobs (mining, smelting, crafting, decorating, trading), which had the effect of separating out poor from rich from middle class (chapter 2). There were a variety of measures whereby status was determined and advertised. Literacy was one measure (chapters 2 and 4); possession and display of precious metal adornments or weapons (chapter 2), and occupation of a large house or dedication of a *stela* (chapters 5 and 6) constituted others. These are markers of class and measures of status, but they relate to cultural identity because some cultural practices were not observed universally, most obviously those that required access to resources or power. The nature of the evidence is such that it rarely allows us access to anything other than elite or official views. A distinctive cultural identity of the lower levels is untraceable.

Human identity is not just about ethnicity, polity or culture. There are personal and social aspects of identity that are equally important: who an individual is, of which group or groups he is a member, what roles she performs, and what status the individual occupies within society. For most people most of the time, these are the important issues of identity, simply because humans interact primarily with others of their own society and do not need to think of themselves as broad national categories. If asked, 'What are you?' issues of ethnic or political identity are not necessarily always at the top of a person's priorities (Williams 2002, 1). To take the example of one figure in the ancient world, Paul of Tarsus was a Pharisee, a Roman citizen, a leading member of the early Christian movement, and a tent-maker. From his words in the Book of Acts, it is clear that he emphasised different aspects of his complex, ever-changing identity in different contexts. He was not unique. Anyone who ventured out of her village into a new linguistic or religious ambit will have made identity decisions similar to those of Paul (Williams 2002).

In analysing the visual language of Celtiberia, I approach cultural identity in several ways, seeking signs of gender, age, and occupation as well as class, culture group, and location. But in many cases it is only the latter three that are discernible. It is left to us to remember that these are merely subsets of the range of different kinds of collectivities with reference to which people in and on the edge of the Roman world might have described themselves.

It is tempting to conclude that there was a multiplicity of Celtiberian cultural identities and to leave it at that, removing the need to articulate a precise definition. But the material record documents regularly associated activities among Celtiberians over time and space. Some of these were portrayed on objects; these will be my focus. Not every Celtiberian adhered to or observed every component of the culture 'complex,' but there was enough regional cohesion with respect to language, burial practice, social structure, pottery types, housing forms and weapon shapes in order to ascribe loosely to the people of Celtiberia one cultural identity. This is not to suggest that Celtiberian cultural identity was static; it was not. Some objects document cultural continuity (in the sense of staying the same over time), but others demonstrate innovative adaptations and changes. Particularly in light of the great changes underway in Celtiberia during the period embraced by this study, it is salutary to keep in mind that cultural identity is a situational construct, not a permanent aspect of people's lives (Barth 1969). In circumstances in which significant political and social changes are taking place, identities are often in a state of flux (DeVos and Romanucci-Ross 1982).

In using the phrase 'Celtiberian cultural identity' and encompassing all Celtiberians within it, I necessarily overlook internal heterogeneity. In many instances, Celtiberians possess social and cultural similarities across boundaries but exhibit variation among themselves. Here it

is helpful to invoke Edward Said's concept of 'discrepant experience', which asserts that different people experience the human condition in different ways (Said 1993, 35-50). In the case of the Napoleonic conquest of Egypt, for example, Said argues that the viewpoint of a Frenchman instrumental in the dominating will be different from that of an Egyptian being dominated (Said 1993, 37-9). Thus 'experience' of Roman political and cultural conquest was not a fixed truth; it was a personal perception (Fincham 2002, 1). Accordingly, I discuss a comprehensive Celtiberian cultural identity that allows for variations on the individual level.

Applying theories of cultural identity to material culture

A study devoted to material culture and cultural identity raises a number of theoretical questions. How can objects be used to study ancient peoples, let alone something as subtle as their sense of identity? What are the limitations of objects as documents of identity? Is it ever really clear where the line should be drawn between 'indigenous' and 'foreign' 'ethnicities' or 'cultures'? In a region that became a province of the Roman Empire, how much of an impact did imperialism have on indigenous self-perception?

Recent theoretical studies offer a number of approaches to these questions. In associating categories of material evidence with a particular people and making comments about the motives behind production and consumption, I draw on ideas formulated by several scholars working with the relationship between material culture and identity (among them: Shennan 1989; Williams 2002; Williamson 1999). I acknowledge the contributions made by V. Gordon Childe in developing the theory that objects help to identify cultural and ethnic groups (Childe 1925; 1958). His works on European prehistory used bronze and other metal objects to prove that 'barbarian societies in Europe behaved in a distinctively European way, foreshadowing [...] the contrast with African and Asiatic societies that has become manifest in the last thousand years' (Childe 1958, 9). For Childe, an archaeological culture was an abstract concept identified by 'certain types of remains [...] pots, implements, ornaments, burial rites, house forms [...] constantly recurring together' (Childe 1925, v-vi). But there are problems with Childe's conceptualisation of artefacts 'through functionalism and a normative concept of culture' (Hides 1996, 27). Moreover, I take cautiously Ian Hodder's conclusion that all objects, including prehistoric artefacts, were manipulated in the negotiation of age, gender and ethnicity identities (Hodder 1982, 185). As Shaun Hides points out, 'Most archaeological theories of cultural identity [...] attempt to place their conceptual definition beyond historical determination; [they see] the relationship between artefacts and identity [as] an intrinsic property of the artefacts themselves' (Hides 1996, 27).

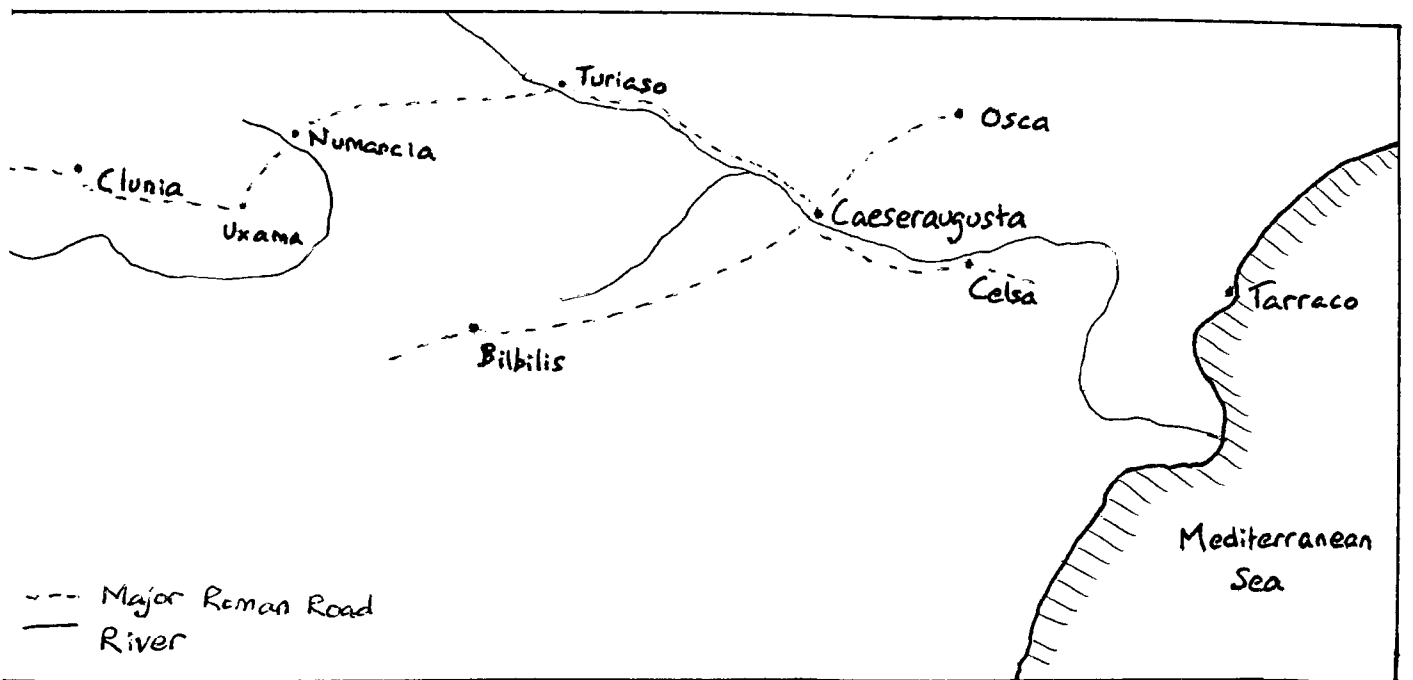
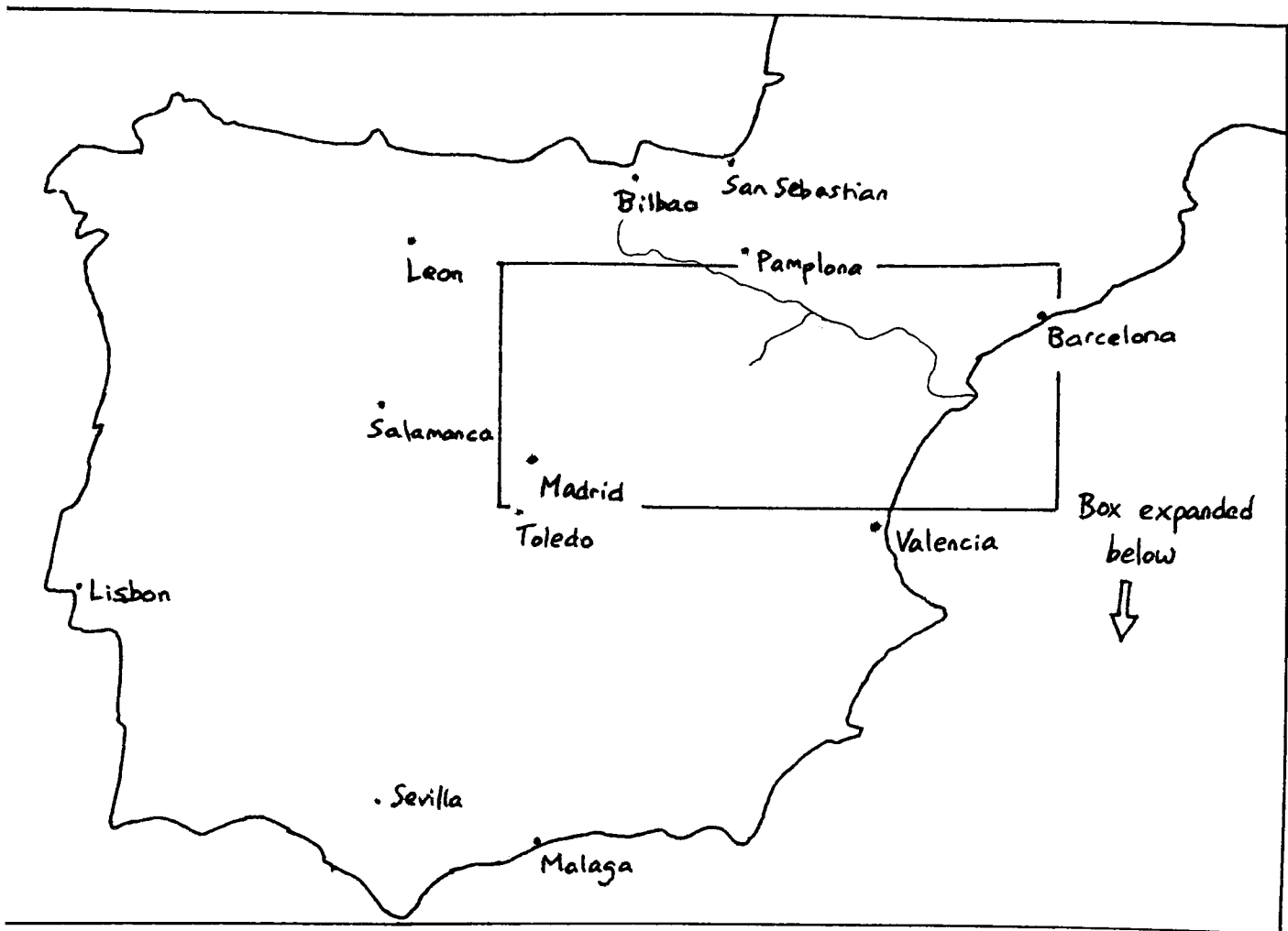
Criticisms of the ‘culture-history’ paradigm notwithstanding, a great body of work demonstrates how material culture *can* be helpfully scrutinised for markers of gender, class, religious beliefs, and cultural identity. Duncan Brown’s article ‘Class and Rubbish’ interprets discarded objects from the medieval English port of Southampton as markers of social status or class in the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries (1999, 151). Sørensen (1997) analyses the construction of social categories and identities in Bronze Age Europe through dress and personal adornments. Wells (1995) assesses critically the labels ‘Celt’ and ‘German’ through the theme ‘material-culture-as-communication.’ In the area of images, Robin Osborne’s studies of Greek art demonstrate how the visual vocabulary associated with objects produced during the Archaic and Classical Periods reveal information about Greek cultural mentalities, gender ideals, and sexuality (Osborne 1998). Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Trinidad Tortosa, meanwhile, explore the interplay between gender identity and the artistic representation of gendered human bodies in Iberian societies (Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa 1999).

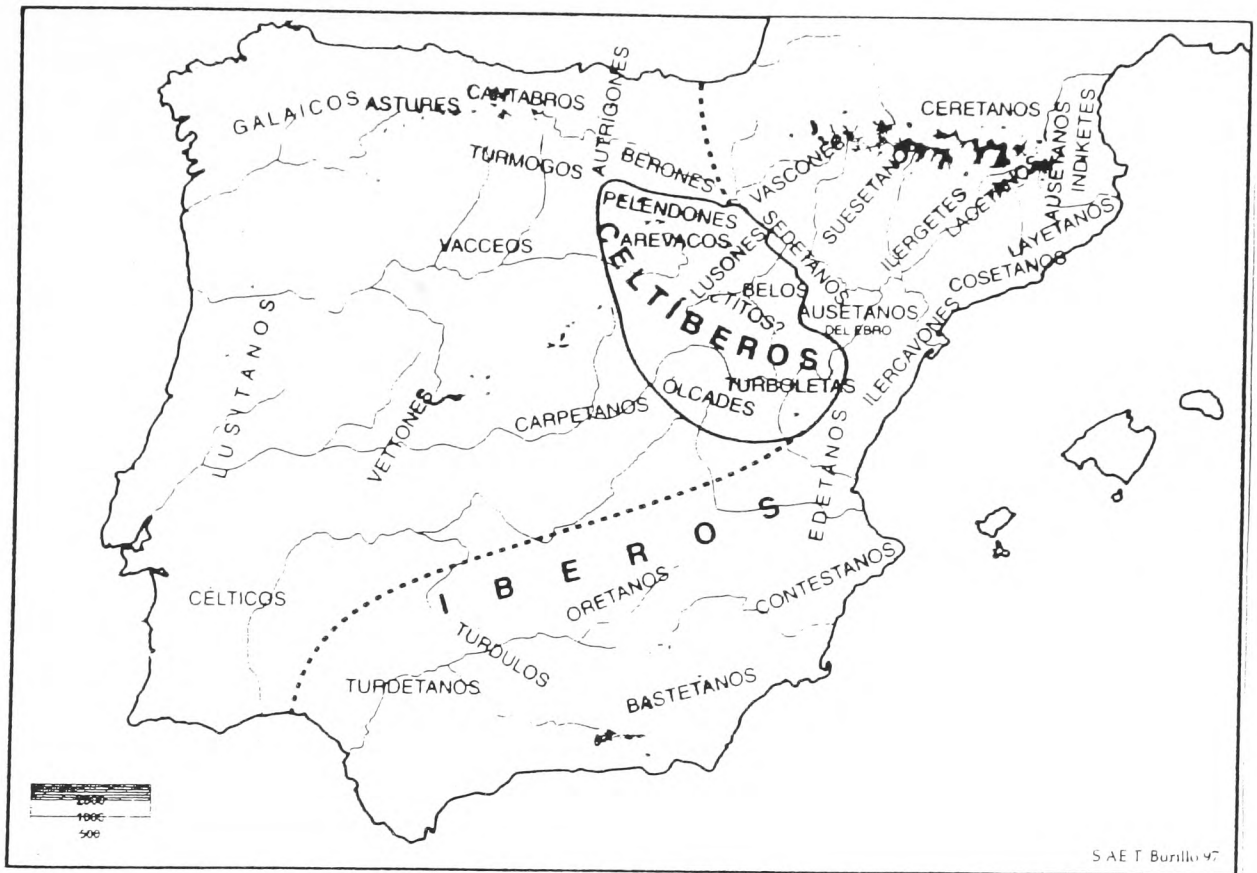
Theories about ethnic and cultural identity are also important. The boundaries between ethnicities and culture groups were, Michael Parker Pearson writes, ‘fluid and variable’ (1995, 206). This refutes the assumption of Childe, Binford (1962; 1972), and others that ‘bounded material culture complexes [are] the material manifestation of past peoples, who shared a set of prescriptive learned norms of behaviour’ (Jones 1996, 65). To this end, the present study uses a methodological framework in which concepts of identity are socially constructed, and cultures are open-ended rather than bounded (Díaz-Andreu 1998; Jones 1996, 63; Williamson 1999, 11).

Finally, there are the questions of what ‘Romanisation’ means, what impact Roman ways of life had on Celtiberia, and whether it was possible to be Celtiberian *and* Roman. I consider the possibilities raised by research, particularly critical assessments of post-colonialism and imperialism, of the effects that administrative divisions and external constructions of identity can have upon cultural identity (Alcock 1997; Alcock *et al.* 2001; Millett 1991; Webster and Cooper 1996; Woolf 1994, 1995, 1998, 2001). Included in this line of research is how the growth and reconfiguration of cities in Roman provinces led to cultural change (Isserlin 1998; Keay 1997; Marín Díaz 1987).

In any study of material culture it is important to examine the society and historical circumstances in which it was produced and consumed. The first chapter is devoted to the social setting of the material evidence. It discusses the geography and landscape of Celtiberia and the relationship between climate and character in Græco-Latin literature. It also summarises the history of Celtiberia in the years leading up to the arrival of Rome, and the impact on the region of Roman soldiers, traders, and settlers, and Latin-speaking, togate Iberians.

Chapters 2 through 6 discuss the main categories of image-bearing objects in a broad chronological sequence. Chapter 2 discusses metal objects produced in the 4th – 2nd centuries BC. Chapter 3 examines painted ceramic vessels dated to the 3rd – 1st centuries BC. Chapter 4 studies the '*jinete*', or horseman, coins that were minted from the early 2nd century BC through the early 1st century AD. Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted to men's and women's funerary *stelai*, respectively, most of them dated from the late 1st century BC to the early-2nd century AD. The final chapter brings together the evidence and draws conclusions about material culture and Celtiberian cultural identity, and what the thesis has accomplished.





Map 1: Map of the Iberian Peninsula divided by tribal groupings, c. early 2nd century BC.
 (Source: A.J. Lorrio 1997)

I. Geography and Græco-Latin literary representations

Since antiquity, the term ‘Celtiberia’ has been used as an ethnic signifier, a regional name, to term a linguistic category, and an artistic style. Some scholars consider the Celtiberians to have been southern cousins of Gallic or Germanic Celts and direct heirs of their traditions (Bosch Gimpera 1932). Others, following Diodorus (*History* 5.33), classify them as an isolated people, resulting from the union of Celts and Iberians. Celtiberia as a geographical concept refers generally to the northern central region of modern Spain – a plateau surrounded by three mountain ranges and occupying the Ebro Valley. Placing the Celtiberians in their geographical context casts one into a battleground of stereotypes and assumptions that originate in the Græco-Latin literary tradition.

In *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, Claude Nicolet examines the political aspects and those of propaganda of geographical studies written by Greeks and Romans (Nicolet 1991). Strabo, the best-known geographer during the early Empire, and author of the longest commentary on *Hispania* that we possess, had ‘clearly political’ intentions in his work. ‘His description of the world when seen as a whole is constructed so as to lead to Rome’s pretended universal domination. [...] For Strabo, geography is the science of the appropriation of land by man, the inventory of his home, his resources, and of the traces that he had left behind him’ (Nicolet 1991, 47; 73). Strabo saw Iberia as land to be pacified, ‘Romanised’, and added to the Empire’s collection of conquests. His portrayal of the Pillars of Herakles (Straits of Gibraltar) as the end of the earth emphasised Iberia and its people as mysterious and distant. This is a crucial point because, as Katherine Clarke writes, ‘Barbarous behaviour was geographically determined in so far as absence of contact with civilized societies such as Rome hindered the process of civilization’ (Clarke 1999, 213). Isolation was closely associated with barbarism.

The earliest descriptions of Celts in the Iberian Peninsula come from Herodotus (2.33 and 4.49). Aristotle (*De animal. gen.* 478a, 22) mentions the cold country of the Celts ‘over Iberia’, and the presence of Celts in central Iberia was confirmed by Diodorus (*Library* 25.10). It was not until the Second Punic War that explicit reference was made to a place called *Κελτιβηρίας* (Polybius 3.17.2), distinguishing it from the rest of Iberia. From this point, reports about Celtiberians and the region of Celtiberia are abundant in the ancient literature, particularly in the context of wars with Roman forces. The surge of interest in Celtiberia was connected with Rome’s growing involvement with the new *provincia Hispania Citerior* and the curious (and potentially dangerous) people who inhabited it (Capalvo 1996, 19).

The Iberian Peninsula is Europe's most topographically diverse region, its 230,000 square miles comprising near-deserts in eastern Andalucía to green countryside and deep coastal inlets in Galicia, the sun-baked uplands of Castilla-La Mancha, and rugged, snow-capped Pyrenees. The Peninsula is mountainous, its average altitude of 650m second only to Switzerland's. The ancient sources agree that Celtiberia was a large area in the interior of the Peninsula, but its precise territorial boundaries were, and are, disputed (Burillo Mozota *et al.* 1988, 7-12 and 1998, 37-50; Lorrio 1997, 34-45). The oldest texts, written in the early years of the Roman conquest, describe Celtiberia as a large area that spread over the *meseta* and the Middle Ebro Valley, with *Idubeda* (the Iberian System) to the East (Strabo 3.4.12). Strabo writes that Celtiberia is divided into four parts and includes in it three of the Peninsula's largest rivers – the Duero, Tajo, Guadiana and Guadalquivir (Strabo 3.3.1; 3.3.4; 3.2.11; 3.4.4; 3.4.12). Pliny offers a smaller vision of Celtiberia, considering only two tribes ethnically Celtiberian (the Pelendones and Arevaci), their occupation limited to the Upper Duero Valley (Pliny 3.19, 25-27). Ptolemy (*Geography* 2.6) discusses the Arevaci and Pelendones apart from the Celtiberians, whom he locates in the Middle Ebro and Cuenca region. The picture is complicated further by Appian (*Iber.* 44; 48-49; 61-63), who offers his own opinion on which tribes were Celtiberian.

Modern historians generally agree that Celtiberia occupied a large area roughly equivalent to the *meseta*, a tableland of fertile soil for grain and livestock, with elevations ranging from 400 to 1000 metres. If there was a Celtiberian heartland, it was the northern plateau, bordered by the Pyrenees, separating the peninsula from France, the Cordillera Cantábrica along the northern coast, and the Cordillera Central and the Sistema Ibérico to the south. The eastern portion of the plateau is the Ebro basin, where the land is low and ideal for cereal cultivation and horticulture. The Northwest reaches (modern Galicia) are hilly and green, similar to other Atlantic lands like Brittany or Ireland.

Ancient writers are preoccupied with climate: their contrasting descriptions of northern and southern Iberia betray distaste for non-Mediterranean climates. Strabo stresses the fertility and natural riches of the south ('Turdetania'), linking a warm and sunny climate with civilised living: '[the region is] marvellously blessed by nature [... producing] large quantities of grain and wine, and also olive oil [...] wax, honey, and pitch' (Strabo 3.2.5-6). Romans would come to regard the provinces of Lusitania and Baetica as producers of the best *garum* in the Empire, shipped far and wide to meet insatiable demand for the fish sauce. Because the climate and products of southern Spain met Roman tastes, this region was considered relatively civilised. The fecundity of the land was closely bound up with the happiness of the people and the

sophistication of their civilisation. Climate was one of the reasons the Romans incorporated Turdetanians into the empire and accepted them as citizens (Clarke 1999, 214-5).

The view of northern Iberia was markedly different. Whilst the northern interior is praised by ancient authors for rich mines and mineral resources, it is also characterised as inaccessible, mountainous, and arid – a remote region occupied by simple people leading a primitive life and consuming milk and cheese instead of wine and olives. Poseidonius attempts to understand the way of life, but his view was conditioned by the moral framework of Roman imperialism, which understood subjugation as the only hope for barbarian people (Strasburger 1965). Whereas Strabo considered the fecund and warm southern regions ‘good,’ the dry and cold climate of the north was ‘bad,’ unworthy of Roman efforts. It becomes clear from the Greek and Latin literary evidence that climate, civilisation, and morality were closely bound up with each other, exemplified by two passages from Strabo’s *Geography*:

As for olive-trees, grapevines, fig trees, and the similar plants, the Iberian coast on our sea [Mediterranean] is richly supplied with them all [...] But the north has none on account of the cold [and] on account of the slovenly character of the people and the fact that they live on a low moral plane. (Strabo 3.4.16)

[Celtiberia] is naturally not capable, on account of the poverty of its soil or else on account of the remoteness or wildness of it, of containing many cities. [Nor do] the modes of life and the activities of the inhabitants [...] suggest anything of the kind. Those who live in villages are wild, and even the cities themselves cannot easily tame their inhabitants when these are outnumbered by the folk that live in the forests for the purpose of causing trouble for their neighbours. (3.4.13)

Thus the non-Mediterranean climate is equated with an alien, inferior lifestyle. The northern Iberians, including the Celtiberians, are the embodiment of the harsh terrain in which they live, immoral thanks to shortcomings of their soil. Cities, in the Greek or Roman sense of that concept (πόλεις) must be supported by rich soil, the opposite of Celtiberia’s poor soil (λυπρότητα). Remoteness and wildness result in a lack of civility and urbanisation among the Celtiberians. Strabo is careful to differentiate from Celtiberians the civilised activities of the people on the eastern seaboard: accustomed as they are to Roman and Greek ways of life they are recognised by Strabo as part of the Mediterranean community of civilisation. The βάρβαροι of Celtiberia cannot be tamed by even the gentle influences of the city.

II. Historical overview of the Iberian Peninsula and Celtiberia

Pre-Roman peoples in Iberia and the search for Celtiberian roots

From the 8th century until the middle of the 3rd century, the 'orientalising' and 'classicising' effects of commercial relations on the Mediterranean coastal zone of the Iberian Peninsula contributed to the development of indigenous culture groups in that area. Phoenician traders established contacts with sites along the southern coast of Iberia in the Late Bronze Age, and by the 8th century they had a permanent port-of-trade at Gades (modern-day Cadíz). Greek contact with the east and northeast is attested as early as 630 BC, and it was during the latter part of the 7th century that the Greeks from Phocaea began to explore the west Mediterranean and established several colonies including Emporion (Cunliffe 1997, 134). The presence of foreign cultures was expressed in visual media, social organisation, and language. A distinctive artistic style took root in vase painting, sculpture, and metalworking. Large nucleated settlements adopted characteristics of Mediterranean cities with temples, public buildings, and customs based on eastern templates, and the social structure developed a degree of complexity that resembled a state system by the 4th century BC (Arteaga and Blech 1988; Ruíz and Molinos 1998, 270-3). Soldiers armed themselves with round shields and *falcatas* and gradually adopted the appearance of hoplite armies. Most significantly, a distinctive script to express the Iberian language emerged, a consequence of increasing socio-economic complexity (de Hoz 1979). In short, the people of southern and eastern Iberia shared in the development of a Mediterranean cultural system in the middle of the first millennium BC.

The northern and central zones present a different case. The ancient sources describe the Celtiberian territory as poor (Strabo 3.4.12), lacking in agricultural resources (Strabo 3.4.13), and dependant on a pastoral economy (Florus I.39.11). Here, indigenous groups used a Celtic language and developed political and socio-economic practices similar, in some aspects, to those of Iberians and Gallic and Galician Celts (Beltrán Lloris 1993; Marco Simón 1993). Although Celtiberian mercenaries served under the Carthaginians in Sicily and the Mediterranean from the end of the 6th century BC, it does not appear that they served as agents of 'Hellenisation' in their home region. Many of the mercenaries who departed Celtiberia during the 6th, 5th, and 4th centuries did not return, and those who did were unlikely to have taken up Greek customs or language since they were largely kept separated (Quesada Sanz 1994, 231). Further, we do not have a completely clear picture of what impact the colonial Greeks and Phoenicians had, if any, on Celtiberia (Cerdeño, Sanmartí and García Huerta 1999, 293).

The nature of the relationship between Celt and Iberian is uncertain. When Diodorus wrote that ‘Celtiberes are a fusion of two peoples, and the combination of Celts and Iberes only took place after long and bloody wars’ (*Hist.* 5.33), he was probably rationalising, rather than reflecting, the ethnic situation. The supposed Celtic roots of the northern Iberians have prompted a list of publications that is constantly growing, contributing to the growing dissent among scholars as to how Celtic language and material culture came to northern Spain. The material record proves that from the 6th century BC, there was a group of northern Iberians that had a Celtic language of their own, and used metallurgical techniques and funerary practices reminiscent of Atlantic and Iberian peoples respectively (Lorrio 1995b). It is clear that from the 6th century BC, Celtiberians traded and exchanged goods with southern Iberians – activity that first began as a social strategy rather than an economic one, since reciprocity and hospitality were important instruments of establishing good diplomatic relations.

Determining what caused the diffusion of Celtic culture in the Iberian Peninsula is difficult, and scholars still debate trans-Pyrenean migrations of Gallic peoples (Ruíz Zapatero 1997, 158-9). From the start, it is important to discard the myth of a monolithic culture in Ireland, Britain, France, and northern Spain, and to think instead of an Atlantic zone of peoples, linguistically linked yet ethnically and culturally discrete (James 1999).

During the 11th century BC there was an explosion of contact in the Atlantic province between indigenous northern Iberians and merchants from Britain and France. These Celtic-speaking peoples traded precious metal objects, but they brought more than just purchasable goods. The effect of long and sustained contact with northern Atlantic peoples was that the language of Northwest and northern central Spain developed into a Celtic form, and social structures took on traits associated with Atlantic peoples (chieftains, elite warriors, clan groupings). Even into Roman times, the northern plateau had place names ending with *-dunum* and *-briga*, both suffixes found widely throughout the Atlantic zone.

To explain the similarities between Celtiberians and other Atlantic peoples, it is postulated that bands of Celts travelled across the Pyrenees to settle in the plateau. Foremost champion of this theory was Pedro Bosch Gimpera, who argued that two large population waves emigrated from France and transformed the culture of northern Spain. He posited that before 1000 BC, the plateau was home to tribes of Iberian ethnicity, to whom reference is made in Græco-Latin writings as *Cantabri*, *Edetani*, and *Lusoni*. The first of Bosch Gimpera’s emigration waves came in approximately that year, when Hallstatt Celts from Switzerland moved in and became the ‘Campos de Urnas’ (Urnfield) people, namely the Ilergetes, Pelendones, and

Beribraces.¹ Bosch Gimpera's second wave – *la gran invasión* – came in 600 BC, when Germanic peoples moved across France, over the Pyrenees, and into the Ebro Valley. According to Bosch Gimpera, these Germanic peoples added several more tribes (including the *Arevaci*, *Vaccei*, and *Carpetani*) and spread Celtic culture as far west as Cuenca, east to the Iberus River, and south to the Anas River. The end of *la dominación céltica* came, he argues, in the 3rd century BC, when the Celtiberians were weakened by skirmishes with the Roman army, and had to band together in ethnically mixed settlements with other Iberian peoples. Bosch Gimpera saw this period as 'a process of dissolution of the dominant Celts that led to towns of mixed Celtiberian populations, whilst in the Ebro River valley the Celts were completely absorbed by the Iberians.'²

Although most Spanish classicists do not embrace the entirety of Bosch Gimpera's two-wave emigration theory, they do accept the general view that Gallic or Germanic invasions transformed pre-Roman Spain and 'changed the face of the world' (Martínez Santa-Olalla 1946, 22). Martín Almagro Basch argues that there was a single, prolonged invasion, beginning in 800 BC and continuing until the 3rd century BC. This era he calls *un proceso de indoeuropeización*, and explains it as a continuous infiltration of northern Iberian settlements by people travelling from France through the Pyrenees or across the Bay of Biscay (Almagro Basch 1952). He and other scholars support a hyper-diffusion model of language and culture, wherein similar practices from various Atlantic lands, peoples, and times were connected to one monolithic origin, namely the Central European sequence: Urnfield Culture-Hallstatt Culture-La Tène Culture. There is no undisputed archaeological evidence for this *postura radical pan celtista* ('radical pan-Celtic position') and it deserves rethinking (Beltrán Martínez 1960, 110 n. 4).

Northern Iberians spoke Celtic and took on some cultural practices that are traditionally identified with other Atlantic peoples (sophisticated metallurgy, the use of certain weapons, distinguishing rich individuals from poor in inhumation burials), but there is no evidence of a large-scale migration of Celts across the Pyrenees or the Bay of Biscay. Neither La Tène nor Hallstatt practices made a significant impact on Spain. The surviving potsherds suggest that most of the indigenous peoples of the Plateau produced their own ceramics, both hand-moulded and wheel-spun, characterised by monochrome geometric designs and parallel bands (García Huerta

¹ The Hallstatt Celts are associated with an early stage of the Iron Age in Central and Western Europe and the Balkans. Their name comes from the Austrian village of Hallstatt, about 225km southwest of Vienna. The Hallstatt epoch extended from 750 to 450 BC and was characterized by elaborate funeral rites, and the use of iron - primarily used as grave furniture and usually decorated in rigid symmetrical, repetitive, geometric patterns.

² My translation. The original 'two-wave' theory of Bosch Gimpera is published in, *Emologia de la Península Ibèrica* (Barcelona 1932). The theory is refined in: Bosch Gimpera 1952-3: Les mouvements celtiques. Essai de reconstitution. *Études celtiques* VI, 328-355. The quotation comes from *Emologia*.

1988, 98). Where similarities in material goods do appear – armaments, fibulae, and other metallurgical goods – they can be explained as the consequence of years of trade between Atlantic and northern Iberian peoples. These material goods were portable items that influenced artistic trends quickly; new artefacts were often incorporated into existing ways of life long before new ideas or customs (Woolf 1998, 14). The true measures of cultural continuity and change are religion, economy, and political organisation, and, in northern-central Iberia, these were not radically altered or wiped out in 1000 or 600 BC. Changes did occur over time, but they cannot be ascribed to Gallic or Germanic tribes.

Linguistic developments in Celtiberia also refute the two-wave theory. The northern-central Iberians used a Q-Celtic form that was widely spoken in the Atlantic zone before the 6th century BC. Q-Celtic is likely to have been introduced to the northern shore of Spain by Atlantic traders moving from port to port along the western seaboard of France. Communication was important to trade, and the Iberians rapidly appropriated the new language. The evidence indicates that Q-Celtic was not limited just to the seaside trading ports, but was diffused throughout the Plateau.

The fact that only Q-Celtic is attested in Iberia argues against La Tène Celts' migration into the Peninsula across the Pyrenees. The La Tène people lived near Lake Neuchâtel in Switzerland and enjoyed a cultural florescence in the 5th century BC. They used the P-Celtic language, which was more developed than Q-Celtic (also called 'Archaic Celtic'). The Q-Celtic linguistic group remained isolated in Ireland, Northwest France, and northern Spain, while P-Celtic developed in Britain and most of France and Switzerland. Great waves of Celts moving from France to Spain would have brought the new language. Since P-Celtic did not travel, it is clear that a Celtic language took root and developed indigenously, brought in by Atlantic traders but taken up and transformed by locals. The northern Iberians were not passive receptors of culture, but innovators who selectively adopted foreign cultural practices, absorbed and re-interpreted them to fit their own needs. This applied to Atlantic, and later to Roman, culture.

Bosch Gimpera's theories must be seen in the context of his time. As Gonzalo Ruíz Zapatero writes, 'The identification of the Franco regime with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy led to an over-valuation of the Celtic component (in Spanish history). The two most influential archaeologists in Spain during the 1930s and 40s were [...] both trained in Germany (under Gustav Kossinna), and sympathetic to the ideas of the German regime' (Zapatero 1996, 185-7). Franco needed historical legitimisation of his concept of fatherland, and the Celtiberians were seized upon as the 'first real Spaniards' – the embodiment of Spain's unity since time

immemorial. 'Invasion' theories of Bosch Gimpera and Martín Almagro Basch (1952) linked Spain with Celts and Germans, peoples whom Kossinna understood as racially superior.

Nevertheless, it is clear people did enter the Iberian Peninsula from France and Britain, and that migration across the Pyrenees did occur. The introduction to Iberia of urnfields, from the end of the second and the beginning of the first millennia BC, is a significant marker of cultural change. New pottery styles and metallic objects were introduced on a large scale. A new funerary rite (interment of ashes in an urn) was gradually adopted, though old inhumation ritual continued. These cultural elements originated in Languedoc, southeast France, where they are labelled Late Bronze Age II or Early Urnfield (Ruíz Zapatero 1997, 170). Discontinuities in pottery, metallurgy, and funerary ritual are also documented in Celtiberia. All of these factors lead to the conclusion that a migration of people from southern France to northern Iberia took place, but it is important to be precise in defining the nature of that migration. Gonzalo Ruíz Zapatero argues that rather than taking the form of large 'waves' or gradual and slow trickles of people, migration took the form of 'small-scale penetration from neighbouring areas.' Based on the archaeological record of several Celtiberian sites, he hypothesises the situation thus: 'Limited movements of small groups [moved] short distances between neighbouring regions and [had] a different impact in their interaction with the population of the new areas' (Ruíz Zapatero 1997, 171). This model of migration best suits the evidence from Celtiberia, and best explains how these people came to be considered Celtiberians, rather than Iberians, or Celts in Iberia.

There are problems with the term 'Celtiberians' when it is interpreted as a fused group of Iberians and La Tène or Hallstatt Celts. The Celtiberian culture of the latter centuries BC is the culmination of a historical process that had its origins in the 6th century. The Atlantic world changed in time and from one place to another, and cannot be regarded as a single, homogeneous cultural unit. It is misleading to think of the northern Iberians as transplanted Gallic Celts who continued Hallstatt and, later, La Tène practices in a new land. There were aspects of cultural identity in Celtiberia that set the region apart from the French side of the Pyrenees, differences observable in the styles and subject matter of material culture. As a general concept, referring to the zone of interaction between Atlantic and Iberian peoples, 'Celtiberia' is valid. In this thesis the term refers to a culturally fluid region, and 'Celtiberians' to the people who inhabited it.

Habitations and settlements

There was no single type of Celtiberian settlement. Greek and Roman writers use several terms to refer to Celtiberian settlements at the time of the Roman wars of conquest: population concentrations in *urbes*, *civitates*, and *oppida*; small groupings in *vici* or *turres* (Salinas de Frias

1993, 174). During the late 4th century BC, new systems of defence including buttressed walls and rectangular towers were incorporated into existing 'chevaux-de-frise' (Lorrio 1997, 79-83). 'Chevaux-de-frise' is the term generally used for zones of obstacles in front of fortifications. These were usually sharp-angled stones projecting from the ground, but could occasionally be timber (Cunliffe, *pers. comment*).

The settlement type most characteristic of pre-Roman Celtiberia is the *oppidum*. Celtiberian *oppida* were round in shape, frequently situated on hilltops to make use of the defensive advantages of elevation, and surrounded by walls, a ditch or moat, and sometimes sported lookout towers. Typical *oppida* featured one central street running longitudinally through the settlement, with family homes on either side. Early (c. 7th century) homes were circular, averaging six metres in diameter, and supported by posts running along the perimeter and a large central post (Romero and Ruíz Zapatero 1992, 109-11; Romero and Misiego 1995, 130). In later centuries, rectangular dwellings of approximately fifty square metres each, made of limestone walls and adobe tiled roofs, and hard-packed earthen floors were more common. Often the houses abutted one another, separated by thick walls, close enough to create insulation in the cold winters. These small dwellings would have suited nuclear family units, and would have consisted of one main room for cooking, sleeping, and working. Occasionally, the main room would have been subdivided (de Sus 1988, 29-31). An average small- to medium-sized *oppidum* had eight to twelve domestic dwellings, housing eight to ten people each. The *oppidum* at El Ceremeño featured eight houses in its Second Phase (4th century BC), but at nineteen m² these were smaller than houses built earlier on the site (Cerdeño Serrano and Martín García 1995, 189).

Lorrio's study of 109 Celtiberian settlements dated to the 5th and 4th centuries illustrates how small most of the *oppida* were. Only six comprised more than 2 ha. of land; twenty-three comprised between 0.5 and 2 ha., twenty between 0.2 and 0.5 ha., and forty-four less than 0.2 ha. (Lorrio 1997, 68, fig. 14). Of particular interest is the northern region of Celtiberia (present-day Soria), where the so-called 'cultura castreña soriana' (Soriano castro culture) developed during the first Iron Age. All of the settlements here were less than one hectare in size, with the exception of Castilfrío de la Sierra (1.3 ha.). These settlements were villages of fewer than 100 people, reliant on agriculture, hunting, and animal husbandry. This image of Celtiberian settlements gives nuanced perspective to Tiberius Gracchus's claim that he destroyed '300 cities in Celtiberia': what he destroyed were small villages rather than *civitates* in the Roman sense of the word (Strabo 3.4.13).

The years from the end of the 3rd century to the early 1st century BC mark a period of profound change in the region. Many small *oppida* were abandoned as people moved into larger

settlements. By the time of the Roman wars of conquest, there were some thirty large towns in the region including Segontia at sixty hectares and Contrebia Carbica at forty-five hectares. However, the average surface area of an *oppidum* in 2nd century Celtiberia was just over thirteen hectares. Numancia, the fortified city of the Arevaci that held out against Roman forces from 140-134 BC (including a year-long siege from 140-139), comprised 7.6 hectares of living space and a further four hectares of defensive lines (Jimeno and Tabernero 1996, 422-4; Lorrio 1997, 68). The small villages of early years were grouped in federations, an aspect of society that was reflected in legends on coins minted in this period (Lorrio 1997, 381). Archaeologists speculate that drought, disease, or war forced the abandonment of villages, and it is clear from the material record that many dwellings were burned to the ground. A representative case is the area around the Huecha River, a western tributary of the Ebro river: here there were twenty-three *oppida* in 500 BC but only four by the early 3rd century BC (Burillo Mozota 1998, 222-3).

The move into towns resulted in the adoption of new identities. The process begun in the late 5th century, whereby social distinctions were emphasised and individuals sought to display their distinctiveness (Lorrio 1997, 380), continued. New urban centres required administrative apparatus, which in turn led to a new set of roles for the inhabitants and new ways of establishing status. The number of élites was consolidated into a richer, more powerful ruling class, whilst the majority low- and medium-status people grew in number. This resulted in increased élite competition and new means of promotion. The move from village to town had a profound effect on individuals' self-perception.

Increased population density brought other changes. By the early 3rd century BC, urban Celtiberians used a written language, a monetary system, and long-distance trade routes with southern Iberians for the trading of agriculture and livestock (Cerdeño, Sanmartí, and García Huerta 1999, 263; Salinas de Frias 1986, 85; Sánchez-Moreno 2001). On the cusp of the Roman period, the tribes of Celtiberia were concentrated in large fortified settlements under an increasingly federal system of governance, with several tribes living together. The Celtiberians' new urbanism brought them closer to the Mediterranean civic model already in place in southern and coastal Iberia. It also grouped them more easily for war with the armies of Rome.

III. The arrival of Romans

Until the 3rd century BC, peoples from Galicia, the Atlantic coast of Gaul, and southern Gaul constituted the foremost foreign influences in northern central Iberia. This changed with the coming of the Romans, after *Hispania* was enrolled as a Roman province, and after the Roman

victory over the Carthaginians in the second Punic War (218-206). Initial contact between Romans and Celtiberians was of a military nature, and the first general to enter the region was Cato in 195 BC. By the spring of that year, Cato 'pacified' the Sedetani, Ausetani, Suessetani, and Lacetani tribes (Salinas de Frias 1986, 10-11). In reality, it would take another two hundred years of wars, treaties, and sieges before the region was sufficiently at peace for Augustus to shut the gates of the Temple of Janus in Rome.

Soldiers repressed indigenous uprisings, but the process whereby Celtiberians adopted and adapted Roman practices was more subtle and prolonged than military power alone could have induced. Adoption of Roman ways in Celtiberia was gradual – without necessarily being continuous – until the wars against the *Cantabri*, following which, a more decisive cultural impact upon the indigenous communities took place. 'Romanisation' is a problematic term for describing the changes in Celtiberian cultural practices and socio-economic structures that took place after sustained contact with Roman soldiers and settlers, and Latin-speaking Iberians from Roman settlements. The term is problematic because it implies a single form of Roman culture was introduced to non-Roman peoples, in a systematic way. 'Romanisation' is defined by Greg Woolf as 'the process by which the inhabitants come to be, and to think of themselves as, Roman' (Woolf 1998, 6). Woolf's definition is helpful: it is important to emphasise that the impetus for the process whereby Celtiberians adopted 'Roman' ways, came from local people.

In Celtiberia, as in other Roman provinces, the change from indigenous to Roman did not manifest itself as a repetition of cultural patterns erasing everything indigenous that preceded it. Rather, there was a fluid exchange of ideas between the new administration and the settlements in the Plateau, between many different kinds of Romans and Celtiberians at varying levels of urban sophistication, Latin comprehension, and cosmopolitan pretensions. Or, as Martin Millett puts it in his study of Romanisation in Britain, 'Roman culture interacted with native cultures to produce the synthesis that we call Romanized' (Millett 1990, 1). Just as there was 'no standard Roman civilisation against which provincial cultures might be measured' (Woolf 1998, 6), there was no standard Celtiberian disposition towards Rome that can be understood to represent the attitudes of all Celtiberians.

At the time of Cato's arrival, the Celtiberian tribes had expanded over the Ebro Valley and to the southeast coast (Livy 27.50). After a few years' fighting with Roman forces, Celtiberians were suffering. Poor growing conditions, along with crop destruction and loss of life at the hands of enemy soldiers, led to poverty, starvation, and unstable leadership (Burillo Mozota 1998, 235). Unable to sustain themselves as farmers, Celtiberian men enrolled as mercenary troops in the Carthaginian (Livy 21.43), Turdetanian (Livy 34.19), or Roman armies (Livy 25.33)

(Blázquez 1983, 218). From the end of the 3rd to the middle of the 2nd centuries BC, the Celtiberians generally fought against the Romans. With the conclusion of the Celtiberian Wars (c. 133 BC), Celtiberian participation in the Roman army increased, and Celtiberian warriors were to prove especially useful in the Sertorian Wars and the civil war between Caesar and Pompey.

The martial value of the Celtiberians was widely appreciated and was put to good use on behalf of the Romans both in and outside Spain. Diodorus Siculus (5.33.2) and Polybius (35.1) praise the valour and preparedness of the Celtiberians. Livy, Pliny, and Strabo remark on their ferocity and bravery in battle. The stereotype of the bloodthirsty savage quickly emerges. Ancient authors often report bizarre and appalling, non-Roman practices, especially where war and fighting are concerned. For example, Silius Italicus describes the Celtiberian practice of excarnation, in order to illustrate the strange rituals of the warriors:

They consider it a crime to burn the body of a soldier fallen in battle; for they believe that the soul goes up to the gods in heaven, if the body is devoured on the field by the hungry vulture. (*Punica* 3.340-5)

Greek and Roman authors often portray Celtiberians as fierce, pragmatic warriors, exceptionally loyal to their leaders on the battlefield. Polybius calls the war between the Romans and the Celtiberians the ‘fiery war’ on account of the remarkably ‘uninterrupted character of the engagements’, and emphasises the Celtiberians’ indefatigable fighting and their refusal to let courage flag. ‘Ever rallying,’ they were fierce (and fearsome) opponents (Polybius 35.1). Strabo (3.4.16) mentions the first visit of Vettonian fighters to a Roman legionary camp, during which the Vettonians saw Roman officers promenading up and down the streets. The Vettonian men ‘supposed [the Romans] were crazy and proceeded to lead the way for them to the tents, thinking they should either remain quietly seated or else be fighting.’ The mix of admiration and contempt is a powerful reminder of the limits of integration at this time. Celtiberian mercenary troops did not blend instantly into the Roman army, magically building a bridge between natives and invaders.

The supposed strangeness and violence of the Celtiberian warriors marked them out as non-Roman, but the entire region of Celtiberia was seen as uncivilised for its lack of urban centres. The rural nature of the region also accounts for the slow spread of Roman ways. Unlike southern Iberia, the northern plateau and *meseta* were not colonised by Italians, and the first cities established there after Augustus’s campaigns – *Asturica Augusta* and *Iuliobriga* – did not achieve the administrative status of *colonia* until after AD 66. It was the Flavian period that saw the

founding of *Flaviobriga* on the northern Atlantic coast and the granting of honorary status to *Clunia*, conferred in thanks for the assistance given by the city during the crisis of 68/9. One way or another, the scarcity of urban centres on the plateau is apparent. Reflecting on the settlement situation in the early 1st century BC, Alberto Balil writes that ‘there was a scarcity of what a Roman would really consider a city and an abundance of what we would today call a backwater’ (Balil 1977, 92). Cities and towns did exist, but there is no evidence that Italian settlers were moving into them (apart from coastal sites such as Emporion and Tarraco, the premier city of the province). Evan Haley’s study of migration in Roman Imperial Spain reveals a substantial number of Iberians in Celtiberian cities – that is to say, indigenous people were moving and resettling within the region. More precisely, from a total of 360 Iberian *alieni* attested in inscriptions from Tarraconensis, twenty-nine, or just over 8%, are from outside the province. Clunia and Uxama were particularly attractive destinations for intraprovincial migrants, a fact that may be explained by the wealth of these towns and the organised exchanges of goods and labour in the Iberian Peninsula (Haley 1991, 69-89).

The evidence suggests that the urban and social developments of Celtiberia were not alone due to Italian, Baetican, or Lusitanian *alieni*. Celtiberians moved within their territory from small *oppida* to large *civitates*, implementing some Roman architectural and cultural practices as they enhanced their settlements, benefiting from the euergetism of Roman administrators, and mostly taking up the new ways voluntarily. Although a few pockets of Celtiberia still resisted Roman rule in the early Imperial period, by the late 1st – early 2nd centuries AD, the region had taken on Roman municipal organisation, the Latin language, and Roman religious practices. By the early Empire, education had become sufficiently established for Tarraconensis to produce the most famous Roman writer on pedagogy – Quintilian, who was born in 33 at Calagurris. Martial, born in the Celtiberian town of Bilbilis, radiates a sense of ethnic pride in several epigrams, read widely among Rome’s elite: *nos celtis genitos et ex iberis / nostrae nomina duriora terrae / grato non pudeat referre versu...* (Let us, born from Celts and Iberians, be not ashamed to recall in grateful verse the harsher names of our country [...]) (*Ep.* IV.55; cf. I.49, X.13).

Trade and cultural exchange in Celtiberia during the Roman period

From the arrival of Roman soldiers until the establishment of *municipia* and *coloniae* in the closing decades of the 2nd century, Celtiberia had the traits of a military zone. In this phase, the military was the primary representative of Roman culture to the interior. Roman soldiers brought products for their own consumption in the first instance, but gradually through time there arose a system of reciprocity, in which the soldiers and the increasingly pacified indigenous people

traded goods. The absence, in this period, of commercial posts similar to those dated to the end of the 2nd century BC (found at Azaila, Caminreal, and Contrebia Belaisca), impede somewhat our analysis of how Roman goods circulated (Cerdeño, Sanmartí and García Huerta 1999, 290). Goods must have been exchanged between military figures and the *cannabae* – the people living at the settlements that sprung up around *castra*. There were also more explicit activities of economic nature around military forts, including suppliers, merchants, buyers and sellers of battle-won booty, and those dedicated to buying and selling prisoners-of-war (Middleton 1983; Whittaker 1983).

Archaeologically, the arrival of soldiers is marked by the appearance of new pottery types: Campanian A and B wares and amphora Dr. 1A (Cerdeño, Sanmartí, and García Huerta 1999, 291). The city of Tarraco must have played an important role in the diffusion of Roman cultural practices in the Iberian interior, since Roman soldiers first arrived at Tarraco from Italy and departed from there for Celtiberia. Roman soldiers probably brought the wine amphorae, Campanian A and B wares, and Catalanian pottery that appear at forts.

After the destruction of Numancia in 133, Celtiberia entered a new phase of trade and exchange. Hostilities gradually ended, and the construction of roads, aqueducts, and towns gave a new structural terrain to the region. From this period coins were minted at and distributed from several towns in Celtiberia. The appearance of coinage is a sign that settlement hierarchy was clarified (probably according to population size), and economic transactions were systematised. In the years after 133, commercial relations between the coast and the interior were organised, and the material record shows a great increase in the amount of imported goods. Paved roads were of crucial importance in the movement of goods. The principal road originated in Tarraco and led to the Ebro River, which was used to transport goods to the Celtiberian settlements along that river. (The same road is used today to travel from Barcelona to Madrid, via Tarragona.) It is no surprise that the settlements of eastern Celtiberia have been found to contain higher quantities of black-varnish and Campanian wares (dated to the second half of the 2nd century and the 1st century BC) than the settlements in the centre and west of the Meseta.

Because of their ability to acquire prestige goods such as wine and oil, and because they adopted Roman status signifiers (names, titles, Latin language, the toga), Celtiberia's urban élites emerged as the foremost economic power in the late 2nd century and 1st century BC. In their homes and in the public buildings that they donated to their fellow townfolk, the urban élites deployed wall painting, *opus signinum* floor pavements, friezes, and architectonic decoration – examples of which are known at Azaila, Bursau, Kaiskata and Salduie.

The 1st century BC saw the consolidation of the Roman commercial penetration from the Mediterranean coast. Central Italy was no longer the sole source of the olive oil, wine, and ceramics that came into Celtiberia. Rather, products from other regions of Italy were now distributed throughout Tarraconensis. Amphorae from Brindisi have been found at Azaila, Bursau, Caminreal, Contrebia Belaisca, El Villar (Fuentes de Ebro), and Lakine (Cerdeño, Sanmartí, and García Huerta 1999, 291-2). Apulian wine and wine amphorae are attested at Azaila, Bursau, Caminreal, Contrebia Belaisca, and Contrebia Leucade (*vide supra*, 292). Imported Italian fine-walled wares and new types of culinary ceramics have also been excavated at Celtiberian settlements. These findings demonstrate the development of Iberian-Italian trade relations in the 1st century BC, with South Italian products entering the new markets that were opening up in the *Hispaniae*.

Throughout this period of change, however, Celtiberia was not a homogeneous economic and cultural entity. There were differences among settlements as to which Roman practices were adopted, depending on how much contact the residents had with Roman soldiers, and how many products reached them. As aforementioned, settlements in eastern Celtiberia were more likely to obtain Roman products than were western settlements, since the eastern coast was the primary supplier and base of trading operations. Goods were portable agents of cultural change. Towns and cities represented and contained more permanent agents of cultural change.

The proliferation of cities and towns in Roman Celtiberia

Settlements were transformed as soon as Romans had established themselves in Tarraconensis. By the early Imperial period, urban entities ranged from hill *castros* to Roman-founded *civitates* and *coloniae*. One of the most significant developments within Iberia under the rule of Augustus was the growth and development of urban sites on Roman lines. Among the numerous places mentioned on the Itinerary of Antoninus, there is a mixture of cities, *mansiones*, and inns. However, the archaeological remains are scarce and inadequate, and we cannot easily reconstruct the nuclei. Many of the sites remain undiscovered, a fact reflected in scholars' widely varying estimations of their original locations. The cities mentioned by Pliny or Ptolemy have yet to be securely placed, though a few (*Cauca*, *Pallantia*, *Segovia*) have been identified thanks to the survival of the names into modern times (Coca, Palencia, Segovia). *Conventus* capitals were important population centres, among them Caesaraugusta, Clunia, Pallantia, Cauca, and Uxama.

José Abásolo divides the pre-Roman and early-Roman-era Celtiberian settlements into three categories. In the first category belong military camps that were later developed into towns. In the second belong pre-Roman enclaves that adopted new civic customs and apparatus (often at

the expense of old civic arrangements). The third category contains new foundations such as the *conventus* capital, Clunia, which changed its location whilst retaining its Arevacan name (Abásolo 1993, 194-5).

It is difficult to make detailed observations about the military camps that became towns: poor archaeological remains reveal only that Roman *castra* grew from rectangular precincts into urban nuclei. One example is Segisamo, which was founded as a military installation in the late 3rd or early 2nd century, during a war with the Cantabrians. Florus's reference to the site as *apud Segisamam* hints at a pre-Roman urban nucleus (Abásolo 1993, 194). A votive inscription dated to the 2nd century calls Segisamo a *statio*, and by this period it had monumental public buildings, a sewage system, a theatre, homes, and mosaic pavements (Gómez-Pantoja, 1992).

Another Roman military camp that grew into a Celtiberian town is Rosinos de Vidriales (Zamora). The settlement here consisted of two camps, one superimposed on the other, and each belonging to different phases of Roman occupation. The first of these was connected with the presence of the *legio X* at the time of the Cantabrian wars. The second, on top of the previous camp and smaller in area, is understood to have been an outpost of the *Ala II Flavia Civium Romanorum* of the end of the 1st and beginning of the 2nd centuries AD. Some scholars associate this site with *Petavonium*, a town to which Ptolemy and the Itinerary of Antonius make reference. The association is not certain, but it is clear from excavated materials that the settlement at Rosinos de Vidriales evolved from a rectangular precinct into a continuously inhabited site with *thermae*, a shrine to an eastern cult, and everyday civilian activities (Morillo 1991).

New cities were built in Roman-era Celtiberia. Numismatic evidence indicates that during the reign of Tiberius, Clunia received the status of *municipium*, it became legally recognised as a *civitas*, with its own constitution and magistrates, and its inhabitants shared certain rights, and also duties (*i.e.* military service), with Roman citizens. Later, Clunia acquired the definitive status of *colonia*, whereby citizenship was conferred upon the inhabitants, who were excused from paying tributes (Millar 1966, 82-4 on the status and rights of *municipia* and *coloniae*). Although there had been a pre-Roman settlement of the Arevaci called *Kolounioko* (according to recovered coinage), Roman-era Clunia was founded on a previously unoccupied site, either for strategic reasons or because of nearby subterranean water reserves. Clunia was planned along a grid layout, in keeping with topography, which adhered to the principle of parallel street blocks running north to south and east to west. The city occupied some 130 hectares – enormous in comparison with earlier Celtiberian *oppida* and contemporary Roman cities elsewhere in Iberia (*cp.* Tarraco with 60 hectares and Emerita Augusta with 120 hectares).

Clunia is an interesting case study in urban dynamism because its main axes shifted after a renovation of the forum in which official public buildings were constructed (figure 1.1). The forum was made up of three parts. The large central square (140 metres by 100 metres) had a regular line of *tabernae*, nineteen in total, along the eastern side (figure 1.2). Their decorative remains and unusual size suggest that these *tabernae* were not part of a market place, but were small temples or religious shelters. On each of the shorter sides was the basilica and temple. The basilica reveals three aisles defined by two lines of fourteen columns. Adjacent to the basilica was a building interpreted as an *aedes Augusti* (de Palol 1982, 1985, 1991). The main temple was an imposing building measuring forty metres by twenty metres, with an apse on a podium and two lateral staircases. It is not certain which god was worshipped here, though it is traditional to interpret it as a temple to Jupiter. The discovery of municipal coins of Claudius in the *signinum* floor suggests that the building's construction took place during the reign of that emperor. The collection of official public buildings was completed with a Flavian-era *macellum*, and a theatre on the outskirts of the city that followed Vitruvian prescriptions.

Clunia represents a new Roman city, re-designed to fit the Roman authorities' idea of what constituted a proper administrative and economic centre. But this seems to have been an exception: for the most part, the indigenous peoples adapted to encroaching Roman urbanism in the Meseta by augmenting the size of their settlements and adding monumental public architecture. A Roman-era city was superimposed on the pre-Roman township of Uxama. The town was endowed with a water supply system and public buildings (including a temple), and new building techniques (stone, bricks) were introduced (García Merino 1984).

Tiermes is another example of an indigenous settlement that adapted to changes brought by Romans. The rock dwellings of the original nucleus were, by and large, preserved during the Imperial period, and it is common to find luxurious houses here, with sophisticated wall paintings but irregular floor layout. A Roman-era water network with an aqueduct, a forum with several *tabernae*, a *macellum*, and public buildings including a temple, were introduced to Tiermes. (Argente Oliver. 1990, 48-9, 61-5, 88). Similarly, after the Roman occupation and resettlement of Numancia, that city's street system was reorganised into a grid plan featuring a set of parallel axes and regular *insulae* (figure 1.3).

The *Municipium Augusta Bilbilis*, home to the poet Martial, was a very ancient settlement with a complex history, and it underwent a sweeping transformation under Roman occupation. Promoted to the rank of *municipium* under Caesar, the town embarked on large-scale structural modifications that transformed the early provincial settlement into a physical manifestation of the new ideas brought by the Roman administration. A great monumental centre was built,

comprising a forum with a central square, a presiding temple, and two colonnades with entablatures (figs. 1.4 and 1.5). The basilica was built off one of the colonnades, and at the end of the opposite colonnade there is a large base for a construction that may have been a *curia* (Martín-Bueno 1993, 124). Two portrait busts of Tiberius have been found in the forum, along with statue bases that supported portraits of members of the Imperial family. Bilbilis also had a theatre with a two-storey *scaena*, a complex of public baths, a temple of the Ionic order, modest as well as lavish houses, and a sophisticated network of cisterns and channels that supplied and distributed water to the entire town. The Romans' ambition, Manuel Martín-Bueno argues, was to give Bilbilis 'a monumental and scenic appearance that would astonish the Celtiberi of the surrounding region' (*vide supra*, 124).

The largest and most important city of the region of Celtiberia, however, was the *Colonia Immunis Caesar Augusta* (modern Zaragoza). Caesar Augusta was a town that answered a definite calling. Founded in 19 BC as 'the personal creation of Agrippa' (Martín-Bueno 1993, 118), it was an urban centre intended to serve the *princeps's* policy of granting land to the veterans of the Iberian wars, whilst at the same time enabling military control to be maintained over a wide area. Caesar Augusta provided operational headquarters for a rearguard of the Roman army, and administrative apparatus for the management of the *conventus Caesar Augustus*. Whereas older Roman towns in the region show a certain measure of disordered agglutination in their streets and buildings, Caesar Augusta was planned from the beginning to be practical (sewers, orthogonal street system) as well as ostentatious (monumental forum, *tabernae* with double porticoes, theatre, public baths, sumptuous *domus*). After the death of Livia, the town issued coins commemorating the construction of a hexastyle temple dedicated to the *Pietas Augusta* (Escudero 1981). Inscriptions tell us that local aristocrats paid for many of these buildings. For aristocrats and the poor alike, the move from rural village to the city of Caesar Augusta brought a new lifestyle and a rise in social status.

Archaeological evidence of urbanisation notwithstanding, cosmopolitan activity in early Imperial Celtiberia did not predominate. Strabo (3.4.13) claims that the influence of the cities was not widely felt and the majority of the population continued to live in rural areas. It is imperative not to judge the 'Romanness' of the inhabitants by the number of cities and *fora* they built, or to assume that those who remained in villages rejected Roman ways. As trading centres and government seats, cities assumed new importance in Celtiberia and even the country dwellers would have felt the influence of that concentration of power. Those living outside the towns and cities may have taken up Roman practices in ways that cannot easily be traced, for example by speaking Latin, consuming wine and *garum*, or syncretising indigenous deities with Roman gods.

Strabo implies that lack of contact with Roman urbanism was indicative of lack of progress generally, and this implication needs refuting because his narrow measure of progress did not necessarily allow for indigenous structures. Undoubtedly, there were innovations on the local level that seemed like progress to Celtiberians, but not to Strabo and his informers.

Cultural symbols played an important role in social change (Keay 1999, 193), and urbanisation brought a host of new cultural symbols. In the Celtiberian world, as in so many parts of the Western Roman Empire, urban cultural symbols took the form of Roman-style buildings with external Corinthian columns, marble portrait busts and freestanding honorific sculptures, and public buildings with official functions. Less traditionally 'Roman,' but clearly products of Roman influence, limestone *stelae* with Latin epitaphs and relief images with both Roman and Celtiberian visual elements began to be used; coins with Celtiberian legends and Roman-style obverse and reverse figures came into circulation; and new naming practices in which Latin endings (-us, -ius) were appended to indigenous names became *de rigueur*. Keay suggests we analyse 'the artistic currents between provinces in the Roman world' by exploring the evidence as symbols of ideology, not by using the art and architecture for strictly formal studies. He writes, 'Ideology is a form of power used by a dominant elite to ensure its own stability and continuity by a representation of perceived reality which is favourable to its interests' (1999, 195).

The notion of ideology as power will be examined in chapter 2, in a discussion devoted to the equestrian symbol and fibulae in Celtiberia. The link between ideology and Roman imperial power is considered in a number of studies on Romanisation or imperialism (Alcock *et al.* 2001; Webster and Cooper 1996; Whittaker 1997; Woolf 1998), emphasising 'the centrality of ideology and ideological transformations to imperial dynamics' (Alcock *et al.* 2001, 280). Roman authorities used towns as a political tool with which to affect the behaviour of individuals. Urban nuclei provided the means for some inhabitants to attain social advancement, manipulating and being manipulated in their turn. The development of any given Roman-era town was shaped by local élites in pursuit of their own social promotion (Martín-Bueno 1993, 118). This phenomenon has been observed in other provincial areas. In Roman Britain, Millett argues, 'The character of the towns was not entirely a function of the stamp of imperialism, but is an expression of different native and Roman aspirations' (Millett 1990, 111). The situation in Roman Britain differed from that in Roman Celtiberia because in the former, power remained in the control of a small oligarchy, and there was thus little need to compete (Millett 1990, 82). Romano-British élites living in *civitas* centres did advertise their civic munificence through public inscriptions, but not to the degree that élites in other regions of the Empire did. Nevertheless, in both Roman Britain

and Roman Celtiberia, local people's identities were changed by moving to Roman cities, using Roman-style buildings for Roman activities, and aspiring to high Roman social and political rank.

In Roman Gaul, aristocrats used their money to monumentalise urban public spaces – ‘a sign of conformity to cultural patterns widespread in the empire and more importantly well established by previous generations in Gaul’ (Woolf 1998, 124). Woolf contends that Gallo-Roman élites built up their cities because of the possibility that euergetism would be rewarded with political and social promotion. Moreover, paying for the construction or refurbishment of a public edifice helped the new élites to ‘impress their own subordinates and legitimize the ascendancy Rome had granted them within their own societies’ (Woolf 1998, 125). In Roman Greece, Alcock identifies ‘radical alterations’ in settlement patterns, chief among them the ‘emptying out of the rural landscape’ (Alcock 2001b, 332). The archaeological evidence suggests a significant decline in the population of the countryside, and a complementary increase in the population of cities. In the cities of Roman Greece, ‘cultural memory’ and, by implication, cultural identity, were altered, as Greeks saw their myths, gods, and media repackaged for Roman ‘cultural tourism’ (*vide supra*, 347). Thus, Roman cities changed the way status, rank, and identity was determined in Britain, Gaul, and Greece.

Similarly, when Roman-style buildings and visual media were set up in Celtiberian towns, local people can be seen to have adopted new forms of identity in response to the changing value system implicit in the new visual landscape. These changes will be considered in the context of the case studies presented in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: METALLURGY AND METAL OBJECTS

This chapter studies metal objects in 3rd – 2nd century BC Celtiberia, with particular reference to three categories of goods: fibulae, *hospitium tesserae*, and weapons. It is mainly concerned with understanding the social and economic value of these objects, and to ask how and if they express aspects of Celtiberian cultural identity.

Sometime in the late 4th or early 3rd century BC, a woman was cremated and interred in the Celtiberian necropolis at La Mercadera with an assortment of silver objects: two finger-rings, four earrings, and two further adornments (Schüle 1969, 265 and plate 47). La Mercadera, located in the province of Soria near Numancia, is one of the best-documented necropoleis in Celtiberia. The necropolis was excavated and its contents published by Blas Taracena in 1932. The findings were organised and re-assessed by Wilhelm Schüle (1969), and discussed recently by Alberto Lorrio (1990).

The cache in this woman's grave, numbered 5 by the excavators, was neither the biggest nor the richest in this necropolis – others contained goods in larger quantity or of better quality – but it gives insight into a number of important aspects of Celtiberian society. The objects must have been carefully chosen to individualise the woman's grave. Their workmanship is good and displays knowledge of sophisticated metal working, as indicated by complicated catches on the earrings. The use of silver suggests personal or familial prosperity, and collective respect for silver as a precious material. The predominance of geometric patterns and shapes points to contemporary artistic tastes. The inclusion of objects in the burial reveals that the people responsible saw value in them: buried jewellery is useless to the living, but its display in a funerary context would have drawn attention to the wealth and resources of the woman and her family.

On one particular piece from Grave 5 – identified by Schüle as a 'small silver plate' (*kleines Silberplättchen*), which probably once belonged to a larger item of jewellery – silver wire was twisted into two small spirals and then soldered onto the plate. These were decorative, not structurally functional, but the seemingly insignificant spirals were part of a much wider visual phenomenon that recurred on breastplates, daggers, brooches, ceramic vessels, and, much later, limestone *stelai*. Born of a taste for abstract images and geometric patterns, the concentric circle is a hallmark of Celtiberian visual language in the century immediately preceding Roman presence, when human and animal figures were exceptional subjects in locally produced material culture. This period, called in turns 'Late La Tène,' 'Late Iron Age,' and 'Late Celtiberian,' saw the development and consolidation of Celtiberian visual language. The production of artefacts among Indo-European Continental tribes was at its height, with new styles growing away from Mediterranean art and towards allusive and

esoteric human, animal, and vegetal motifs. Simultaneously, peoples in the southern region of the Iberian Peninsula developed sophisticated figural compositions, resulting from close and sustained contact with Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans. Between these two cultural zones, in the Celtiberian *oppida* of the eastern Meseta, geometric non-figural designs predominated, whereas human and animal figures were rare. The woman of Grave 5 was buried with objects associated with her cultural identity and that of her contemporaries. Figured motifs would probably not have featured prominently in the visual language she knew and understood, nor in that of the other ninety-nine men, women, and children interred at La Mercadera without figured media.

Analyses of manufactured objects from Celtiberia have traditionally focussed on form and content and on the sources of change within artistic style. Form and content of material culture are relevant to material-based readings of cultural identity, and will be examined closely in this study. But if the objective is to understand not just how, but *why* Celtiberian cultural identity was visually expressed as it was, it is also necessary to consider the social significance of symbols, materials, context, and display. The metallurgical record offers a solid starting point. Celtiberians began making iron tools in the 8th century BC and by the 6th century BC were crafting weapons, fibulae, breastplates, bracelets and necklaces from the precious metals, as well as from bronze and iron (Lorrio *et al.* 1997, 161-2). Trade brought metal weapons and adornments into Celtiberia from Galicia, southern France, and southern Spain, as élite members of society found value in certain metals and used the ownership and display of such objects as one arena for social competition. In short, the abundance, persistence, and early manufacture of metal goods make it important to focus on these when beginning any study of Celtiberian material culture and cultural identity.

The metallurgical richness of the Iberian Peninsula attracted Phoenician traders perhaps as early as the 12th century BC (Shepherd 1993, 188). The Phoenicians purchased Iberian silver with low-value goods unobtainable in Iberia, then transported this silver to Greece and Africa (Diodorus Siculus V.35-36). Greek traders arrived in the 7th century BC with an eye towards trade and the supply of metal, especially tin (Boardman 1999, 210). The abundance of Iberia's precious metals was transmitted by various authors and configured in the rhetoric of the known *laudes Hispaniae*, such as that of Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and Pliny. Pliny described Iberia as a land 'abounding in gold, silver, lead, copper and iron' (*History* 3.3), whilst Strabo wrote that the whole of Iberia was 'full of metals' and 'nowhere else has gold, silver, copper and iron been found in a natural state and of such high quality' (*History* 3.2). Indeed, the Romans' systematic exploitation of the approximately 150 Iberian mines resulted in Iberia becoming the greatest producer of metals, possibly in the whole world, from the period 100 BC – AD 100 (Davies 1935; Shepherd 1993, 190). Livy (31.20) reports that Lucius Cornelius brought 43,000 pounds of silver and 2,450 pounds of gold to

Rome from the Peninsula in 200 BC, and that Cato brought 25,000 pounds in silver ingots and 14,000 pounds of gold and coined money in 194 BC (34.46). Such exploits led Edward Gibbon to proclaim Iberia 'the Peru and Mexico of the old world' (Syme 1958, 9).

In the years before Roman occupation, however, the production of metals in Iberia was not high. Metallurgical technology in Iron Age Spain was relatively unsophisticated, and neither Phoenician nor Greek traders seemed to bring improvements to the process (Gómez Ramos 1999). In northeast Iberia, in the Ebro River valley, local tribesmen worked in mines and metal rich rivers, and smelting and melting workshops were small. What did metal mean to these Celtiberians? Why was it desirable to own a gold bracelet, silver fibula, or bronze breastplate? How were these objects displayed? What symbols adorned them, and why were they chosen? This chapter studies fibulae and brooches, *hospitium tesserae*, and weapons and armour, made of bronze, silver, or gold. It begins with a discussion of the social and ideological importance of metals to Celtiberians, and moves through case studies of three groups of metallurgical goods. These goods represent the bulk of Celtiberian metallurgical output, and give insight to how metals were valued and configured as aspects of Celtiberian cultural identity. Emphasis is on images, their formulation and reception, and their function as markers of group and individual identity among Celtiberians. These issues can be best addressed by studying fibulae and *tesserae* forms and the engraved designs on breastplates and sword-hilts. A complete catalogue of Celtiberian metallurgical goods is not intended.

Material culture and the social importance of metal

Material culture generally expresses important aspects of the cultural identity of the groups that produce it. This can mean that a group's religious beliefs, socio-economic structure, and gender roles are concretised in the objects it creates, but it does not necessarily mean that objects are static reflectors of identity. In fact, material items can transform cultural behaviour and identities (Keay 1997, 208). The archaeological record of Celtiberia suggests that when certain symbols, objects, and materials were diffused over time and space, a large segment of the population was quick to display and use them, and in so doing, shaped their own collective identity.

When and why does a certain material, such as metal, become precious, and what significance does it have for the local economy and society? In Celtiberia as in other societies, the appearance of metal had a great impact on many aspects of everyday activity. For example, metal tools and weapons, being stronger, replaced stone tools and weapons. Furthermore the increase in labour productivity entailed a noticeable acceleration in the pace of economic development. Tribes with access to raw metals found themselves in possession of a new and considerable source of wealth. The rapid accumulation of wealth, along with the redistribution of this wealth that resulted from long-distance trade in metal, led to the growth

of social stratification. The development of mining and metal production was also linked with the increasingly complicated structure of functional differentiation in society. In practically every social formation, skilled craftsmen in the mining and metallurgical fields were isolated from other members of the community by the nature of their occupation (Chernykh 1992, 5).

The metal-rich areas of Celtiberia were concentrated in the Central and Iberian mountain ranges (Lorrio *et al.* 1997, 162). Silver and gold appeared in the Central mountain range, in the headwaters of the Jarama River and in the land bounded by the Jarama and Henares rivers in addition to points in Segovia and northern Guadalajara. Copper sources were located along the northeast limit of the Celtiberian territory in large groups of small mines. Deposits of zinc, tin, and lead were also located here, the latter two found in small quantities scattered across the Celtiberian mineral landscape. Steel objects, particularly weapons, were also produced in Celtiberia, and were known by the Romans for their excellent quality (Pliny 34.144). The two metals most important in Celtiberia for their quantity and widespread distribution were iron and bronze.

With the exception of small amounts of gold and copper, minerals in their natural state were useless. The extraction and manufacture of raw minerals into metal goods required skills, knowledge, special equipment, and labour. There remains little information about who controlled the mines and whether tribes worked together to extract minerals or competed for control. The distribution of mines throughout the region meant that many tribes had one in their ambit. The size of these mines and their low output during the pre-Roman years make it likely that labour was undertaken voluntarily by a small number of men. There is no evidence of slavery in the Celtiberian mines, contrasting the Carthaginians' and Romans' practice of working ruthlessly thousands of slaves in Iberian silver mines (Shepherd 1993, 189).

Slag findings in *oppida*, and the ruins of workshops with specialised earthenware ovens suitable for smelting, suggest that many Celtiberian settlements had their own metallurgical production centres (Gómez Ramos 1996, 614-15). The unusually high concentrations of slag and fragments of large crucibles found in a settlement near the copper and iron mines of Pardos raise the possibility that the *oppidum*'s chief activity consisted of extracting minerals and manufacturing them into metals (Arenas 1993, 290). In larger cities, such as Numancia, certain neighbourhoods were given over to metallurgical workshops (Jimeno *et al.* 1990, 28). For the purpose of melting scraps of metal in crucibles, all that would have been required was a ring of stones, a pile of hot charcoal, and a clay tuyere connected to bellows (Tylecote 1992, 20-1). The ovens used for smelting were cylindrical in shape and measured between 30 and 60 cm. in diameter. These would have reached sufficiently high temperatures for melting bronze (950°C). There is no evidence that the more sophisticated ovens used in southern Iberia were ever used in the Late Celtiberian era (Lorrio *et al.* 1997, 170).

It is likely that in the early years of mineral production, some tribes in the region did not possess metallurgical skills. The spread of metals technology into Celtiberia is attributed to 'a small number of Celtic immigrants [who] came up the valley of the Ebro into the eastern Meseta' (Lernez-de Wilde 1995, 544). It [metallurgical production] was an important technological innovation. Work was divided and jobs were specialised so that groups of miners, smelters, and blacksmiths arose in addition to those who crafted the resulting metal into useable objects and those who decorated the breastplates, swords, brooches, necklaces, and bracelets. Thus there developed a hierarchy of labour in which artisans at the end of the process stood to benefit the most by the sale and trade of finished goods. Chieftains able to marshal mine labour, horse-drawn carts, and all of the equipment needed to extract and smelt the minerals, grew rich. The exchange of wealth objects offered chiefs an alternative source of power. Control over specialised production and distribution gave them what Timothy Earle calls 'wealth finance' – the use of special objects (primitive valuables, prestige goods, money) as political currency to compensate people within ruling institutions (Earle 1997, 73).

The presence of metal alone does not enable us to evaluate and define the degree of technological knowledge and social complexity of the populations that consumed and/or produced it (S. Oliveira Jorge and V. Oliveira Jorge 1997, 129), nor does it guarantee that local users regarded their metal objects as unusually valuable. Metal may have circulated over areas in which it was regarded as just another raw material of alien origin, useful for labour but not particularly valued as a marker of wealth. Nonetheless, the archaeological record of Celtiberia indicates that communities unable to produce their own metal goods acquired them ready-made through a trade network that extended to Languedoc and Andalucía. These boosted the social status of those who purchased them, presumably local élites. Iron tools and steel and bronze weapons were of value to their users because of their strength and durability, and prestige was bestowed upon warriors who excelled in battle, thanks to the superiority of their weapons. The introduction of gold, silver, and bronze adornments to Celtiberia stimulated new social competition for possession of the precious materials – first through trade, then local manufacture. Whereas weapons and tools were functionally valuable, jewellery was valuable for appearance alone, and owners enhanced their status by wearing it.

Gold, silver, and bronze bangles, brooches, earrings, weapons, shields, breastplates, and helmets were highly prized by the Celtiberians. Jewellery making came late to the region, beginning at the end of the 3rd century BC and continuing throughout the 2nd century BC (Almagro-Gorbea 1973, 90). Of course, Celtiberians had been exposed to jewellery earlier than the 3rd century as a result of trade with Celts and Iberians. The prime purpose of wearing jewellery or an elaborate breastplate was to signify status, and such pieces reflect in some measure the structure and activities of the society that produced them. In other words jewellery, decorated weapons, and the precious substances incorporated in them need to be

examined in the context of social history (Clark 1986, 7). This theory underpins the framework of study in the following sections on equine fibulae and weapons.

Ownership and display of an item of jewellery or expensive armour allowed a person to advertise publicly his access to extra resources and exotica in a way that earlier markers of identity – participation in communal activities, tribal and clan membership – did not (Treherne 1995, 107). Accompanying the shift towards individual prestige was a nexus of value, commodity, and exchange in which the role of such objects as symbols of power and wealth was of crucial importance (Renfrew 2001). Because prestige metal goods could be owned, inherited, and transferred, they were ideal signifiers of individual social position and influence. In burials, grave goods accomplish this function in the after-life, for the deceased and the deceased's family (DeMarrais *et al.* 1996, 18). For the ruling élite, it was important to monopolise the trade and possession of precious metal not just for personal vanity but for political power as well. Élites with the resources to extend their ideology through material wealth were able to promote their objectives and legitimacy at the expense of competing groups who lacked those resources (DeMarrais *et al.* 1996, 16-7). The recurrence of the horseman figure on fibulae, coins, and *stelai*, for example, suggests élite participation in promoting the equestrian class through material representation. The elevation of the horseman figure to iconic status legitimised the ruling order and reinforced the power of the equestrian class over the lower orders by making the figure synonymous with a major aspect of Celtiberian identity.

In sum, metallurgy renewed the Celtiberian cultural scene in a remarkable way, both as a technological innovation and a means for exchange. It triggered processes such as craft specialisation, socio-economic organisation, and the concretisation of cultural identity and ideology. The dissemination of metallurgical skills gave rise to new kinds of valuables, which permitted the development of social features and roles not previously prominent – the warrior, the miner, the craft specialist, the trader. Notions of value and prestige had a part in these economic and social changes.

The first section examines bronze and silver fibulae and brooches, with particular attention paid to those in the form of a male figure on a horse. The second section examines the form and content of bronze *hospitium tesserae* ('hospitality tablets'). Finally, the third section looks at bronze weapons and armour with geometric and figural designs. The concluding section comes back to the role of metallurgical goods as prestige objects and markers of high social status.

I. Fibulae

The fibula, used to fasten a garment over a person's body, first appeared in the eastern Meseta in the 11th century BC. The constituent elements are a pin to pierce the clothing fold, a spring or hinge to allow the pin to swing open, a 'foot' or clasp to catch the tip of the pin, and, a 'bridge' connecting the spring to the foot to allow the fibula to close. One hundred and thirty-five 'horse' fibulae and thirteen 'horseman' fibulae have been unearthed on the Iberian Peninsula: approximately forty-four of the horse fibulae were found in Celtiberia, and seven of the horseman fibulae in and around Celtiberia. Sizes of the equine fibulae range from 3 cm long and 2.8 cm tall to 7.5 cm long and 9.4 cm tall, with non-figured fibulae much smaller (sometimes 2 cm long).

Early examples are plain and unadorned, often in one piece, intended more for use than display. It is clear from finds in the eastern Meseta that there were many variations. They have been classified into nine categories by J.L. Argente Oliver: fibulae without spring, fibulae *de codo* ('of the elbow,' with the bridge bent), fibulae with double springs, buckle fibulae, and so forth (Argente Oliver 1994, 35-100). The bridge and clasp were progressively elaborated, first with simple appendages, later bent into fashionable shapes, and from the second half of the 4th century BC animal and human figures were used for the bridge. Forty-two fibulae in the shape of a horse or horseman are known to come from Celtiberia; a further seven in 'zoomorphic forms' – bulls, a bird, and unidentifiable animals – have also been recovered (Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz 1999, 15; Argente Oliver 1994, 251 figs. 338-44). These forty-nine figured fibulae account for just over five percent of the 905 known fibulae from Celtiberia during the period 10th – 1st centuries BC, with the horseman fibulae beginning to be made after the 3rd century. They are exotic appurtenances of the élite, showpieces rather than everyday items of dress.

Because the horse and horseman fibulae have been thoroughly studied by M. Almagro-Gorbea and M. Torres Ortíz (*Las Fíbulas de Jinete y de Caballito* 1999, referred to hereafter as *Fíbulas*), their work will not be repeated here. Their taxonomy is important to understanding the origins, forms, materials, and chronology of the items. This discussion focuses on questions germane to identity and self-perception: why were horses and horsemen chosen, how were these images made and formulated, who owned the equine fibulae, and how do the objects relate to the complete spectrum of Celtiberian imagery? Of particular interest is the corpus of horseman fibulae, since the human figure is included. However, it could be argued that examples with horse alone are products of the same ideological system.

The equine fibulae developed from a type of fibula in which the foot (containing the clasp) curved back into a loop towards the arched bridge (*pie vuelto*). Some of the early

examples look like abstract animal forms, and it is not difficult to see how the horse evolved from these. This type of fibula is characteristic of La Tène metallurgy and is generally credited with ushering in a new era of fibula production in Gaul and northern Iberia: a great number of subtypes and variants, plus lavish ornamentation were made possible by the form (Argente Oliver 1994, 107). ‘La Tène’ inspired fibulae have been found widely throughout the Peninsula, but the zoomorphic types seem to have been concentrated in the eastern Meseta, with a great number of them found in and around Numancia. This suggests that Numancia was a production centre for horse fibulae, underscoring the town’s importance as a focus for the ‘Duero Culture’ centred round the river of that name (Lorrio 1997, 315-8).

The horse was an obvious subject for visual representation. Difficult to obtain and expensive to keep, a horse brought its owner social prestige and, when ridden skilfully in battle alongside the chieftain and allied warriors, wealth, respect, and status. In the years just before the Roman occupation, when the Celtiberians adopted urban ways of life and consolidated their diverse holdings into *oppida*, equestrian warriors exercised considerable social and political power (Almagro-Gorbea 1993, 147-8; Lorrio 1997, 314). Their horsemanship was such that Roman generals coveted them as mercenary troops. Diodorus Siculus (5.33.2) writes, ‘[The Celtiberians], it would appear, provide for warfare not only excellent cavalry but also foot-soldiers who excel in prowess and endurance.’

The horse may also have had religious importance for the Celtiberians – as was the case with cultural groups in Gaul and Britain (Thevenot 1951; Green 1989, 113-4) – but the nature of the evidence from Celtiberia leaves the question open (Lorrio 1997, 329-32). Among several Indo-European cultures, the horse was considered an animal of divine origin, associated with the regal sphere, with war, as a symbol of force and courage, and with fertility, as a symbol of sexual prowess. Its supernatural symbolism could be enhanced by association with solar symbols. The horse’s strength could be enhanced by association with trophy-heads (*Fibulas*, 79). Similarities between Celtiberian and Gallic Celtic representations of the horse suggest that in both cultures, the animal was believed to have wielded mythic powers. The social and religious significance of the horse, along with the precious metals out of which the equine fibulae were made, underscores the value of these objects. This topic will be considered more closely after a description of the horseman fibulae’s appearance and decoration.

Appearance and formal aspects

1. The concentric circle device

The first of the equine fibulae were without rider and have an oddly primitive silhouette (figures 2.1 and 2.2). Developments in figural representation notwithstanding, it is obvious that the prevailing artistic idiom was based upon rectilinear and curvilinear forms.

This is not the equine form of southern and coastal Iberia, where painted pots and carved stones exhibit horses with a short and straight neck, thick midsection, and (often) a long mane. The style in Celtiberia is simple and abstract, with the intention that the equine fibulae be viewed in profile, worn flat against the garment. Each horse has a long curving neck and elongated muzzle, narrow torso, one front leg and one hind leg, and a long arched tail connected to the back of the hind leg. Sometimes, ears or a dot eye are added to give semblance of reality, but this is rare. More commonly, the surface of the horse is decorated with spirals or concentric circles – harking back to the spirals on the piece from Grave 5 in the necropolis at La Mercadera. Figures 2.1 – 2.4 feature these elements, from two on figure 2.1 to twelve on figure 2.3. They fit into the predominantly geometric visual language of 3rd century Celtiberia. Do these concentric circles have symbolic, as well as decorative, meaning?

A similar concentric circle was painted in equestrian scenes on ceramic vessels from Numancia (c. 1st half of the 2nd century BC) (Wattenberg 1963, figs. 1 and 2). The device recurs on limestone *stelai* from Clunia (c. early to mid-1st century BC), which show a male figure on a horse holding his own shield, and carrying additional shields on a spear and/or accompanied by shields hovering in space near the horse (García y Bellido 1949, n. 372 lám. 268). In the context of ceramics and *stelai*, the concentric circles are generally interpreted as the shields of vanquished opponents, a view strengthened by the evidence from a fragment of a *stela* from El Palao, Alcañiz (Marco Simón 1976). The fragment presents a male figure on a horse holding a round shield in one hand and a spear in the other. He raises these objects above his head, as if to celebrate his victory over the male figure sprawled on the ground in front of him. Two large birds peck at the fallen figure and a third approaches a dog or wolf next to him. The figure on the ground has lost his shield, and it appears to float upwards to the horseman, who awaits it as his trophy. The large hand reaching down from the top of the scene gives divine sanction to the victory.

The concentric circles have been interpreted as solar symbols (Sánchez Abal and Salas 1983, 394; Olmos 1992, 163; *Fibulas*, 70), votive objects (da Silva *et al.* 1984), and pectoral armour (Cabré 1942, fig. 3). Blasco and Alonso (1985) are of the view that they are purely decorative (118). In one case (figure 2.6), the devices are part of the bridle and reins – supporting the view that they are elements of armament or equipment (Esparza 1992, 544).

Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz, on the other hand, understand them to be solar circles indicative of the supernatural character of the rider and his horse, and relate these to myths of heroism linked with solar and war deities (*Fibulas*, 70).¹ But there are problems with the evidence upon which they base this interpretation. The bronze bowls from Axtroki (prov. Guipúzcoa) feature bands of circles and concentric circles as part of a decorative scheme that

includes several bands of geometric patterns. There is no reason, *pace* Prof. Almagro-Gorbea, to understand these devices as solar symbols. He himself points out that the bowls demonstrate ‘a tendency to decorate the entire surface without leaving any empty space’ (Almagro-Gorbea 1974, 74-8). Similarly, the helmet from Rianxo presents concentric circles, but nothing about them suggests solar or religious significance (Kruta 1993, 1.120). The ‘Candelabro de Calaceite’ features large circles and smaller incised concentric circles (Cabré Aguiló 1942, fig. 2); again, there is no explicit visual connection between these circles and solar worship. The warrior statue from Procuna (prov. Jaén) wears a circular breastplate and protective metal discs slung low around the hips, elements of an elaborate panoply not obviously connected with sun worship or religious symbolism (Almagro-Gorbea 1992, fig. 7).

Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz develop a tautological argument in which the solar significance of the concentric circle devices is proved by yet more appearances of concentric circles with (‘what must be’) solar significance.

All of these representations should be related to the symbolic use of circular motifs, often associated with chariots or horses, as elements of identification of élites in the Bronze and Iron Ages. [This was part of] an Indo-European ancestral tradition that is perfectly documented to have been related to the myth of the chariot of Apollo (*Fíbulas*, 70) (my translation).

Nowhere do they present evidence of a worship or belief system whereby the Celtiberians held the sun to be sacred. Their reliance on the evidence from elsewhere in the ‘mundo celta’ is not very helpful, as there is disagreement among scholars of ancient Gaul, Britain, and Germany as to whether and in what form solar worship existed.²

Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz take a maximal view of the horseman fibulae. Alternatively, the spiral and concentric circle devices on the fibulae have been understood as trophy shields, hence their frequent appearance on swords, helmets, breastplates, and in scenes of combat on other media. It is unlikely that every concentric circle on a horseman fibula symbolises a shield, but in some cases they may be linked with the practice of capturing and displaying an enemy’s shield. In the context of a gleaming silver or bronze

¹ ‘Este simbolismo ... aludir a que el jinete y su caballo tenían un sentido mágico, posiblemente asociado a algún pasaje mítico relacionado con una divinidad solar y de la guerra’ (*Fíbulas*, 70).

² Webster 1995: ‘Astronomical considerations may have influenced the structuring of space within [Celtic sacred] enclosures. ... At present, however, ideas on Celtic sacred geography remain speculative, articulated mainly by appeals to the medieval literature’ (460). Birkhan 1997: ‘Wir hören in zwei Heiligenviten von der Verehrung eines Sonnengottes, aber immer im Zusammenhang mit der *mater deorum*, die als Diana erscheint und möglicherweise auf die ephesische Artemis zurückgeht, weshalb man in diesen Fällen nicht abschätzen kann, wie weit da nicht mediterranes Erbe zu uns spricht’ (578).

fibula with a prominent horseman figure, shield symbols echo the theme of martial valour. Rather than object to either interpretation at this point, they will both be allowed, but caution exercised where the rest of the maximal interpretation (heroisation myth and élite signifier) is concerned. This discussion will be continued in the Interpretation section of the fibula study.

Whether the concentric circles are shields or solar symbols, they illustrate the Celtiberians' use of symbols on personal objects. Kossack understood this, arguing that the devices were used on armour, weapons, and jewellery (including fibulae), to identify the élite during the Bronze and Iron Ages (Kossack 1954, 54-6). Thus the concentric circles were part of the process of articulating identities within material culture, and communicating differences, categories, and social status with 'messages of appearance' in dress (Sørensen 1997, 95).

2. The severed human head

Another symbolic aspect of the horseman fibulae is the severed human head sometimes included beneath the horse's muzzle (figs. 1-5, 11-14). Blázquez related these severed heads ('cabezas cortadas') to human sacrifice, using the report of Strabo (3.154-5) to confirm that it was practised by some peoples of northern Iberia in honour of a warrior god ('una divinidad guerrera') likened to Mars (Blázquez 1958, 31). Human sacrifice was apparently observed in Iberia into the 1st century BC, prompting Crassus to issue an edict prohibiting the practise (Plutarch, *Quaest. Rom.*83). Whether human sacrifice among Celtiberians entailed ritual decapitation and display of the head is difficult to prove archaeologically. But the archaeological record does confirm the relationship between severed heads and religious observance in at least one case. At Fresno de Sagayo (Zamora), a head carved of stone and two altars – one of them dedicated to the goddess *Bane* and the other equipped for sacrifice – were found together (López Monteagudo 1987, 248).

To understand the significance of severed heads in Celtiberia, it is useful to look to Celtic Gaul because the evidence from there is abundant and explicit. The frequency of stone heads in Celtic material culture supports the theory of a 'head cult' among tribes in Gaul and Britain, wherein the human head was venerated as an object of power, and ritual sacrifices were performed in which the victim's head was removed and worshipped (Ross 1992). Many warrior-gods in Gallic art carry images of severed heads in the hands, usually with closed eyes, designed to represent death (Green 1989, 109). The *tête coupée* theme recurs in other contexts, possibly of a secular nature. At St-Michel-de-Valbonne (Var) in southern Gaul, a pre-Roman stone carving depicts a horseman with a huge head, riding over five severed heads. At the sanctuary at Entremont, a relief of a horseman shows him carrying a severed head, eyes closed, suspended from the neck of his mount; a carved pillar of incised human heads was also recovered from the site (Green 1989, 109; Lenerz-de Wilde 1995, 550). Both

Entremont and another sanctuary in the Lower Rhône Valley, Roquepertuse, had niches (filled with the human skulls of young men killed in battle) built into the structure of the temple (Green 1995a, 467-8; Benoit 1955, 1981). Closer to Celtiberian territory, in Catalonia, sculptures depicting severed heads on a pillar similar to that found at Entremont suggest the 'Celtic cult of the head' was practised there, too (Guitart Durán 1975).

These objects illustrate that the severed head iconography was not limited to religious function. Just as captured shields could be displayed as trophies, so enemies' heads could be paraded as proof of battle prowess. Diodorus wrote that the Celts cut off the heads of enemies and attached them to the necks of their horse, and that they embalmed the heads of their most distinguished enemies in cedar oil and nailed them to the entrances of their houses (5.34). The custom of beheading an enemy and suspending his head from a horse's neck is also reported by Strabo (4.4.5) and Livy (10.26.11; 23.24.11), though we must read the ancient authors with a measure of scepticism because they were basing their 'observations' on the reports of paid informers – informers who may or may not themselves have had little understanding of Celtic practices. Nevertheless, texts and images from Celtic Gaul are explicit about the symbolic power of the severed head in the context of war. For a warrior to remove and display the head of an opponent was to prove his victory and, perhaps to make an offering to Mars or a similar war deity (López Monteagudo 1987, 251-2).

Although there is little in the way of physical evidence that Celtiberian warriors actually decapitated their bested opponents, this interpretation holds merit in the wider context of headhunting and head-veneration in the Gallo-Iberian Celtic ambit. Diodorus described the Celtiberians as no more compassionate towards their enemies than the Gallic Celts, and while he does not actually say that the Celtiberians partook of ritual decapitation, in the framework of his general discussion, he suggests it. The author may be perpetuating some favourite stereotypes about the supposedly barbarous and bloodthirsty Celts, but he is consistent in his comments, and adamant that this treatment of the head was peculiar to peoples in this part of Europe. The consistency of Diodorus's comments suggests there is a grain of truth to them – that decapitated heads did have symbolic meaning for Celtiberians. I suggest as a minimal interpretation that in the case of Celtiberian fibulae, the decapitated head signified martial prowess.

How is the severed head included on the fibulae? In the early years (c. 1st quarter 3rd century BC), the head is highly stylised and attached between the horse's front feet with a single strut (figs. 2.1 and 2.2). A second strut is added in later models, giving the appearance of one of the horse's front legs being held out in front, the head resting on the knee (figs. 2.3-2.5). Sometimes the head is so simplistic as to lack all facial features, more symbolic than representative (fig. 2.5). Interestingly, several types of horse/head fibulae were manufactured before a rider was introduced (Argente Oliver 1994, 94-5). No horse could decapitate a man

and carry his head, so in these examples the presence of another figure is implied but not made explicit.

In sum, the *tête coupée* iconography exudes martial prowess and conquest. Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortiz adopt the view that the heads are symbols of status of the equestrian élite, perhaps related to mythical concepts of equestrian heroism, and that such heads had, moreover, to be 'earned' by successfully decapitating an enemy (*Fibulas*, 77-8). The visual evidence cannot support this interpretation to its full extent, and the 'rite of initiation for the élite' concept formulated by the authors is supposition. The material record does, however, indicate the prominence of the severed human head as an iconographic theme at shrines and in sculpture. On the horseman fibulae, the heads establish a link between power and religion, with invocations of head veneration and myth.

3. The rider

The rider and his horse are the essential components in the iconography of these fibulae. Combined, they have élite overtones because the representation and cultural use of the horse implied membership of the highest economic and social rank (*Fibulas*, 266). It was a symbol that recurred frequently in Celtiberian visual media over at least three centuries.

When the rider figure first comes into use on fibulae (c. mid- to late-3rd century), it was attached to the horse by insertion, soon thereafter by soldering. The bridge of a bronze single-spring fibula from Lancia presents a horse mounted by a male figure (*Fibulas*, 120 fig. 6). The fibula is 5.5 cm long and 5 cm tall. The horse has a long, pointy muzzle and a long, arched tail. It is decorated with three concentric circles: one on the left hindquarter, one on the left shoulder, and one on the left side of the base of the neck. The rider, attached to the fibula by a rivet in his thigh, leans forward and is marked with an 'X' on his back and chest and a line around his waist, perhaps the marking of equipment or armour. His facial features are indiscernible except for stylised, square eyes that form part of the head. His limbs are short and stocky, the arms devoid of hands and the legs cut off just below the bent knees.

A more elaborate example, this one from Luzaga (Centenares), presents a male figure on a horse with a human head beneath the muzzle (fig. 2.13); the bridge is 4.8 cm long and 5cm tall (Argente Oliver 1994, 446 and fig. 89 n. 792). The horse's neck is decorated with three perforated concentric circles, with a fourth on the animal's hindquarters. The rider's body is crude and simple, his arms held open towards the neck of his steed. On his back is an 'X' – again, perhaps these are straps that held in place pectoral armour or a sword's sheath. The horse has two front legs, one held out in front of the other at a right angle. To the leg held out in front is fused a human head with exaggerated eyes and coarse facial features.

A bronze fibula from Herrera de los Navarros, measuring 5.4 cm long and 5 cm tall, lengthens the bilateral spring, and features a severed human head squarely in front of horse

(*Fibulas*, 120 fig. 4). The horse's body is decorated with seven concentric circles, three on the right hindquarter and four on the right shoulder and neck, which are connected with a series of three small lines. These might be round medals made of silver or gold, worn on the body and bridle as badges of honour (called *faleras* in Spanish, from the Latin *phalerae*³) and bridle. Its neck is long and curving and its ears are sharply pointed. The coarse figure of the rider lacks facial features and legs (later damage). He holds in his right hand a cylindrical object, probably the reins. The severed head is positioned beneath the horse's muzzle and in front of its breast, held in place by little rods sprouting from the horse's muzzle, front feet, and breast. Across the forehead of both the rider and the severed head are two, small, parallel, incised lines, alluding to a helmet or a band of cloth. This is a feature shared by many of the horseman fibulae's rider figures.

In some examples, rings were added to augment the lavish and expensive appearance of the fibulae. This is illustrated by figures 2.7-2.10 and 2.14. These were distributed throughout the eastern Meseta and because they all employ the single-spring clasp system, they can be dated to the mid- to late-3rd century. Figure 2.14, a bronze fibula from Tierras de León (or Palencia – provenience uncertain), measuring 9.4 cm long and 7.5 cm tall, presents a male figure on horseback with a severed head at the front of the horse (*Fibulas*, 121 fig. 8). The rider's arms and legs are missing. He wears a short cap or helmet close to the skull, a belted tunic, and trousers. He is clean-shaven and his nose, chin, and ears are stylised and simplified. The decapitated head shows similarities to the rider's head – short cap or helmet, square nose, straight brow. His ears were punctured for the insertion of rings, and atop the crown of his head there rests a ring secured in place by the horse's muzzle. The supporting rod underneath this head is inscribed with an 'X', which, in addition to being decorative, may depict a baldric worn across the chest, similar to the incised Xs seen in other examples. The horse is richly decorated with a series of concentric circles, the largest of the six at the left shoulder. Along the neck are short, incised lines that give the body texture, symmetry, and dynamism. The overall effect is of careful and laborious craftsmanship, lavish ornament, and expensive materials.

Figures 2.8 and 2.9 illustrate further the deployment of rings as ornaments on the horses' mane and tail. A bronze fibula from Palenzuela (figure 2.9), measuring 7.8 cm long by 6 cm tall, is incised with four horseshoe shapes arranged in two pairs, one on the torso, the other on the hindquarter (*Fibulas*, 137 fig. 84). In such cases, it appears that there was a taste for rings on fibulae in a certain period; the jangling sound produced by them would have called attention to the wearer and his or her elaborate ornament. These examples also demonstrate creative uses of the struts, in which they do not support a severed head. The

³ Source: Zerolo, E. 1985: *Diccionario enciclopédico de la lengua castellana* (Paris).

fibulae shown in figures 2.7 and 2.9 have a ring attached to an ornamental strut that arches out from the front hoof (the ring is now missing from 2.7). Figure 2.10, from Numancia, presents an unusual addition on the front. Directly beneath the horse's long muzzle is a pair of long ears or horns, projecting from a head with a square jaw and broad snout – not a human head, but an animal head. Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz interpret it as a 'stylised wild boar' (*Fibulas*, 122 fig. 11).

Occupying the same place beneath the horse's head that the human trophy-head occupies in other examples, the wild boar figure points to a similar meaning. Because hunting and fighting demanded similar skills, it is possible that the severed boar's head advertised strength and courage in the fibula's wearer. Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz relate the boar's head in figure 2.10 to an Indo-European belief that the boar is a chthonic creature, and specifically to Hispano-Celtic initiation into equestrian hunting (*Fibulas*, 71). The inclusion of the boar's head underscores the function of equine fibulae as personal displays of rank, power, and prestige.

The hunting theme is continued in the fibulae of *anular*, or ring-shaped, type. Examples of these, all in silver, are given at figures 2.15, 2.16, 2.7 and 2.18. None of these was found in Celtiberia, but their widespread dissemination in other parts of the Peninsula suggests that Celtiberian viewers and craftsmen may have come into contact with them. This *anular* type evolved from a La Tène III model, making its Iberian adoption no earlier than the end of the 2nd century BC (Argente Oliver 1994, 94). The *anular* fibulae typically present a male figure on a horse with smaller animals in front of the horse, aligned along the bridge. A silver fibula from Cañete de las Torres (figure 2.17) shows the rider pursuing a stag and a wild boar (*Fibulas*, 151 fig. 11). The fibula is 8.5cm long and weighs 65.7 grams. The rider holds a round shield in his left hand and in his right hand may have held a lance (now missing). The axis of the spring features a double protome, each head extending out from the rider at a right angle to him. Between the heads is a female figure in axial position. A similar piece from Chiclana de Segura (figure 2.8), 9.2 cm long, 2.8 cm tall and weighing 88.9 grams, shows a figure holding a large round shield in his left hand and chasing a stag and a boar on his horse (*Fibulas*, 150 fig. 9). Here, too, a female figure stands between a double protome. She has large round eyes, short hair, plants her hands on her hips, and wears a dress incised with a diamond pattern. She also wears a torque, revealing the Celtic roots of this fibula design. The *anular* fibulae, then, differ from the Celtiberian *jinete* fibulae with respect to material, techniques, and design, but the themes – hunting, élite equestrians, power, wealth and social rank – are the same.

Interpretation

Who wore the equestrian fibulae? The archaeological contexts for these objects give the best information about ownership, dispersion, and display. They have been unearthed in settlements as well as cemeteries, with variations according to zone. Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz have calculated that 43% of the equine fibulae come from settlements, 32.6% from necropoleis, with one found in a cave, and the remaining 24% of unknown provenience. The silver fibulae come mostly from hoards, a fact explained by the intrinsic value of silver and the role of these objects as prestige goods. The fibula from Herrera de los Navarros was found in a domestic dwelling that appears to have been large and well-built, suggesting it housed an élite family (*Fibulas*, 120). A horse fibula from Numancia was discovered in house 19 of *manzana* ('block') 12 – a dwelling larger by threefold, than most of the surrounding buildings. These examples associate the equine fibulae with large homes and, probably, people of élite status.

Where equine fibulae are found in burials they stand out for their rarity. The fibula from Luzaga was unearthed at a necropolis that contained some 1,800 funerary urns. Ten fibulae were found in the necropolis, among them one equine example. The excavation record does not specify whether any other objects were found with this horseman fibula, so it is difficult to assess the overall grandeur of the burial (Argente Oliver 1994, 443). It is clear, however, that the fibula was exceptional in its value and sophistication in comparison with the other, more humble pieces found at the necropolis. The horseman fibula from Gormaz was found in the La Requijada necropolis, which contained 1,200 burials, of which 700 held a funerary urn and 180 were marked by a stele. Altogether, more than 500 precious objects were found among the burials, including thirty-seven swords of La Tène type, several bronze fibulae and three iron fibulae (Argente Oliver 1994, 253-4). One horseman fibula was found (*Fibulas*, 119 fig. 3). The necropolis at Le Requijada was used from the beginning of the 4th century until the beginning of the 2nd century BC, and to judge by the number and size of the burials it was the final resting place for a broad cross-section of this Celtiberian *oppidum*. The fibula, found with a sword, was described by the excavator as 'una condecoración' – a badge or medal. Lack of detail in the excavation reports makes it difficult to make precise comments about the findspots of many of the equine fibulae. Those fibulae for which provenience information exists were unusual pieces, buried in small numbers near graves with smaller, simpler fibulae in larger number. The equine fibulae were exotic pieces owned by a very few.

But what exactly did these pieces mean to their owners and viewers? Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ortíz strongly advocate associating them with a 'military élite', understanding the fibulae as emblems of 'a military aristocracy fully dedicated to war' (a characterisation that they apply to Celtiberian culture as a whole: *Fibulas*, 101-2). They explain the equine fibulae as distinctive elements of a particular class, made only for the élite

by special artisans in their service. Moreover, the authors consider the fibulae representative of the social structure and ideology of 'la Cultura Celtibérica' – implying that equestrian status was the social level with which all Celtiberians would have liked to identify (108).

Two ideas need to be re-considered. The first is the image of a Celtiberian *oppidum* ruled by a chieftain and his council of élite warriors, where 'women work the land and men make war' (Justinus 44, 3, 7). The second is the notion that martial prowess and equestrian skills were important components of Celtiberian cultural identity.

The traditional view of Celtiberian society in the pre-Roman era holds it to be organised around clans, with people living in supra-familial groupings delineated by *gentilicium*, or clan name (Albertos 1975; Almagro-Gorbea 1993; Faust 1979; González Rodríguez 1986). But extrapolating social organisation from onomastic categorisation is untenable. Celtiberian names were often written in the genitive plural (corresponding to a group) or genitive singular (father's name, similar to the Latin *filius* + father's name in the genitive case). But the social function of these name-based groupings is not completely understood (Burillo Mozota 1988, 185). Francisco Beltrán Lloris's study examines the role of Greek and Latin historiography in developing the '*gentiliate* fantasy' (Beltrán Lloris 1988). He observes that Pliny (3.23-26), Strabo (3.3, 7), and Diodorus (5.34.3) were in no position to comprehend the internal divisions and workings of Celtiberian society, despite their pretences to explain *populi* or *gens* (229-35). Our only evidence of consanguineous social division in Celtiberia comes from Greek and Roman authors. Celtiberian texts feature indigenous names in the genitive plural (cf. the bronze plaques from *Contrebia Belaisca* [modern Botorrita]), but they do not make clear the social or political importance, of such delineation.

It is important to underscore the uncertainty of the *gentilitates* theory because it has led scholars to portray Celtiberia as a social system in which chieftains and warriors dominated the social hierarchy:

Esta organización clientelar prerromana, hasta cierto punto confirmada por la tradición de pactos de fidelidad documentada por las *tesserae* de hospitalidad, indican relaciones e intereses entre zonas a veces muy apartadas y se puede relacionar con su sistema gentilicio y con el ambiente guerrero documentado por los textos históricos, al señalar que eran hospitalarios y *amantes de la guerra*, con instituciones tan características como las luchas de campeones o la *devotio* o consagración de la vida al jefe [...] (Almagro-Gorbea 1993, 152). (My emphasis.)

The pre-Roman client-based system of organisation, confirmed in the texts on the hospitality tablets, indicate relationships and interests among zones that were in many cases distant from each other. It can be related to the *gentiliate* system and to the bellicose atmosphere documented by the ancient texts, marked by hospitality and *love of war*, with such characteristic institutions as fights among champions or devotion to or consecration of the life of the chief. (My emphasis and translation).

This image echoes Strabo's description of another culture group in the Celtic world:

The whole race, which is now called Gallic or Galatic, is madly fond of war, high-spirited and quick to battle. [...] And so when they are stirred up they assemble in their bands for battle, quite openly and without forethought, and are easily handled by those desiring to outwit them (*Geographia* 4.1.14).

Suggesting that Celtiberians loved war and were perpetually geared towards it is a discursive statement, rooted in Græco-Roman historiography, which has constrained study of these people. If Celtiberians were eager for war, we would expect to see archaeological evidence (burnt buildings, high concentrations of weapons, and ruptures in the domestic record) of internecine fighting. This evidence is lacking. The warfare that *is* documented in the region, however, archaeologically and literally, is that of warfare between indigenous people and Roman soldiers. The Classical writers discuss Celtiberian mercenaries in the service of Carthaginian, Greek, and Roman armies, and the portrait of a culture of violence stems from these passages. As Jane Webster observes in her examination of the 'Celtic warrior society' stereotype, 'Classical ethnographers, writing in a colonial context, reduced Celtic peoples to [the status of] innately aggressive warrior society. [...] A Classical portrait of endemic warfare and innate aggression [was] largely created at the moment of Roman territorial expansion in the northwest, and the peak of Rome's clashes with Celtic peoples' (Webster 1996, 114-5). Warfare, she argues, and ethnographies of warfare, are historically contingent. If Celtiberians appeared geared for, or centred round, war at the time Greeks and Romans were writing about them, it was because they had been engaged in conflicts with outside forces since the 3rd century BC. Interaction with foreign armies brought social organisation along new lines, and internecine fighting was an inevitable consequence of the

constantly shifting tribal loyalties encouraged by Carthaginian and Roman generals eager to split Celtiberian alliances.

The prevailing visual idiom of the fibulae is a male figure on a horse, often associated with a severed head. Ownership of a horse was a marker of high social status, and riding a horse in battle or whilst hunting conferred power and, probably, respect. A man wearing an equine fibula was advertising his status, and possibly his successes as a warrior or hunter. That the fibulae are made of bronze or silver, and are rare finds in burials, further illustrates their value. But the fibulae should not be read as emblems of a warrior aristocracy perpetually eager for war, or as signifiers of a cultural identity centred round war. The value of the fibulae and the mythic properties of their images point to reverence for the horse and the power of his rider. Accepting Sharples's thesis that warfare is on some level an endemic feature of virtually all societies, the horseman fibulae were likely to have been the material embodiment of horse-riding warriors' special status (Sharples 1991). These fibulae communicate the following about Celtiberian cultural identity: a small but wealthy group of people in several tribes felt the horseman icon was worthy of prominent display on the body.

A bronze standard from the necropolis at Numancia (fig. 2.19) suggests that the horseman figure could be associated with group, and not just individual, identity among Celtiberians. Carried by Arevaci warriors, the *signum equitum* presents two horses' heads facing away from each other and a male figure astride the conjoined backs of the horses. Other *signa equitum* have been found, and they appear on some 2nd century BC bronze coins of 'jinete' type. In other words, several Celtiberian tribes probably carried equestrian standards. These *signa* represented mounted warriors fighting in a given battle, and may have been understood as symbols of the rest of the tribe. In Chapter 4, a discussion of numismatic images of the horseman type will demonstrate how the icon was mass-deployed on coins in such a way that it gradually lost its exclusivity and became increasingly identified with Celtiberians in general instead of with a small, privileged stratum of society.

II. *Hospitium Tesserae*

Hospitality tablets present two subjects pertaining to cultural identity: text and iconography. In its first incarnation, written Celtiberian was confined to public documents and administrative or sacral business. The Iberian alphabet was adopted because Celtiberian speakers did not have their own script. It was an imperfect arrangement: Celtiberian was an Indo-European language but Iberian was not, so certain vocalised consonantal groups in Celtiberian could not be expressed in writing. The epigraphic record of the region is limited to thirty-six non-monetary inscriptions and forty-seven numismatic legends in the Celtiberian

language, written in the Iberian script, and approximately twenty inscriptions of the language in Latin script (de Hoz 1993, 361). Most of these were inscribed on bronze plaques or tablets, with a few on potsherds. These were short inscriptions, usually naming a person to show possession or identify the maker.

Hospitium tesserae are small bronze tablets inscribed with words pertaining to hospitality agreements. They are physical emblems of verbal promises concerning housing, assistance, trade, and peace between tribes or individuals. It is often clear that huge distances were involved (400 km and more) between points or peoples bound by the pact, often separated by high mountains and large rivers. These *tesserae* were not unique to Spain – others are attested from Gaul, Italy, Rome, Sardinia, and Africa – but Spain has yielded more than all other regions combined (Tovar 1948). Some fifty tablets are known, the majority from central Spain, with a considerable number located along the east region of the Meseta.⁴ Thirty of these present Celtiberian words in the Iberian script, of which twenty have a zoomorphic shape. The oldest ones can be dated to the middle of the 2nd century BC; the majority to the late 2nd/early 1st century BC. The practice of *hospitium* was continued in Roman times when *tesserae* were inscribed with Latin. The forms and content of the Roman-era hospitality agreements are studied extensively by Manuel Salinas de Frías in a recent paper (Salinas de Frías 2001).

For the most part, the *tesserae* bear brief inscriptions that include the names of the people agreeing the pact, or the names of their cities or family groups. They are the tokens of longer agreements whose full texts were written on bronze plaques. They sum up the content of the pacts, and were probably given to participants so that they could identify themselves to other signatories or members of the tribe with which the agreement was reached. They were not meant to carry details of the agreements, and were not circulated widely. Key words are *karou kortika*, Celtiberian for ‘hospitality tablet’; *kortika* approximated the Latin word *tessera*. The word *karou* is the genitive form of *karuom*, meaning ‘hospitality.’ Both terms find their origin in Indo-European languages. The formula *kortika karuo* often accompanies the name of a town given in adjectival form, as in: *Ue(n)tanakâ kar = Uentanakâ (kortikâ) kar(uo)*, ‘Uentanense hospitality tessera,’ or *tessera* of the city of Uentanâ (Burillo Mozota 1988, 186).

Traditionally, the *tesserae* are studied only from a linguistic viewpoint and their shape has been noted merely in passing. But in order to understand the value of these objects in their wider social setting, the forms must be considered as well. The shape dictates the layout of the words and the size of the letters. One side of the tablet is given over to details of the animal – eyes, ears, joints, and tail – and the other is smoothed in order to provide a

suitable surface for inscribing words. The text follows the outline of the tablet, in harmony with the back, tail, and limbs.

In many cases it is clear that the shape had symbolic meaning. *Tesserae* in the form of an outstretched hand, or even two clasping hands, spell out a hospitality agreement literally and also express it pictorially. Figure 2.20 is a bronze *tessera* inscribed in Celtiberian as follows: ‘Lubos, from the family of the Alisokos, son of Avalos, belonging to the city of Contrebia Belaisca.’⁵ The other side presents an outstretched hand in careful anatomical detail, including differentiated fingers, wrinkles at the knuckles, veins, and fingernails. Figure 2.21 is a variation of this type, showing two clasped hands on the obverse. The reverse is inscribed in Latin letters and reads, ‘TVRIASICA CAR,’ or ‘hospitality agreement with/of Turiasu.’ ‘CAR’ is an abbreviated and transliterated form of the word *karou*; Turiasu was a Celtiberian town on the Ebro River, later re-named Turiaso. The shape of both *tesserae* reflects the amicable content of the text, such that even illiterate viewers would have had a sense of its significance.

Sometimes, the hospitality tablet comprised two parts that joined physically and textually. This is exemplified by figure 2.22, which shows a *tessera* of geometric form and a conjectural illustration of how it probably fitted with a companion piece (now missing). The remaining piece witnesses a hospitality agreement involving the town of Arekorata. It reads: ‘Arekoratan (adjectival sense) hospitality pact of Segilakos of the Amikos tribe, son of Melmû, native to/of Atâ; Bistiros, from the Lastikos tribe, is the guarantor.’⁶ Without the missing piece, it is not possible to know with whom the pact was made. Nevertheless, the interlocking format of the tablets brings the towns or public institutions together in an abstract version of the *iunctio dextrarum* suggested by the ‘hand’ tablets.

Often the *tesserae* have little buttons or hollows that allowed them to interlock with a corresponding *tessera* – the other half of the pact, perhaps, and a reminder of the act of two parties coming together. This is illustrated by the *tesserae* at figures 2.23, 2.27, and 2.31. Furthermore, certain forms are concentrated in a limited geographic range. This might suggest that each tribe had its preferred *tessera* pattern. An example of this is figure 2.23, a bronze *tessera* in the shape of an animal (perhaps a wild boar or the stretched skin of one) seen from a bird’s eye view. This perspective is characteristic of visual media found in the territory of the Arevaci, a Celtiberian tribe concentrated in Numancia and its environs. A few examples are provided by objects produced by the Vaccaei, a non-Celtiberian tribe. Figure 24 presents various deployments of the bird’s eye view of animals painted or applied onto ceramic vessels, or fashioned into metallurgical products (Romero and Sanz 1992, 457). It is a striking

⁴ Unpublished discussion with Dr. Eduardo Sanchez-Moreno, of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 14/05/2002.

⁵ The full text reads: *lubos alisokum avalos ke contrebias belaiscas*.

approach to figural depiction. The Spanish term for this is *perspectiva cenital*, translated into English as ‘heavenly view’ (bird’s-eye view). Implicit in this heavenly view is a power relationship, with the viewed subject smaller and lower than, and therefore inferior to, the viewer. If the bird’s-eye view a speciality of the Arevaci, this *tessera* could be a marker of a tribe’s unique visual language, one facet of its cultural identity.

Similarly, the shape might correspond to the purpose of the agreement. *Tesserae* were made in the forms of bulls, birds, fish, boars, and dolphins, with bulls being the most popular choice. Figures 2.25, 2.26 and 2.27 present three ways to depict a bull. Each of these is a bronze tablet measuring no longer than 6cm. A bronze tablet from Fosos de Bayona (Cuenca) shows the bull in profile view (figure 2.25). Its obverse is modelled with horns, an eye, mouth, and inscribed lines at the shoulder and rump to indicate flesh. The reverse reads: *libiakâ kortikâ kar(uo)*, which can be understood as ‘Libiense tablet of hospitality’ (of the city of Libiâ). The reverse is smoothed for inscribing letters, except for the rounded lower legs. Another bronze tablet presents only the bull’s head, again in profile (figure 2.26, provenience unknown). The obverse has a projecting horn and incised eye and mouth. This time, both the obverse and reserve are inscribed, with the same word: *sekobirisâ* = from the town of Sekobirika (later *Segobriga*). The maker brings the viewer right up close to the bull’s face, with its soft, rounded contours. Finally, a third type of bull is completely silhouette (figure 2.27, from Sasamón, Burgos). The bronze tablet is sharply cut around the neck, head, and legs to give the animal horns, a long muzzle, and blocky legs. Both sides are inscribed. One side reads: *irorêgios monitukôs nemaios*, which names an individual (Irorêx), his gentiliate group (Monitukôs), and his father (Nemaios), all three names in the nominative. The other side reads: *aledûrês*, perhaps the name of a witness (Aledos) who had an official position as chief or magistrate (-rês could be the Celtiberian version of *rex*) (Tolosa Leal 2000). Figure 2.29 is identified as a bull by some scholars but it has no horns and its round, short body looks more ursine than bovine.

Cattle were a valuable commodity and could be exchanged along long-distance circuits (Sánchez Moreno 2001, 400-1). The geographical distribution of bull *tesserae* shows that they were used along long-distance trading roads. The bull form could have been chosen for agreements that concerned cattle (Sánchez Moreno 1998). It is also possible that the symbol of the bull had religious significance. A representative of power, fecundity, strength, abundance, and prosperity, it had enormous importance in the religious systems of Celtic (and Celtiberian) peoples (Marco Simón 2001, 219). In this light, a pact inscribed onto a bull-shaped *tessera*, or the individuals named in that pact, may have been considered sacred and divinely sanctioned.

⁶ The full text reads: *arekoratika: kar / sekilako amikum melmunos ata / bistiros lastiko ueisos.*

Wild boars were also chosen for *tessera* forms. One such from Uxama (Burgo de Osma, Soria), with a lengthy inscription in clear, consistent letters, must be the product of an experienced hand (figure 2.30). Its back is rounded and the legs are thin and long. The eye is hollowed out and another small hole has been bored at the rump – possibly to allow a string to be thread through in order that the *tessera* might be worn around the neck. Figure 2.28 has a very different shape, squatter and cruder than the tablet from Uxama, and its straightened back is mottled to conjure the rough hairs of a real boar. As discussed in the previous section on fibulae, the boar was a prestigious hunting trophy among élite Celtiberians. It is possible that boar-shaped tablets dealt with hunting agreements or some aspect of élite horsemanship, but the textual evidence does not prove or disprove this hypothesis, so it must remain a supposition.

Other shapes include a fish, chosen for a bronze tablet from Belorado (figure 2.31) and rendered completely in silhouette with no scales, eye, or fins. A bronze *tessera* from Palenzuela (figure 2.32) is a highly abstract rendering of a bird in profile, with an incised eye and stylised ‘plumage’ on the obverse and an inscription on the reverse: *uirouiakâ kar* = *Uirouiakâ (kortikâ) kar(uo)*, ‘Viroviense hospitality tablet,’ from the town of Uirouiâ. The inscription was written from the right to the left – an unusual practice mainly found in the 3rd and 2nd centuries, when Phoenician-influenced Iberians introduced written Celtiberian.

In addition to the ‘hand’ *tesserae*, one further example of a human subject remains. A silver tablet from Villasviejas del Tamuja presents a male head in profile. The facial features are abstract but unmistakable – a long, sharp nose, rounded cheek, and short, cropped hair arranged in four ‘tiers’ designed to give the profile texture. A thick black line around the neck may be a torque, which we know to have been worn by Celtiberian chieftains and warriors. The crudeness of the inscription is surprising, considering the high quality of the casting and the expensive material (silver) used.

The zoomorphic forms of the tablets are important to an academic understanding of the Celtiberian visual vocabulary. Nevertheless, what made them valuable to those who possessed and used them were their material and content. The cultural and economic value of metal has already been discussed; made from bronze and (in one case) silver, the tablets were finely crafted and individualised. In societies in which coins were scarce, the *tesserae* were unique, shimmering pieces of metal inscribed with words that sounded and looked official. The words, too, brought value to the tablets. The interplay between power and the spread of writing in Gaul is explored by Greg Woolf in a 1994 article entitled, ‘Power and the spread of writing in the West.’ He concludes that power relations shaped ‘the way that writing was adopted, adapted, used and rejected,’ and argues that writing was important as a symbolic medium that had ‘the power to puzzle’ (Woolf 1994, 98). That the written form of Celtiberian relied on a foreign (Iberian) alphabet and was apparently used in limited epigraphic contexts,

suggests that literacy was restricted to the élite. Thus, written language and precious materials work together to enhance the tablets' value as prestige goods.

In sum, the *hospitium tesserae* demonstrate the importance of zoomorphic figures in the Celtiberian visual vocabulary. Animals were the overwhelmingly popular choice for the shape of the tablets, and makers were adept at fashioning bronze into bulls, boars, fish, and birds. In addition to their obvious significance as records of written Celtiberian and the institution of hospitality, they offer crucial evidence of how cultural identity was depicted visually. Certain animals can be connected with religion or trade; the *perspectiva cenital* is clearly linked to a particular tribe, the Arevaci. Hand-shaped tablets give concrete expression to the content of the inscription, illustrating a symbiotic relationship between images and text. From a functional point of view, the shape of the tablet allowed the ancient viewer to understand the purpose of the *tessera*, even if he could not read the text. Since the agreements often linked two parties separated by a great distance, it is likely that the designers and makers chose images that said something about their tribe, locality, and social position. In essence, they created portable emblems of cultural identity.

III. Weapons and Shields

Weapons were useful for hunting and war, and they were also status symbols and markers of identity, valuable both because they were made from metal and because they could be decorated with elaborate designs. Élite Celtiberians were in the position to formulate and disseminate political and social ideology, and one of the ways they did so was to promote the image of a horse-riding warrior as an iconic emblem of Celtiberian cultural identity. The prominence of weapons in burials illustrates their importance to individuals' identity, with elaborate or rare pieces marking the owner as a member of the élite stratum. This section examines Celtiberian swords, shields, and armour dated to the period mid-4th – early 2nd century BC. It gives an overview of the types of weapons made and the constituent elements of the Celtiberian panoply, but the primary focus is on pieces with figural and geometric designs, which provide another perspective on Celtiberian visual language.

Typical Celtiberian weapons and armour: function and appearance

The weapons most frequently associated with Celtiberian warriors are the sword, shield, dagger, lance, helmet, greaves, bow, sling, and cuirass or breastplate. Greek and Latin texts corroborate the physical and artistic evidence; archaeologists can conclude with certainty that these objects were used by Celtiberian warriors.

During the so-called Middle Celtiberian period (5th – 3rd centuries BC), warrior burials included swords of the antenna or *frontón* types, spearheads, shield with a bronze or iron boss, short stabbing knife, and, in some cases, bronze disc-breastplates and helmets (Lorrio 1997, 380). Horse harnesses were sometimes deposited as well, indicating the high status of the deceased. Noteworthy is the weapons' range of origins. The various types of antenna swords reflect two influences, one from Languedoc (via Catalonia) and the other from Aquitaine. The *frontón* swords, however, are probably of Mediterranean origin and would have come to Celtiberia through southern Iberia from the early 5th century BC onwards. Bronze helmets, breastplates, and large bosses of similar technique to each other, for example the disc-breastplates that are close in form to Italic pieces (Lorrio 1997, 275-7), were also imported. Weapons were imported because they were exotic and prestigious, and because they were often of better quality than those produced locally.

A significant shift in the balance of power changed the weapons' pattern in Celtiberia during the 4th century. With the rise of the Arevaci tribe, a high proportion of burials in their territory – the Upper Duero River valley – included weapons, whilst burials in the territories of the other Celtiberian tribes diminished in wealth. The Arevaci used La Tène type swords and other pieces from southern Gaul. It is possible that they were brought back by Celtiberian mercenaries or arrived through exchanges of prestige goods. Finally, in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC – the period immediately preceding the arrival of Roman power – weapons of local provenience were included in burials, but they were outnumbered by jewellery and fibulae, which increasingly replaced weapons as elements of status and social symbols.

Weapons adorned with visual images will be discussed here. They are the antenna sword, shield, breastplate, and helmet. The full range of Celtiberian weapon types and subtypes is studied by Fernando Quesada Sanz in several publications, the most extensive of them being his 1997 *El armamento ibérico*. He investigates the defensive and offensive instruments of war used by Celtiberians and Iberians during the period 6th – 1st century BC, and documents the patterns of trade and exchange that brought new weapons' designs into the Peninsula. Quesada Sanz concludes that Celtiberian weapons in the 4th and 3rd centuries BC represented several sources of influence, with emphasis on La Tène-inspired objects such as the sword. He defines the 'espada de La Tène' as a sword with a double-edge blade at a right angle to the 'antenna' handle, and illustrates the high concentration of these found in Celtiberia (Quesada Sanz 1997, 243; 256, fig. 155). Whereas warriors in Gaul generally used swords averaging 80 cm in length and without a point, and Iberian Celts used long swords with one blade (the *falcata*), Celtiberians used short swords (50 – 60 cm maximum) with a double blade and sharp point (Pérez Casas 1988, 117).

The *falcata* – the Iron Age Iberian weapon *par excellence* – has been found in high concentrations in the southern part of the Peninsula, but not in the north, where it has been

found in low concentrations (Quesada Sanz 1997, 61; 70, fig. 10). The fewer than ten *falcatas* found in Celtiberia arrived there through trade or were brought back by indigenous warriors. And, where Greek influence is attested on weapon types in southern Iberia, Celtiberian pieces suggest no such influence. No single region, then, can be credited with driving weapons development in 4th and 3rd century Celtiberia. Through gift exchange and trade networks, a variety of defensive and offensive weapons were introduced to the region, and provided local makers with ideas that they could apply to their products in innovative ways. In turn the Celtiberian-made swords, helmets, breastplates, and daggers that have been found in southern Iberia and southern Gaul may have influenced weapons' makers in those areas.

Knives, daggers, and swords were sometimes ritually bent or broken before being deposited in the grave (eg., Aguilar de Anguita graves A and B; Arcóbriga grave B; Osma graves 2, 10 and 14). This practice may be explained by the highly personal significance attached to these weapons: in western and central Europe during the Bronze Age, a warrior's sword was 'the new form of personal weaponry' (Treherne 1995, 109). Whereas axes and daggers were used as instruments of war, having been adapted from existing tools, the sword was 'the first object clearly designed for battle' (Treherne 1995). With individualised details such as engraved patterns and embellished hilts, the sword was part of a man's personal identity as a warrior. Bending or breaking a sword, or its relatives the dagger and knife, ensured that no other warrior would be able to use it. Furthermore, deliberately destroying an expensive and prestigious object boasted the wealth and status of the dead and his survivors.

The shield was an active piece of defensive equipment, whereas the helmet, breastplate, and greaves were passive, defensive pieces of equipment. Celtiberian warriors tended to carry a round shield made of stiff animal hide stretched over wood, held in place with a metal boss on the exterior and handle on the interior. The diameter of the metal boss ranged between 20 and 40 centimetres. Some shields made entirely of bronze have been recovered in burials, and they may have been used for battle, but the animal skins on the normal shields would have offered superior flexibility, stretching but not shattering when hit by a spear or sword (Quesada Sanz 1997, 491). One of the advantages of the shield was that, unlike breastplates or other body armour it did not need to be tailor-made and would therefore have been less expensive (Quesada Sanz 1997, 483). Decorations on the boss and outer surface of the Celtiberian warrior's shield facilitated the identification of the bearer as heraldic symbols in the medieval period did.

Body armour was often made of metal and decorated with figural and non-figural designs. Like the shields, they could form part of a system of identification on the battlefield. In addition to offering protection, helmets and breastplates allowed the owner to display his wealth and status. Round discs of metal measuring approximately 20 cm across (sometimes as many as 26 cm) were attached to the body by means of leather straps criss-crossing the back

in the 'X' pattern familiar from fibulae figures discussed earlier (Quesada Sanz 1997, 572). Breastplates were decorated with concentric circles, animals, vegetal patterns, and geometric designs. Helmets with elaborate ear-pieces and visors suggest that these, too, were media for displaying individual social and cultural identity.

Images on the weapons

Trade networks and gift exchange brought new weapons' technology into Celtiberia as well as new visual language. This section focuses on four panoplies found buried in four Celtiberian necropoleis. Since it is unlikely that all of the objects were manufactured locally, it is not possible to speak of these as emblematic of Celtiberian visual culture. They do, however, illustrate the types of images circulating in the region, and shed light on the decorative motifs that adorned metallurgical pieces produced contemporaneously and later by Celtiberians. These weapons were markers of status; their designs must have been admired by local élites because they were replicated on jewellery of local provenience.

1. Grave A from the necropolis at Alpanseque (figure 2.34)

The first panoply to be discussed here was discovered at the necropolis at Alpanseque (prov. Soria). The burial comprised an iron dagger of *frontón* type, iron shield boss, bronze helmet with iron nails, and a knife and lance point, both in iron (Cabré 1942, fig. 7; Lorrio 1997, 151 fig. 59; Schüle 1969, 262 and Tafeln 25 and 26). The tip of the knife was intentionally broken off. Of the grave's contents, only the helmet and shield were decorated with designs. The helmet is conical and consists of four bronze segments soldered together with iron bands. Each segment is richly decorated. The bottom-half of each segment has two parallel bands of herringbone, and at the lower edge is a band of raised dots. The upper half includes concentric circles with radiating lines. The segments were paired and soldered so that a larger radiating circle overlaps each pair. One other helmet of this type was found in the same necropolis and they were both associated with 'rich or very rich' burial goods (Lorrio 1997, 166).

All that remains of the shield is a bronze boss; the wood and animal skin have decomposed completely. The boss is a raised circle with a cross at the very centre. Twelve 'spokes' ending in a globular shape radiate from the circle. Each globe has a raised dot. Four bronze circles, two on each edge of the shield face, held in place the internal handle. The shield and the helmet can be dated to the 4th or early 3rd century, a period when Celtiberian metallurgical skills were on the rise and local production of weapons and armour increased significantly (Lorrio 1994b; Lorrio 1997, 156). Items comparable to all of the objects found in Grave A at Alpanseque are known to have been found in the vicinity of this grave (cp. graves 4 and 5, Schüle 1969, Tafeln 28 – 30), so it is likely that the helmet and shield were manufactured in Celtiberia.

2. Grave 16 from Atienza, necropolis at Altillo del Cerropozo (c. early- to mid-4th cen. BC) (figure 2.35)

Grave 16 from the necropolis at Altillo del Cerropozo, near Atienza, is one of the richest Celtiberian graves excavated (Cabr  1937, 116, L m. 29 figs. 48 – 49; Sch le 1969, 259 and Tafeln 19 – 20). Some eighteen metal goods were interred in a single burial. These included a bronze dagger with silver handle, sheath with bronze and silver details, large silver belt-buckle, bronze-and-silver plaque, two iron lance points, a bronze fibula, four iron nails, an iron knife, and an iron bit and muzzle for one or two horses. (Sch le 1969, 259: ‘gebrochene Trense’; ‘zwei lange gerade Trensenknebel’; ‘zwei halbkreisf rmige Trensenknebel.’) The knife was intentionally bent. The belt-buckle, dagger, sheath, and plaque were decorated with spirals, concentric circles, and bands of line patterns.

The dagger and its sheath are of excellent quality and stand out from the other items for their value and sophistication. The dagger is made of bronze and its hilt has flat spherical antennae. The handle is decorated with five bands of silver-inlaid lines running parallel or in zigzags. The hollow-ground blade bulges at the middle and tapers to a sharp point. It is decorated with long, sleek lines running along the contours of the blade.

The dagger’s sheath was probably made of animal skin because all that remains of it are the silver pieces that formed its framework. The sides of the sheath feature tiny swirls running their length. Near the tip is a band of silver decorated with a hound’s-tooth pattern. This band would have embellished the sheath, and would also have stabilised it. The top of the sheath, where the dagger was inserted, was silver, and engraved with two pairs of three decorative bands each, set perpendicular to the tip and in mirror image of each other. Each pattern comprises one band of swirls, a band of short parallel lines in the centre, and the hound’s-tooth pattern at the outer edge. Silver rings at the hilt and centre would have allowed the owner to strap the weapon to his waist or chest.

A bronze belt-buckle and decorative plate were found in the same burial. The belt-buckle is rectangular and its centre presents an elaborate concentric circle design engraved in silver. Framing the concentric circle design are two S-swirls at one side and three bronze nails. The nails would have held in place the leather strap through which the actual belt (a thick cord or strip of leather) was looped. The decorative bronze plate is rectangular and features three large concentric circles inlaid in silver. Four further concentric circles are attached along one of the long edges of the rectangular plate. They are placed such that they appear to dangle, much like an insignia or a modern medal of honour.

In the Atienza necropolis some twenty Iron Age incineration graves have been discovered, plus eighteen to twenty Roman-era graves that included *terra sigillata*. The Iron Age graves had urns with lids or stones over the opening. No *stelai* marked any of the graves.

It does not appear as though the graves were laid out or organised in a particular way, since rich and poor burials have often been found next to each other (Schüle 1969, 258). The objects from grave 16 can be dated to the period early- to mid-4th century BC, when Iberian weapons declined in use among Celtiberians, and more locally-made products were included in burials (Lorrio 1997, 167).

3. Grave A from the necropolis at Arcóbriga (c. 3rd – 2nd century BC) (figure 2.36)

Among the three hundred incineration burials at the Arcóbriga necropolis near Monreal de Ariza (in the upper Jalón river valley) was a grave that contained a bronze-and-silver antenna-hilt dagger, two iron lance points, iron knife (ritually bent), bronze fibula, and two bronze rings. A few pieces of metal that may have been used as tools, or constituent elements of another weapon were also included (Schüle 1969, 279; Tafel 64). The iron spear points have been stuck onto a wooden shaft and have a pronounced rib along the blade. The dagger's iron blade tapers from the handle, bulges at the centre, then tapers to a sharp point. Lines were engraved along the blade in harmony with its contours, but these are now scarcely visible. The blade was inserted into the handle, soldered into place, and reinforced with nails. The grip is silver and features several bands of intricate geometric patterns, lozenges, parallel lines, and zigzags. At the end of the handle is a pair of flat spherical antennae.

The objects from grave A at Arcóbriga should be dated to the period mid-3rd to early-2nd century BC. During this period, few armaments were included in burials; in fact, the archaeological record documents widespread impoverishment in grave goods in Celtiberian necropoleis. Élite burials continued to include a few items, but they were nowhere near as lavish as they once had been (Lorrio 1997, 171).

4. Grave 12 from Osma (c. late 3rd – early 2nd century BC) (figure 2.37)

In contrast with the earlier panoplies discovered at Alpanseque and Atienza, the panoplies interred at Osma over 150 years later are smaller, consist of fewer objects, and are of noticeably inferior quality. The necropolis of Osma was located 750 miles south of Uxama, a town active in the Iron Age and Roman periods.

Grave 12 contained an iron dagger, bronze sheath, iron lance point, iron *pilum*, bronze buckle, and iron knife. The inclusion of the *pilum* illustrates the use of Roman weapons in the region. Only the dagger's sheath is decorated. The dagger itself has a *frontón* type pommel, with two discs pressed into the grip. The sheath is made of a sheet of bronze, cut to fit the dagger. It is engraved with concentric circles; along the edge run two parallel bands of incised dots.

The social and cultural contexts of decorated weapons

Most weapons from Celtiberia in the period 5th – 2nd centuries BC were not decorated. Few lance points, stabbing knives, and arrowheads were embellished with any sort of pattern or design, and they accounted for the majority of weapons used in Celtiberian warfare and hunting. Weapons likely to be decorated were the sword or dagger (and sheaths), shield boss, and defensive equipment such as the helmet and breastplate. These were precisely the pieces that decorated the warrior's body (in the case of armour and helmets) or were on prominent display in battle (the sword and shield). Lance points and arrowheads, on the other hand, were hurled about in great quantity and the users probably did not expect to recover them. Designs on the shields and armour helped to identify the warrior, and allowed him to advertise his status as an élite fighter. To obtain a bronze-and-silver sword, for example, required a great amount of personal wealth and/or involvement in an important gift exchange.

The ornaments and engravings on weapons reveal more about the societies that manufactured and used them than simply about such societies' war-mongering. That weapons were decorated illustrates their non-utilitarian significance, which was expressed in a variety of forms, including political, religious, and ritual contexts. It is difficult to detect and analyse aesthetic appreciation among Celtiberians because their perception of 'art' differed greatly from ours. The engraved silver grooves that we consider 'artistic' in a Celtiberian dagger handle, for example, may have been primarily functional originally. But there were easier, plainer ways to make the grip slip-proof. What might look repetitive and monotonous to modern eyes could have had symbolic significance for Celtiberians. On the whole, armaments were considered appropriate for aesthetic embellishment.

The nature of this embellishment was non-figural, emphasising geometric shapes, line patterns, and swirls over human and animal figures. Figural motifs seldom appear on weapons recovered from Celtiberian sites. A belt from the necropolis at Arcóbriga provides a rare example of a Celtiberian armament decorated with a figure. The belt is made of four thin square sheets of bronze (Lorrio 1997, 231 fig. 97; Schüle 1969, Tafel 68 n. 1). Each square is engraved with a horse – highly stylised and blocky, with little in the way of naturalising features, but unquestionably equine. It is not certain whether this object was worn in battle or used for ceremonial purposes. It was not found interred with weapons.

Further afield, a belt from the necropolis at La Osera (prov. Ávila) is adorned with five bronze and silver plates each presenting a scene of an eagle clutching a small bird with its talons (Schüle 1969, Tafel 128). The eagle's wings are spread and its beak is sharp. A similar, but not identical, scene was engraved onto a bronze plaque, discovered in a grave in Cabecico del Tesoro, Murcia (Nieto 1947, fig. 34). The eagle's realistic features, the scene's drama, and the marshy reeds surrounding the figures are not attested in any other object from this region.

The archaeological record does not suggest that anything similar was made locally. Parallels to this scene are found on Greek coins from Olympia and Akragas, and it is likely that the belt from La Osera was an import from an area under Greek artistic influence – probably via southern Iberia since Greek traders were active there.

It is clear that in the 4th and 3rd centuries, Celtiberian metals craftsmen *did* use figural themes for equine fibulae and *hospitium tesserae*, and stylised people and animals were painted onto ceramic vessels. It is interesting to note that figures were not used on armaments, which was also the case in southern and western Iberian. These areas also favoured geometric patterns for their weapons and armour, but they preferred S-swirls and Orientalising vegetal tendrils to the Celtiberians' concentric circles, hound's-tooth, and parallel lines' patterns. The hilts and sheaths from Celtiberia are similar to examples discovered in La Tène sites in Gaul and Britain. Specifically, a penchant for engraving the edges of the sheath with a narrow band of geometric pattern, then engraving a strip of the centre field with a different geometric pattern, is attested on sheaths from throughout Western Europe (Lenerz-de Wilde 1977, Tafel 64). Because these objects circulated widely, it is difficult to say with certainty that Celtiberian weapons makers produced their own decorated goods, or that all of the decorated La Tène armaments found in Celtiberia were imports. Since there are differences among La Tène armaments from Britain, Gaul, and Iberia, it is probable that what was originally foreign artistic practice was adopted by Celtiberian ateliers, who modified sheath and hilt decorating by using geometric patterns of symbolic and aesthetic importance to local consumers.

The concentric circle enjoyed widespread and enduring popularity, appearing on armaments as well as fibulae, jewellery, and ceramics. Concentric circles and crosses were used throughout Europe and are attested on Greek ceramics since the 10th century BC (Lenerz-de Wilde 1977, 78). But the Celtiberian version tends to comprise two or more separate circles, whereas the Greek and Celtic versions tend to comprise a continuous curling line (spiral). Interpretations of the concentric circles were discussed in section I in the context of the equine fibulae. As with the fibulae, the question of their precise meaning is open.

The symbols made the armaments valuable for cultural and personal reasons. They were also of value because they added to the economic and social prestige of the weapons and armour they decorated. The term 'prestige weapon' is sometimes used to describe apparently non-utilitarian artefacts whose precise function or significance remains unclear. In Celtiberian studies, 'prestige' weapons might include swords, daggers, and shields of expensive materials (bronze-and-silver as opposed to iron), rich with embellishments. If they were not taken into battle, costly, prestigious weapons could be displayed at other times and would have been part of the owner's identity as a hunter or fighter. Archaeological remains give insight to the rarity and value of weapons among Celtiberian men. In the necropolis at La Cogotas (Ávila), 16.8% of all graves contained finds, and of these, 18% contained weapons; only five possessed a full

panoply, consisting of spears, dagger and shield (Kurtz 1987). In Sector VI of La Osera necropolis, the proportions are similar: 355 out of 517 burials were without any finds. Only sixty-five of those with finds contained weapons, mostly one or two spears, with a few possessing a dagger, or a sword and shield. Some of the larger burials contained horse harnesses, roasting-spits and cauldrons (Lenerz-de Wilde 1991, 211 and fig. 152).

The majority of weapons found in Celtiberian graves are without decoration: fewer than 5% were engraved with any sort of embellishment, and fewer than 1% included silver inlay. But these numbers change over the years. There was, for example, a high concentration of decorated armaments in the necropolis at Alpanseque, whose graves should be dated to the period 5th – late 4th century BC. The concentration of decorated armaments in the necropolis at Arcóbriga, which is dated to the period late 4th – late 3rd century BC, was low. Any number of reasons could explain the variation. The power shift in Celtiberia that saw the Arevaci rise to predominance led to the impoverishment of other tribes in the region. Prestige weapons were popular in Alpanseque, but the élites of Arcóbriga may have had another way of marking status. Alternatively there may have been less demand for such goods in Arcóbriga. Quesada Sanz's study of burial goods in Iron Age Iberia illustrates the changes over time in weapons deposition. During the 7th and 6th centuries – the so-called Orientalising Period – in southern Iberia, wealth and status were displayed in funerary contexts by the deposition of symbols of excellence, such as chariots or imported goods. 'Weapons were conspicuously rare among grave-goods, and the concept of quality seems to have been more important than the mere accumulation of goods' (Quesada Sanz 1998, 70). But after the end of the 5th century BC, weapons take precedence over any other category of objects as symbols of status and wealth. Quesada Sanz writes, 'the old concept of quality was largely abandoned and the accumulation of lower-quality imported goods [...] was used to indicate wealth and/or status' (70). The argument made for explaining changes in weapons deposition in southern Iberia and the varying concentrations of decorated armaments may apply to the Celtiberian situation, but further research is needed before drawing conclusions.

Thus it was the élite of the Celtiberian tribes who wore elements of La Tène personal equipment and who used the La Tène sword. They used their access to gift-exchange and trade networks to obtain decorated armaments and/or to commission them from local ateliers familiar with the preferred techniques. The possession and display of these items was part of the nexus of 'bronze, weapons of war, and a masculine ethos' of Western European culture groups (Earle 1998). Paul Treherne (1995) has traced the emergence of masculine self-identity and the notion of the warrior's beauty during the Bronze Age. Here the warrior's metal weapons and armour constitute these qualities, not merely reflect them. Bronze, silver, and iron armaments were elements crucial to a Celtiberian's personal identity as a warrior and to his communal identity as a member of a particular social stratum.

Concluding remarks

The range, quantity, and quality of the Celtiberian metallurgical objects were the products of an emerging élite and a new mode of prestige. They represented the mobilisation of social forces and special skills (mining, smelting, casting, etc.), the elaboration of material culture, ostentation, and an ethos of accumulation (Voutsaki 1997, 43).

Decorated armaments, rare in Celtiberian necropoleis, are associated with rich burials and would have been available only to those with connections to gift-exchange and trade networks. Horse and horseman fibulae were prestigious personal adornments. It is likely that these were owned and worn by equestrians, whose ability to obtain and maintain a horse signifies high socio-economic status. The *hospitium tesserae* were official documents of hospitality agreements entered into by tribes or individuals from different tribes. Only chiefs or their advisors had the authority to enter into such agreements, and the prestige of the tablets is clear from the text inscribed on them.

What we learn from these objects is that during the 4th – late 2nd centuries BC, the period immediately preceding Roman occupation, élite men in Celtiberia saw themselves as warriors, and especially equestrian warriors. The equine fibulae with severed heads are striking physical expressions of this identity. Decorated swords, sheaths, and helmets suggest that some warriors had weapons with which they identified personally. The geometric patterns on the armaments, stylised animals and fish on the *tesserae*, men and horses on the fibulae, and concentric circles everywhere, attest to the wide range of images that made up the Celtiberian visual language. All of these recurred in adapted form on Celtiberian ceramic vessels, coins, and stone *stelai* in succeeding years, as later chapters will illustrate.

As so often in archaeology, the material record in Celtiberia during the Late Iron Age reveals more about the élite and élite men in particular, than any other segment of society. Had this chapter included undecorated jewellery and tools from the burials of this period, something could be said about élite women and the non-élite, but the bulk of information would centre on élite men. This fact itself says something about the under-represented groups: they would not have seen themselves as equestrian warriors and tribal representatives. The myth of the noble Celtiberian horse-riding fighter, exaggerated and disseminated by ancient authors, lifted him to iconic status, where he came to represent a culture-wide identity for all Celtiberians. The accuracy of this myth, and how the equestrian figure relates to social structure and visual language in Roman-era Celtiberia, is explored in a variety of media, beginning with 3rd and 2nd century ceramics in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: HUMAN AND ANIMAL FIGURES ON PAINTED POTTERY

Painted human figures on ceramics from Celtiberia offer insight to how people of the area depicted themselves, and to what activities were considered important for representation. The ceramics studied in this chapter date from (no earlier than) the early 3rd century to the early 1st century BC. They help to trace the evolution of figured images in the Celtiberian world over a period of time in which several cultural influences reached the Meseta. The earliest of the vessels are probably from the period just before the arrival of those Roman forces led by M. Porcius Cato (c. 195 BC). The corpus comes from the time of the Celtiberian Wars, the destruction of Numancia in 133 BC, the Sertorian revolt, and the establishment of Roman towns in the region. The corpus of painted ceramics is one area of the artistic production of late Iron Age Celtiberia where we have some sense of the original range, and variety, of the local visual vocabulary, and its subjects, themes, and quality, before the arrival of Roman cultural practices.

Pottery is important to archaeology. Potsherds typically survive better than other material data, and are found in such abundance that trends in consumption, production, and decorative tastes can be traced over time and area. Since most culture groups in antiquity used ceramic vessels, cross-cultural analyses of vessel size and shape can shed light on how pottery technology and tastes differed according to region and population. Noting changes in pot shapes in a given site or settlement gives some indication of the outside cultural influences that may have affected the pottery techniques in that settlement. For example, the proliferation in 2nd and 1st century BC contexts of amphora shards at Celtiberian sites indicates local demand for Roman wine and oil, and increased contact with Roman pottery types.

The surviving body of ceramic material from Celtiberia – thirty-six painted human figures from twenty-five ceramic vessels – is not large, but the vessels are the only pre-Roman Celtiberian media to bear such images.¹ The examples considered in this study are drawn from major cities including Numancia, Clunia, Tiermes and Uxama, as well as the smaller sites of Ocenilla, El Pradillo, and San Antonio. Numancia has produced the largest single body of Celtiberian ceramics, painted or plain. Of the 1,300 clay vessels excavated there over a century of digs, some 500 are plain (without any decoration) and 800 are painted. In addition, there are nearly 1,000 painted fragments, half of them painted with more than one colour.

¹ Caves and rocks near Soria and Segovia were decorated with schematic male figures in the 4th millennium BC. This is the only other major source of pre-Roman painted human figures in the region. See: Lucas Pellicer 1992. At Soria, forty-six such paintings were found; at Segovia, forty-seven.

Human figures are rare on Celtiberian pottery. Eighty per cent of the polychrome vessels are decorated solely with geometric motifs, whilst only 20% bear animate figures – birds, fish, humans, and other animals (Romero Carnicero 1992). Moreover, the Numantine numbers are exceptional: the majority of Celtiberian ceramic vessels were left unadorned, and of those decorated, most were painted with horizontal bands, circles, semicircles, or other simple geometric forms. A small percentage offer painted figures. *Cauca* (modern Coca), an *oppidum* 160 km southwest of Numantia belonging to the Vaccaei (a non-Celtiberian tribe), has produced the largest pottery collection from any 3rd/2nd century site in the western Meseta. Yet, of thousands of preserved fragments, only eighteen have painted figures, none of them human (Blanco García 1995, 222).

Thus, painted figures occupy a special place in the Celtiberian pottery corpus, and prompt the questions that are the focus of this chapter: How is the human figure portrayed? What do the visual decisions tell us about the value world of the makers and users? Is the range of styles best explained in terms of chronological development, local preference, ateliers' 'schools', or a combination of factors? How were these painted vessels used?

The body of scholarship on the pottery from Numantia spans nearly a century, from Constantin Koenen's chapters in the original excavation reports from 1905-1912, through catalogues by Blas Taracena (1942), Federico Wattenberg (1963), and Fernando Romero Carnicero (1976), to recent analyses of iconography by Ricardo Olmos Romera (1986) and José Manuel Pastor Eixarch (1998). The earlier publications are useful for basic information and catalogues of photos, and the recent articles are interesting for their provocative questions and innovative ways of looking at the images. This chapter looks at figural paintings on vessels from throughout the region known as Celtiberia – not just from Numancia – in order to investigate the full range of artistic and cultural ideas among the Celtiberian tribes. It considers the social significance of the objects' context, shape, and use. Finally, it compares the style of the Celtiberian figures with painted pottery from other cultural ambits.

The chapter begins with a discussion of pottery chronology in Celtiberia, and gives an overview of ceramics production and technology in the region. The second section describes the iconography of each of the painted pots and potsherds of Celtiberia. The third section analyses the figures and their context, by which is meant the use and function of the vessels and the significance of the figures and symbols. In the fourth and final section, comparisons are made with painted pots from Lliria, Azaila, Izana, and other Iberian sites, to look for sources of influence and to consider whether painted pottery from the Meseta reflects a 'Celtiberian style'.

I. The development of Celtiberian ceramics and questions of chronology

Federico Wattenberg's division of Numantine pottery into five time periods, explicated in his 1963 *Las cerámicas indígenas de Numancia* (hereafter abbreviated to *Cerámicas*) is widely accepted by scholars (*Cerámicas*, 27-36). But Wattenberg's chronology should be reassessed because it relies almost completely on Adolf Schulten's historical interpretation of Numancia: in other words, Wattenberg used Schulten's historical chronology to date the pottery rather than the pottery to help provide dates for the city.² This study does not aim to establish a precise chronology, but it is important to consider the diachronic development of Celtiberian ceramics more generally, and the introduction of technologies such as the wheel and high-temperature oven. Doing so requires close scrutiny of Wattenberg's methods and conclusions.

The Wattenberg chronology begins with the last quarter of the 4th century BC, considered by Schulten to be the first Celtiberian phase of the town, based on the evidence of building materials, habitation patterns, and house forms.³ According to Wattenberg, the years 320 to 220 BC saw the production of hand-made vessels with incised decorations, concentric circles, and affixed metal ornaments. He dates the first wheel-thrown vessels to the period 220 to 179 BC – a phase that produced stamped, but not painted, vessels.

Using the report from Polybius (35.2) of Roman military forces attacking holdings of the Vaccaei and the four Celtiberian tribes in 180/179, Wattenberg argues that this caused crises in local *oppida* and a pause in their artistic productions. After the year of turmoil, a new period of ceramic design supposedly began, resulting in richly painted wheel-thrown vessels baked in high-temperature ovens (*Cerámicas*, 33, 38-40). Monochrome and polychrome pieces with animate figures were made, according to Wattenberg, between 179 and 133 BC (the year Numancia was burned and destroyed by Roman forces⁴). The chronology continues into the third quarter of the 1st century BC. Wattenberg interprets a second destruction layer at Numancia – clearly post-dating the 133 BC destruction layer – as evidence of Pompeian action in 75 BC. This alleged second destruction is Wattenberg's watershed for dating pottery to pre- and post-75 BC. Ceramics produced in the period 133 to 75 BC imitate red-wall Campanian vessels, and some 'indigenous' pottery still bear simple painted motifs. From 75 BC, to the fall of the city at the hands of the Vaccaei in 29 BC, the ceramic vessels are a mix of Roman and native forms.

² Schulten carried out extensive excavations at Numancia from 1906-1912, with a further minor season in 1927. His reports are published in four volumes, *Numantia. Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen 1905-1912* Band I—IV (Munich 1931-33). Reference to this publication is abbreviated to *Numantia*.

³ Schulten, *Numantia* Band II, 114-184. 'Numantia gehört wohl zu den späteren Siedlungen der Keltiberer und ist kaum vor 300 v.Chr., eher später, erbaut worden.' – Schulten 1933, 18.

There are several problems with this chronology. First, Wattenberg's date for the introduction of the wheel (last years of the 3rd century/early 2nd century BC) is surprisingly late. Manuel Pellicer's study of ceramics from sites in the Ebro Valley considers the years 300 to 200 BC to have been, 'el apogeo de la cerámica a torno pintada.' He dates the introduction of the pottery wheel to Celtiberia to the beginning of the 4th century BC, and dates the painted pieces to the late 3rd century BC (Pellicer 1962, figs. 5 & 6). Eloisa Wattenberg García, examining wheel-thrown pottery remains from across Celtiberia, concludes that the wheel was in widespread use at northern Meseta sites by the end of the 3rd century BC (Wattenberg García 1978, 14). Romero Carnicero argues that the pottery wheel was in use in the Central Meseta by 400 BC, while Juan Francisco Blanco García dates its introduction to *Cauca* to no later than 300 BC (Blanco García 1995, 2, 223; Romero Carnicero 1991, 502). It is unlikely that Numancia, already a wealthy and powerful city by the end of the 3rd century BC, adopted the newest pottery technology after small towns on the Meseta had done so. It is more likely that the wheel first came into use at Numancia and was then adopted by surrounding *oppida*.

Second, Wattenberg is incautious in his interpretation of the post-133 destruction layer. Numancia is not attested as having been attacked by Pompeius at the time of the Sertorian revolt (75-72 BC), whereas Appian specifies Pallantia and Calagurris, and Valerius Maximus names Contrebia, Clunia, Uxama, and Cauca, as victims of Roman military aggression (Appian, *Bell. Civ.* 1.112; Valerius Maximus 7.6.3). Nevertheless, Wattenberg seizes upon the destruction layer as evidence of a military action under Pompeius; he explains that it is not included in the ancient texts because 'su pequeño poblado sería destruído sin gran riesgo' ('its small village would have been destroyed without great risk') (*Cerámicas*, 27). This alleged destruction becomes his focal point for change in the pottery production at Numancia. It is true that there is evidence of new types of ceramics at Numancia after the destruction layer associated with 133, and it is true that there is evidence of a second destruction layer above that of 133. But the appearance of new pottery forms could be explained by trade or outside cultural influences, and in any case, the second destruction layer can neither be securely attributed to Pompeian action nor assigned to 75.

Finally, Wattenberg unquestioningly accepts Schulten's history of the city such that the years 179, 133, 75, and 29 are fixtures on the 'cronología absoluta de Numancia,' which purports to determine the 'cronología relativa' of the pottery (*Cerámicas*, 27). Whilst the historical information about Numancia may help us to understand the vicissitudes of that city's fortunes, it would be erroneous to use ancient authors' (often second-hand) reports to construct an absolute chronology that in turn dates the different phases of pottery and production technologies.

⁴ Val. Max. 2.7.1, *incendiis exustam ... solo aequavit.*

Schulten was an archaeologist of his time, working in the tradition of Heinrich Schliemann to fit the stratigraphy to ancient texts, rather than using ancient texts as possible aids in interpreting the stratigraphic layers. The historical narrative that Schulten has provided of the city of Numancia is convincing in its general outlines, but should not be superimposed over the ceramics' remains.

For the present study, three points about pottery development are important. (1) The stratigraphic layers dateable to well before the destruction layer of 133 contained clay vessels that were made on the wheel and then painted with figural scenes.⁵ From this we can suppose that the wheel, high-temperature oven, and decorative painting were all employed by Celtiberian ceramic makers before the arrival of Roman soldiers in the first quarter of the 2nd century BC. (2) Some of the decorative elements, such as *hippocampi*, griffins, and fish, are unparalleled in Iron Age indigenous art and probably reflect interaction with other cultures. (3) There is insufficient evidence to conclude (a) that monochrome vessels predate polychrome vessels; and (b) whether and how Roman military actions of 180/179 and 75 BC affected local pottery production.

II. Ceramics production and technology in Celtiberia (3rd – 1st centuries BC)

After the adoption of the wheel and oxidisation process, ceramics manufacturing required specialised equipment and skills. Workshops became places of commercial and creative activity, and decorated vessels were the products of buyer—maker interaction, professional craftsmanship, and, perhaps, patronage and commission. Ceramics produced by this process (wheel-thrown and oxidised) and painted with stylised fish, birds, and human figures are a hallmark of Celtiberian material culture and are, as such, an important expression of indigenous visual ideas.⁶

The clay is of local provenience, with the quality of wheel-thrown wares much higher than those made by hand, i.e. finer walls, even glazing, and smaller granules in the fabric. Wheel-thrown vessels can be divided into two general groups, monochrome and polychrome. Characteristic of the first group are red vessels with black paint; of the second group, red vessels with black and white paint, whitewashed red-clay vessels with black and red paint, and whitewashed red-clay vessels with ochre paint. White-walled vessels account for 20% of the corpus. Of the 800 decorated vessels from Numancia, 444 are polychrome and 356 monochrome.

⁵ Schulten, *Numantia* II, Blatt 55, 'Prähistorische und iberische Schicht bei Mauer 124-125.'

⁶ On the centrality of this type of pottery to Celtiberian culture: Blech *et al.* 2001, 369; Salinas de Frías 1998, 145: 'La cultura celtibérica (es) caracterizada fundamentalmente por las cerámicas a torno realizadas en un horno con alta temperatura y atmósfera oxidante, con decoración pintada ... con pintura negra.'

Celtiberian ateliers produced a number of vessel types, including basins, bowls, cups, pitchers, plates, and vases, in a range of sizes and with handles, spouts, lips, and decorative attachments. Wattenberg García's taxonomy of ceramics from 2nd and 1st century BC Celtiberian sites identifies twenty-seven forms, contained within eleven typological categories (Wattenberg García 1978). The type most widely attested is the basin, occurring in four forms. The forms differ from each other in small details (placement of handles, lip curvature), but each of them has tall walls (ranging from 9 to 11 cm) and a wide mouth (ranging from 11 to 24 cm, with an average width of 13 cm). These globular basins would have been ideal for everyday use – deep, wide, and sturdy enough for mixing or stirring. Handles are generally lacking, and on the few basins that have them, there is invariably one handle, which is attached horizontally at the belly. This feature made it easier to tip the vessel and pour out its contents, but it suggests that basins were not dipped into a stream or well, or carried long distances. Of the painted vessels from Numancia whose forms can be recognised, 15% are basins (Romero Carnicero 1976, 142).

Handled pitchers were not in widespread use (they are attested at only four Celtiberian sites), but the evidence from Numancia indicates that they were especially popular there, accounting for 27% of all polychrome painted vessels. The trilobular pitcher with single vertical handle at the shoulder would have been useful for dipping and pouring, the trefoil lip handy for preventing spills. The most striking fact about this form is its prominence: of the 120 polychrome painted pitchers from Numancia, seventy-two are trilobular with a single handle and ovoid body. Ateliers also produced undecorated trilobular pitchers, probably for practical use. Nevertheless, the elaborate geometric and figured paintings on so many of them suggest that the form was favored as recipient of decorative attention.

Cups could take many forms, and they have been found at Celtiberian sites with or without handles, foot, globular bulge, and protruding lip. At Numancia, 18% of the polychrome vessels are cups, most of them with a short foot. The dimensions of these cups (average height of 7 cm, average diameter of 13 cm) are such that the vessels were meant for individual use. Indeed, some cups have Celtiberian letters incised into the exterior wall – perhaps the owners' initials or names. The archaeological record has preserved more plain cups than decorated, and those that are painted tend to have geometric rather than figured designs.

Many of the vessels, particularly those decorated, were evidently intended for funerary use, so the figural motifs that they bear must be seen as part of the Celtiberian commemoration practice. Excavations at Las Ruedas, a Celtiberian necropolis in Valladolid, demonstrate the system of interment there. A hole of variable dimensions was opened in the ground, and into the hole was deposited the cremated remains of the deceased – often contained in a cinerary urn, but

not always. The cremated remains were accompanied by personal possessions and offerings. The hole was then covered with slabs of stone that had been smoothed and, on occasion, marked on top of that by a stone or other visible reminder (Sanz Mínguez 1990, 161). For the most part, the burials at Las Ruedas were individual, not group: fifty-five, or 85%, of the burials contained the remains and offerings of one person. There are a few mother/child and husband/wife burials. Most of these contained wheel-turned urns (66%), but hand-formed urns continued in use (Sanz Mínguez 1990, 162). The general description of burial and deposition is applicable to most Celtiberian necropoleis in the late Iron Age and early Roman period.

In addition to Las Ruedas, several other Celtiberian necropoleis attest to the use of hand-formed urns alongside wheel-thrown urns. At El Cantamento de la Pepina (Badajoz), of the 230 ceramic pieces identified, 35% of the urns were hand-formed and 65% wheel-thrown (Berrocal Rangel 1990). At the necropolis at Las Esperillas (Santa Cruz de la Zarza, Toledo), cinerary urns were ubiquitous in the eastern sector of the necropolis. The excavators reported 'great richness and precision in the decoration of the urns, some of which were of very good manufacture' (García Carillo and Encinas Martínez 1990, 317-8). Many of the urns were sealed with lids, and although most of them were wheel-thrown, hand-made urns were used in the earlier burials from the site, and continued in use even after the introduction of the pottery wheel. The evidence from Cerro Ógmico, in the upper Jalón valley of the province of Zaragoza, an early Iron Age necropolis, demonstrates that even in the early 6th century BC, Celtiberians were using globular urns to hold cremated remains of the deceased (La-Rosa Muncio and García-Soto Mateos 1995).

Wine was imported into Celtiberia from the 2nd century BC, initially to provide wine rations for Roman soldiers, but eventually to trade with locals. From 133 BC onwards, commercial relations between the coast and the interior were organised and the material record shows a great increase in the amount of imported amphorae (Cerdeño, Sanmartí and García Huerta 1999, 291). Pitchers with figural and geometric decoration may have been used for, or inspired by, the presentation and pouring of wine: prestigious objects for a prestige good.

In sum, within the range of vessel forms produced by Celtiberian ceramic makers, three general types were favoured for figured and geometric painting: pitchers, cups, and basins. Pottery forms changed over time, but the globular pitchers and urns remained in use continually (Ruíz Zapatero 1995, 35). Trilobular, handled pitchers were especially popular for poly- and monochrome figures, and their prominence may indicate special use or value. This argument will be pursued further in the section devoted to interpreting the figures.

III. The figured vessels and their iconography

The Celtiberian ceramics record presents a variety of figural types and arrangements, and they will be grouped according to visual theme. The major sources of information on Celtiberian ceramics and painted figures are F. Romero Carnicero's catalogue of polychrome vessels from Numancia, and F. Wattenberg's study of Numantine ceramics. Reference is made to pieces from these publications using the abbreviations *FRC* or *Cerámicas*, respectively, plus inventory number. For example, vessel 24 from Romero Carnicero's book is cited as *FRC* 24 and vessel 1214 from Wattenberg's is cited as *Cerámicas* 1214.

Two pieces that are of particular interest for their good state of preservation as well as for their figural decoration are wheel-thrown trilobular pitchers with a single handle and ovoid body, discovered at Numancia. Both are decorated with black and red paints on a whitewashed background. The first of these, figure 3.1, bears on the widest part of the jug a scene with a male figure, two horses, a smaller mammal (dog?) and concentric circles. The figures are outlined in black and filled in with red paint. The male figure's body and face are in profile, facing the viewer's right. His features are abstract: the single visible eye is impossibly large, almost half the size of his head; the distinction between nose and mouth is made by a C-shaped indentation in the face. He has broad shoulders and two thin arms, too short for the body. The torso tapers to a narrow waist. The legs bulge with thigh and calf muscles, and the left hand has three digits. The man wears a short tunic ending just above the thighs, as indicated by a band of squares at the neck, a similar band at the waist, and a simple hem. In his left hand, he holds the rein of the horse. In his right hand, he holds a stick or a short whip.

Flanking the male figure are two horses in profile. The animals are stylised: the necks and backs slope dramatically, and the legs curve to suggest motion but do not touch the ground. Each horse has one eye towards the viewer, consisting of an over-large circle with a single dot in the middle. Two lines project upward from each head, suggesting ears, and both horses are reined. The tails hang slack and end in a point. In front of the horse on the viewer's right is a small dog. It has a curved back, short tail, two pointed ears, and a muzzle extending from the simple circular eye. Above the male figure's head are two symbols, each one consisting of two concentric circles and a dot in the middle. The same symbol is directly behind his right leg.

The second trilobular pitcher from Numancia, figure 3.2, presents a male figure chasing two horses. The pitcher contained ashes at the time of its discovery, and could have held human remains. Its maximum diameter is 16.5 centimetres and its height from the base, 18.6 centimetres. The male figure is shown in profile and holds up his bent right arm behind him. His head is

similar to that of the figure on vessel 3.1. His torso is an inverted triangle, with wide shoulders and narrow waist. At the neck and waist is a double band of lines, suggesting the neckline and belt of his tunic. In his right hand is a whip. The left arm is missing, but the angle of the left shoulder suggests a stretch toward the first horse. The figure is part of a scene that also includes two horses and a dog. Both horses run away from him and have exaggerated slopes in the back and neck, curved legs, slack tail, large round eyes, and a square muzzle. Running alongside the second horse (at right) is a small dog with pointed ears and a short tail. Its details are stylised and schematised, with a large fish eye and a square nose.

Several geometric symbols are interspersed among the figures. To the man's right is an anchor-like object formed by a concave crescent shape and a long stroke of paint extending upwards from the curve of the crescent. This object appears on other Celtiberian painted vessels (*FRC 7* and *FRC 24*; *Cerámicas 1164*). Underneath the first horse is an object comprised of three concentric circles around a central point. Between the horses is a small rectangle with a double band at each short end. On the rump of the second horse is a cross. In two other Numantine vessels the cross is put to similar use, appearing on the rump of a horse in *FRC 24* and on the hindquarters of a dog in *FRC 19*.

Male figures take centre stage on a brown clay bowl from Numancia (figure 3.3). The bowl, decorated with black paints and measuring 21.2 centimetres across at the mouth, 14.3 centimetres in height from the base, was found buried with two other vessels, including figure 3.1. The figures are presented in a narrow frieze along the outside of the bowl, positioned near the top. Unrolling the scene, the figures run left to right from a hippocampus to a male figure. Two armed male figures face each other in combat at right. The figure's torso and thighs face the viewer, and his head and lower legs are in profile. His features are schematic, with a large round eye, ovular torso, narrow waist, and stick arms. His right leg is missing, but the left leg shows musculature in the calf and thigh. He wears a black helmet with a tall crest (bird's head and plumage?). His torso is white, except for a thick central vertical section painted ochre, which is perhaps the figure's armour. Black brush strokes at the neck, waist, and upper thighs form his short tunic. At the knee and ankle are more black brush strokes to show greaves. In his right hand he holds a lance, which is extended behind his head as if about to be launched. Attached to his left arm is a black shield.

Facing this figure is another armed figure. He, too, has his torso and thighs frontal, and his head, lower legs, and feet in profile. His torso is a large oval set upon a very narrow waist, from which extend two muscular thighs. Features are abstract, with the familiar large round eye, severe nose, and stick arms. The legs are powerful and the painter has depicted muscles in the

thighs and calves. The man wears a white helmet with small, spiky black lines running along the back of it. A similar series of short spikes runs along his shoulders and arms. His shoulders are draped with a thick garment, perhaps an animal pelt. He is dressed in black, with white pelt, white belt and white boots. In his right hand he holds a sword. With his left hand he holds a round shield that blocks most of his upper body. Wattenberg identifies one figure as Roman and the other as Celtiberian (*Cerámicas*, 213).

The third figure is preserved in a separate fragment. The head is broken off, but the neck, upper shoulders, torso, and legs remain. The bulging leg muscles, covered by greaves, show this figure to be male. His shoulders are wide and the torso narrows to the waist, and he has stick arms. He wears a long garment that falls past his knees and ends in a V-slit between the legs. The skirt of his garment is partially decorated with black splotches. His spindly right arm crosses over the torso, framing his body with the conjunction of his left arm. The upper torso is covered with two geometric shapes, one a three-sided object with three dots inside, the other a round sunburst with a dot in the middle. He faces the viewer's right, perhaps following another figure (whose right calf and thigh and garment fragment can be discerned).

On the exterior vessel wall opposite the armed male figures, two *hippocamps* face each other in an equally contentious fashion. Both *hippocamps* have a large fish tail and the neck and face of a horse. The equine features echo those of horses on vessels 3.1 and 3.2: swan necks, large round eyes, elongated muzzles, and pointed ears. In the foreground between the creatures is a long-legged bird atop a crescent-shaped nest with two eggs. The last two animate figures on the vase are placed between the pair of *hippocamps* and the pair of armed men. Each has a long, pointed tail with spikes or scales, two thin bird legs, the body of a large mammal, and a bird's head (griffins?). They reach out for each other aggressively.

Along the outside rim of the bowl, above the procession of figures, is a series of deep U-waves in blank spaces between the figures. Such U-waves, as will be discussed below, have been interpreted by some scholars as visual representations of music or of high-energy scenes.

Another fragment from a red clay vessel from Numancia seems to present a human figure in military garb (figure 3.4). Painted in black paint, the legs of a male figure are intact from the knees to the feet, as is his left lower thigh. The calf and thigh muscles are prominent. The legs are in profile with one foot in front of the other, facing the viewer's right. At each knee is a pattern of three parallel, horizontal lines; an identical effect is achieved at the ankles, depicting the boot worn by several other male figures on Celtiberian ceramic vessels. Just in front of the right knee is a short black line, perhaps the lower end of an object held in his hand.

Another fragment from the same vessel shows a dog in profile to the viewer's left, sporting a painted cross on its left haunch. A further small fragment shows the outline of a human limb – whether arm or leg is unclear – but the figure's context and actions are indecipherable.

Hippocamps make another appearance on a red clay storage vessel from Numancia, of which only fragments remain today (figure 3.5). The projected original diameter of the vessel is 52 centimetres, with a mouth diameter of 32 centimetres, and it was decorated with black, white, and red paints. This piece stands out for its depiction of a female figure, unique in the corpus of Celtiberian painted ceramics. All figures run along the widest part of the vessel's belly in a procession of *hippocamps* in facing pairs, with animate figures interspersed. The figure is positioned between two enormous *hippocampus* tails. Her face and body face the viewer. She is outlined in black and, except for a few details, painted white, her colour matching the background fabric. She is arresting for her completely frontal pose; only one other known figure is arranged this way (vessel 3.8). Her head is heart-shaped, with short black hair in a widow's peak, and she has a pointed chin. She has carefully depicted eyes, eyebrows, nose, lips, and ears. The eyes and lips are painted white. Her shoulders are broad and rounded, and around her waist she wears a white belt with an intricate XXXX pattern painted in black. The breasts are filled in with white paint and are shown as two black concentric circles with a dot in the middle; the small lines emanating from the outside circle give the impression of sunbursts. On each upper arm just above the elbow is a series of seven parallel white lines running horizontally, representing bracelets or sleeves. Her left arm is bent at the elbow and she holds out her empty left hand. The lower half of the body, including the lower right arm, is missing.

The figure wears a white veil. Its peak is above her head and it encloses her in a triangle, with one corner extending to each shoulder. The corner near her right shoulder is intact, and ends in a tassel. The edges are adorned with small black lines, suggesting a fringe. With her left hand, then, she is reaching for the veil's hem.

The remaining fragments show at least five partially intact *hippocamps*. Each *hippocampus* has an enormous fish tail comprised of concentric triangles. The tails are outlined in black, with every other level of triangle filled in white. The horses' heads are curved and the manes are carefully depicted. White paint is used to highlight various bands and details. Three of the *hippocamps* have sharp teeth, with which they bite into white fish. Two birds are also featured on this vessel. They have fat bodies and short wings with speckled feathers. Each bird is positioned between a separate pair of *hippocamps*.

Along the rim above the figural frieze are two bands of geometric symbols, one a series of black squares and the other, just below, a thin black line that erupts into deep U-waves to fill in the blank spaces between the figures (as on vessel 3.4).

The *hippocamps* are among the many fantastical creatures that Celtiberian pot painters used. A two-handled red clay vessel with globular body, found at Numancia, presents two half human-half bird figures (figure 3.6). The maximum diameter of the vessel is 24.5 centimetres, and the mouth 14.2 centimetres. It stands 27 centimetres tall. The two figures are part of a horizontal frieze occupying the surface area from the vessel's rim to the body's maximum diameter. The figures are nearly identical, and both are posed in the typical fashion with frontal body, profile face, and profile legs. One has a sharp nose and chin. His broad shoulders are round, the torso tapers into a small waist, and the garment hem flares out. His thighs and calves are muscular. The arms present a significant point of departure from the standard human figure type: they give the impression more of wings than arms, long and ending in points. They are positioned such that the man appears to be flying; indeed, one foot is already off the ground and the other is touching the ground with the only one toe. The man is outlined in black, and his thighs and heeled shoes are painted black. He wears a close-fitting white garment on the upper body that falls just along the hips. The black trousers that he wears end at the knees with a tassel, which could also be the upper ties for whatever footgear he is wearing. The 'wings' are white with black stripes.

The other figure is identical except for two details. On the top of his head he wears a short, tight black cap. He wears the same white garment on the upper body (the lower hem is visible on his hips) and black trousers down to his knees, with black tassels. His large round eye is painted white. Wattenberg labels the men 'dancers' and defines their arms as horns ('los brazos cuernos,' *Cerámicas*, 209). Bordering the figural frieze are parallel black lines. Above the men's heads is a wavy line that forms large U-waves, as seen in vessels 3.4 and 3.5.

Another fantastical creature appears on a red clay pitcher from Numancia. The pitcher is preserved in fragments, but its maximum diameter can be projected as 11 centimetres and its height 23 centimetres. The figural composition is rendered in black and white paints. The figure has features both human and animal. Its head is in the shape of an inverted teardrop and is in profile with a pointed nose and protruding lips. The right eye is a large white circle outlined in black, with a black dot in the centre. Along the top of the head is a thick stroke of black paint, perhaps a hood or helmet. The body is round, with broad shoulders tapering gently toward the midsection. The lower part of the figure is missing. Its arms are short and thin, sticking straight out from the body (the left arm much shorter than the right). On its back is a tuft of feathers.

Above the figure's head is a geometric pattern of straight and wavy lines. In front of its mouth is an ovular object outlined in black with a concentric black oval inside. It seems to float in space and its function is unclear. Altogether, the awkward features give this figure the appearance of a fish head atop an apple.

A fragment of a basket-type clay vessel from Numancia, with one handle across the top, presents six figures and two horses (figure 3.8). The projected maximum diameter of the vessel is 25 centimetres, and it was discovered in a burial containing ashes, charcoal fragments, and bones. Two of the six figures appear on the same fragment; two are isolated, and the remaining two appear to participate in their own scene. Their physical traits (broad shoulders, belted waist) are consistent with the Numantine visual vocabulary of male figures.

Beginning with the pair of figures, the one on the right (labelled 3.8a) has a conical body formed by two triangles, one inverted over the other with the narrow tips meeting at the waist. He has broad shoulders and his garment sweeps out in a broad hem, touching the ground and covering his feet. His body faces front and his face is in profile, looking toward the viewer's left. On his head he wears a tall, pointed black cap that covers the back of the head like a hood. His garment is elaborated with horizontal black lines and geometric bands (\\\\\\ pattern) at the shoulders and lower hem, and a thick belt. In his left hand he holds a jug by the handle. With his right arm he reaches for a bird that is on an altar. The altar's curved legs support what is clearly a shallow basin, with the bird's feet hidden inside, visible lip, and an ornamental zigzag pattern running along the side. The bird is black and its tail is nearer the figure on the right. This is a medium sized bird, appearing in the painting as equal in width to the man's shoulders. The bird's head and curved right wing are nearer the figure on the left (labelled 3.8b), a figure that remains only in part. The lower right corner of the left-hand figure's garment is preserved. It is the mirror image of the right-hand figure's garment: broad, sweeping to the ground, covered in patterns of lines. With one hand the left-hand figure reaches out for the bird's neck, holding a short, sharp object (knife?) as he does so. The rest of the left-hand figure is no longer visible. It would be consistent with the Numantine painters' preference for symmetry (pairs of *hippocamps*, griffins, armed men) if the figure were identical to the other in clothing and pose, where the two work together to perform an act on the bird at the altar.

The figures are framed by a series of bands with geometric patterns. Beneath their feet are three bands, two VVVV patterns alternating with a metope frieze. Below these bands is a geometric design of a checkerboard pattern with nine black-and-white squares at the centre of a sunburst. Above the figural scene is a curving VVVV band with short spokes radiating in towards the scene. Right of 3.8a is a border of two parallel vertical lines with the same spoke design.

The distinctive pointed black cap is worn by another figure on a fragment from this vessel, labelled figure 3.8c. His head is in profile and he looks to the viewer's right. As with figure 3.8a, this figure's headgear reaches over the back of the head in a hood. Unlike figure 3.8a, his entire face seems to be covered by the hood, leaving uncovered only the eye and mouth (both depicted by dots of white paint). His shoulders are broad, outlined in thick black lines with the upper torso filled in with white paint. To the right of this figure is a tiny portion of another figure or object: only the left curve and interior line or dot can be construed, suggesting that 3.8c was not alone. Above his head run four parallel lines with a VVVV pattern at centre.

The lower half of figure 3.8d is still intact. Similar to figure 3.8a from the waist down, this figure has a narrow belted waist and wears a garment that sweeps out to the ground, covering his feet completely. The hem features the same \\\ pattern. It is not possible to determine which direction the figure faces. Beneath his feet is the series of bands similar to that described reference the first fragment.

Figures 3.8e and 3.8f are formed by inverted triangles, but the garments are simpler and the details less elaborate than those which adorn the aforementioned figures. Figure 3.8e faces front. His facial features echo those of the woman on vessel 3.5: he sports large round eyes, a long nose, and a heart-shaped face with a pointed chin (cp. *Cerámicas* 1214). His neck is thin and shoulders broad. The garment is black and its neckline and lower hem are delineated by geometric line patterns. His upper arms are powerful but the forearms are thin. In his right hand he holds a long stick. His left arm is bent and the empty hand extends out to his side. He has a sword or long dagger at the waist. The head of figure 3.8f is missing, but from the broad shoulders to the flared garment hem he is identical to figure 3.8e. Figure 3.8e is positioned just below the hindquarters of a large horse facing the viewer's right. Its rump and right shoulder bear the nine-square checkerboard pattern described earlier, and the length of the animal is filled in with a VVVV design. The horse's head is triangular, its legs thin, and its tail slack. The horse associated with figure 3.8f is only partially intact, with the tail, two hind legs, and checkerboard design on the rump remaining. The same visual language – whereby a horse is constructed from rounded shapes and internal patterns – is found on other vessels from Numancia (*Cerámicas* 1211,1248,1324).

Where the 'ritual sacrifice' scene on vessel 3.8 may provide a glimpse at Celtiberian religious activity, another painted fragment that has been interpreted as having religious significance comes from a Numantine clay vessel decorated with black paints (figure 3.9). The fragment presents a male figure whose body is frontal and head profile, looking to the viewer's right. The figure's nose is large and his almond-shaped right eye is centred at the top of the face,

looking at the viewer. He wears a headdress of three short branches, which spring straight up from the head. He has no neck and his shoulders are broad. The left arm is bent at the elbow and the four fingers of the empty left hand are outstretched. At his narrow waist is a belted scabbard with a dagger handle. He wears a short tunic that ends just above the thighs, and his left leg is bent at the knee. Some scholars interpret the headdress as indicative of religious ceremony, and the plausibility of this interpretation will be discussed later.

A male figure and horse appear again on an orange clay vessel from Numancia, measuring 46 centimetres across (figure 3.10). On the left of the scene stands the figure, whose body consists of two inverted triangles supported by sturdy legs. His shoulders are broad, waist narrow, and he wears a short tunic ending mid-thigh. The neck and lower hem are elaborated with a /// band. Muscles in the thighs and calves are carefully depicted, and the feet are in profile towards the viewer's right. At his belt he wears a sword or scabbard. The figure's head is very small and looks to the viewer's right, whilst his single visible eye is impossibly large, round like a fish's, and stares out at the viewer. He wears a horn-shaped projection at the back of the head – interpreted by Wattenberg as a wolf's pelt (see vessel 3.11). His long, thin left arm is outstretched and holds up two branches. At right of the figure is the rear of a horse, whose hind legs, torso, rump, and tail are preserved. This horse is similar to the horse painted onto vessel 3.8.

Another scene of combat is rendered on an urn from Numancia, standing 17 centimetres tall and measuring 30 centimetres across (figure 3.11). The figure on the left is preserved from the waist up. His upper body faces front and takes the familiar inverted-triangle shape, tapering from broad shoulders to a narrow, belted waist. He is outlined in black and the interior areas are left blank, except for a cross on his chest. With his left hand he holds a shield embossed with a sunburst emblem. His right arm is lost, but he may have been holding in his right hand the bunch of branches that appears at his side. He turns his head to his left and wears an animal pelt as headdress. The animal's jaws are open, revealing sharp teeth. Wattenberg says that the pelt and branches call to mind one of the supposed war traditions of the Celtiberians – that boughs and the wolf's pelt were symbols of supplication and used to broker peace agreements (Appian alludes to this briefly at *Bell. Hisp.* 9.48: the besieged Nerobriges send a herald to Claudius Marcellus, 'wearing a wolf's skin instead of bearing a herald's staff, [in order to beg] forgiveness.').

The figure at right stands in mirror image to that at left. His shoulders are broad, his waist narrow, and the hips flaring out to powerful thighs. The thighs are inverted triangles and taper to the knee. Only the right lower leg is preserved, and the calf shows bulging muscles. The figure's short tunic is outlined in black paint and decorated with a few geometric patterns, including a swastika on his upper chest. He has thin arms and holds a shield out in front of him, mimicking

his adversary but brandishing a shield embossed with a vertical band of two parallel lines instead of a sunburst. His head is in profile and he wears a helmet with two horns.

Special headgear recurs on a red vessel from Numancia, measuring 18.5 centimetres across and 7.5 centimetres tall (figure 3.12). The fragment presents a male figure whose body faces the viewer and takes the regular inverted triangle form, with broad shoulders, narrow waist, and short tunic falling mid-thigh. His arms are stick-thin and his legs powerful. Physical features are abstract; the only attempt at a faithful anatomical reproduction is the musculature of the legs. With his right arm he reaches for the dagger belted to his waist. It is not clear in which direction he turns his head, though it may be that his chin is jutting to his right. He wears headgear with what appear to be two horns pointing upward. To the right is an object or person that Wattenberg identifies as one of two ‘*figuras humanas que parecen combatir*’ (*Cerámicas*, 217).

For the most part, evidence of painted figures on Celtiberian ceramics occurs on pottery fragments, some of them measuring no more than five or six centimetres across. Even though it is not possible to examine the entire vessel, analysing its form and probable use, and the figures are isolated from their original compositional context, these figures are still valuable for what they tell us about Celtiberian conceptions of the human figure.

In the lower left corner of a fragment from Numancia, the upper body, head, and left arm of a male figure is rendered in black paint (figure 3.13). His shoulders are broad and the torso tapers to the waist. He turns his square head right, one round fish-eye staring at the viewer. Nose and lips are scarcely visible. The painter has added two small lines to the top of the figure’s head, hair (or headgear) and horns. His thin left arm is raised up behind him as he prepares to launch a lance with his left hand. The sharp point of the weapon points to the viewer’s left.

Figure 3.14 presents a male figure with a bird on his arm, in black paint on brown clay background. The male figure is preserved from the waist up. His upper body faces the viewer and is in the shape of an inverted triangle – broad shoulders, and a torso tapering to a tiny waist. He turns his head to his left and wears a tall, pointed black cap. Perched on his outstretched left arm is a black bird, labelled a falcon by Wattenberg. In his right hand he holds an object that is now preserved only in part. It takes the form of a wide-tooth comb, painted in one long line with four shorter parallel lines projecting from it at right angle.

Figure 3.15 presents a partially preserved male figure in black paint. On this small fragment are the head, upper left arm, and part of the upper body of a male figure. His torso faces the viewer and his head is in profile, looking to his left. He wears a garment with a V-neck and line patterns on the sleeve. His chin and nose are pointed, and the two features together cradle the lips in a crescent moon shape. His right eye is a small dot. The back and top of the head are

covered with a black hood; as the upper portion of the head is missing, it is not possible to discern any further details of the headgear.

A male figure wearing black confronts two large four-legged creatures on a pitcher fragment from Numancia (figure 3.16). The figure faces his body to the viewer and turns his head in profile to the left. He has broad shoulders, a thin waist, and broad hips. He wears a short tunic ending just below the hips, with four lines that trace the contours of his hourglass shape. The legs are powerful and the muscles are emphasised in the calves. He holds a shield (shown in profile) in his right hand, raised up in front of him in a protective gesture. The figure's left arm is behind him, and with his left hand he raises a spear. Four wavy lines at the back of the head give him wind-tossed hair.

The object of his attack is preserved only in part. One thick vertical line (the outer edge of a garment?) is directly in front of him, and further to the left are the remains of four or five legs. Behind the figure (viewer's right) is an enormous creature with four legs, its waist well higher than the top of the male figure's head. It wears a short tunic ending mid-thigh, thus dressed similarly to the male figures on Numantine ceramics. A small wavy line is attached to the creature's rear, perhaps to suggest a tail. On the same fragment, at left of this scene (probably on the other side of the vessel in its original form), is the torso of another very large figure.

A variation on the combat theme is presented on figure 3.17, a fragment of a red clay pitcher from Numancia. The figural scene is divided by a vertical band of Xs. To the viewer's right is a figure flat on the ground, feet pointed down. His body is two inverted triangles. His right arm lies at his side and his right hand is empty. In his left hand is a sword that points upward. The head is missing but just over the left shoulder is a long conical object that may be a tall cap (as worn by figures on other vessels). On his left leg perches a bird with a long body, long wings, a short tail, and a small head with a sharp beak. The bird faces the viewer's right.

On the other side of the vertical band is second figure lying on the ground, holding in his right hand a sword pointed upward. The figure's body comprises inverted triangles. His head is turned to the sky and he wears a helmet or hood. A long line protrudes from his midsection, and the tunic's border pattern is interrupted where the line hits his body (the shaft of the weapon that has felled him). Hovering over the fallen figure is a large bird, with a broad breast and wings.

Both scenes call to mind the practice of excarnation, which was, according to ancient sources, held dear by Celtiberians, who saw it as a way to honour those who died in battle. Silius Italicus (3.341-343) writes that they did not cremate those who fell in battle, but left them on the ground to be devoured by birds, so that their souls would be carried to heaven. Similarly, Aelian records that the Vaccaeii cremated only those who died of natural causes, and left their war dead

unburied on the battlefield to be consumed by vultures, which were believed to be sacred birds (*De Nat. Anim.* 10.22).

Figure 3.18, a pitcher fragment from Numancia, is decorated in black paint with geometric bands, line patterns, and a figure. The figure has broad shoulders, narrow waist, flared hips, and stick-thin arms, and stands framed by a series of line patterns. His body faces the viewer and his head is in profile to the right. His arms are at his sides and both hands are empty. His garment has intricate geometric designs. The legs are missing and the length of the garment cannot be discerned, but it extends at least as far as his knees. On his head is a tall pointed cap, similar to those worn by figures on vessels 3.8 and 3.14. The figure's eye is large and round and its nose very prominent. Its mouth is a curved line. Surrounding borders are elaborate, and, combined with the ornate dress, gives the scene an air of formality.

Figure 3.19, a fragment of a whitewashed red clay pitcher from Numancia, features a male figure on horse, rendered in ochre paints. The figure's body follows the principle of inverted triangles. No legs are discernible and the figure has no arms. Its faceless head is a round dot upon broad shoulders. The figure is arranged so that its body bisects a long, narrow horse, whose torso in turn bisects the figure. The horse's neck has a swan curve and his breast is tall and triangular. On its forelegs is a round emblem of concentric white circles. The horse's legs are short, thin, and curved, and the muzzle is tubular.

Moving outside Numancia, a red clay trilobular pitcher from Ocenilla presents a male figure painted in black (figure 3.20). The figure has inverted-triangles body, muscular legs, and thin arms, and stands with his body facing the viewer and his face in profile to the viewer's left. Emphasis is on the hands: the arms are bent at the elbow and he holds up his hands with the fingers spread. The hands, which are level with his shoulders, are over-large (his left hand is twice the size of the right hand, which is the width of his chest) and visually arresting. In his left hand is a long spear whose sharp end points upward. He wears a helmet without parallel in Celtiberian ceramics painting: it fans over his head in a crescent moon-shape that is reminiscent of Spartan soldiers' helmets. The figure is outlined in black paint and all interior spaces (garment, limbs) are filled in with black.

From the town of Uxama comes a male figure in black paint on the fragment of a large, red clay storage vessel measuring 50 centimetres at the belly (31 centimetres at the mouth) (figure 3.21). A fragment from the vessel's rim shows a male figure with his body facing the viewer and his head in profile to the right. His shoulders are wide but his torso tapers only slightly at the waist, thus abandoning the Numantine taste for triangular chests and abdomens. He wears a tunic decorated with a large X in the centre. His right arm is held out far behind him and is bent at the

elbow. The right hand is missing. His left arm reaches forward. His nose, lips, and eye are carefully depicted, as are strands of hair that stand out on the back of his head.

The figure appears to be approaching something to the viewer's right, represented only in part by a few remaining lines. The excavator identifies this with certainty as a horse, but this is not at all clear from what is preserved on the fragment (García Merino 1990, 116).

Another Celtiberian site, modern-day San Antonio, has produced an interesting fragment presenting a male figure on horseback (figure 3.22). A figure rides to the viewer's right. He holds a long shaft with both hands and wears a garment (tunic?) that is flush with the contours of his broad chest and tapers at his narrow waist. His head is in profile and one round fish-eye has been painted in white. His lips have a distinctly beak-like appearance. The horse has a curved neck, short ears, long straight tail, and powerful legs.

Figure 3.23, a fragment of a whitewashed vessel from Tiermes, depicts a male figure standing between two large birds. The figure's body faces the viewer and his head is in profile to the viewer's left. His arms are akimbo, hands on hips, and his legs are bent at the knees and turned outward. The painter has carefully included all ten fingers and musculature in the legs. His face has been left white (matching the background) except for his left eye and ear. He is looking at a large bird that perches on a branch and leans down toward him. On the other side of the man is another large bird, also perched on a branch. Above these figures is a vine with leaves running horizontally. At the very top of the fragment is a scene of one wolf attacking another while a third stands nearby. Both figural scenes are bordered on the right by a large leafy vine running vertically.

Figure 3.24 presents a human figure painted onto fragments of a whitewashed clay vessel found at San Antonio de Calaceite (modern province of Teruel). The figure's upper body faces the viewer while his legs and face are in profile to the right. He has broad shoulders and a triangular torso that tapers to a narrow waist. The figure wears a garment decorated with waves and /// lines. The eye is large and round, the fleshy lips parted. On the head is a hood or helmet attached with a strap across the face. Arms are thin and spindly and they reach out toward a horse whose rump and hind legs are near the man's face. Other objects in the scene include a black triangle with fringe and an ovular emblem with short lines radiating from it.

A fragment of a red clay vessel from Izana presents two male figures in black paint (figure 3.25). A figure in the centre of the fragment looks to the viewer's right whilst his body is frontal. He has broad shoulders and a tapered torso. He wears a tunic decorated with vertical lines and a series of shorter lines run perpendicular to these. His nose is long and hooked, his eye large, and his lips parted. He has thin arms: the left is bent at the elbow and held up (the hand is

missing), the right is bent at the elbow and the right hand reaches for his head. From the back of the head there streams a long, wavy line, which gives a sense of movement. To the left of this figure is half of another figure's face and upper body. He faces the viewer and looks to the right. His torso matches that of the first figure. With his right arm he reaches out to the other figure. Lorrio interprets the figures as participants in 'a magic-religious dance' (Lorrio 1997, 330).

Sometimes the figures on ceramic pots were attached, not painted. This is the case with two vessels from Uxama. The first, figure 3.26, presents birds and ornaments in black paints and a small human head affixed. The vessel is made of high-quality clay with few imperfections in the fabric. A large black bird, rendered in abstract imagery (exaggerated eye, schematic plumage), stands at the viewer's left. The bird is in profile and faces right. To the right of the bird is a box (1.8 cm x 2.3 cm), containing a small human head. Two wings emerge from the upper corners of the box, which is supported by two clawed feet. The head is human: it has two round eyes, a long nose, and flat lips (no beak).

The second vessel from Uxama, figure 3.27, also presents small, clay human heads affixed in shallow relief. Three large birds are in profile to the viewer's right. Each bird is approximately eight centimetres long from tail to front foot, has a large eye, pointy beak, and extended wing. The birds are part of a vertical frieze and alternate with small boxes rendered in black paint. Each box contains a head made of clay, attached in medium relief. The boxes are not uniform but are roughly four centimetres tall and six centimetres wide. Similar to the image described reference vessel 3.24, these boxes have long elliptical objects springing from the upper corners ('wings'). The heads have human eyes, nose, and mouth. These winged boxes are understood to be urns transported to the heavens with their human remains.

In addition to the Celtiberian vessels with human figures, there are several painted figures from Numancia that are of an ambiguous nature, sharing animal and human features ('zoomorphic' figures, as the Spanish publications call them). A few are considered herein, pertinent as they are to this study for what they tell us about Celtiberians' conception of human and animal figures, and perception of the world around them.

Figure 3.28, a red clay pitcher standing 25.9 centimetres tall and 12.5 centimetres wide, shows a figure with the head of a horse and the body of a man stands framed by elaborate geometric patterns. The figure's shoulders and torso face the viewer, his legs are in profile to the right, and he looks back to the viewer's left. Legs are painted black and the calves have white highlights. The arms are bent at the elbow and the empty hands held up at shoulder height. The torso comprises a ladder-pattern of intersecting lines. The figure's hips and shoulders are elaborated with curling lines.

The figure has a long neck that curves like a swan's, and equine face and muzzle. The basic visual vocabulary is the same as that used on other Celtiberian vessels, with abstract physiognomy and the sweeping curve of the horse's neck. This particular figure is altogether more sophisticated, however, than many of the other figural paintings: the maker has produced intricate geometric designs within the figure itself, and a rich tapestry of shapes to surround it.

Figure 3.29, a fragment of a red clay pitcher also from Numancia, depicts a winged zoomorphic figure in black paint. The figure's body consists of inverted triangles: broad shoulders, narrow waist, and flared hips. The upper triangle is twice as large as the lower. The head is missing. Arms consist of three brush strokes extending from each shoulder to mid-chest. No hands or fingers are discernible. The feet are identical in form (three brush strokes), though half as large as the 'arms'. These features give the figure the appearance of a human with bird's wings and feet.

Another fragment from Numancia, figure 3.30, presents a zoomorphic figure. The torso and legs of the figure are intact. Its chest tapers to the belted waist and the garment hem flares. The legs are schematic, rendered as triangles. The figure's left foot has three claws or talons.

Finally, figure 3.31, from a fragment of a pitcher from Numancia, shows a zoomorphic figure with human and bird features. The figure's legs are human, with bulging calves and feet in profile to the right. Instead of hips and a torso, the figure has a bird's belly, plumage, and neck. A second figure is on the back of the bird, though all that can be seen of the figure is a small arm holding up a shaft and a spear point.

IV. Analysis of the images

Technical aspects: size of the figures, division of the pictorial field, secondary ornaments

Human figures painted onto Celtiberian ceramics are predominantly male (thirty-five out of thirty-six cases) and are frequently armed (fifteen out of thirty-six), associated with horses (nine examples), associated with birds (five examples), or engaged in conflict (six or seven examples). Generally, figures are arranged with their shoulders and torso facing the viewer, with the face and legs in profile. Many have a body formed by inverted triangles, with broad shoulders, sharply tapered waist, and flared hips. Polychrome figures are rare; more common are monochrome silhouettes or outlined figures with internal details. Animals appear frequently and they are sometimes adjuncts (cf. dogs on vessels 3.1 and 3.2), but also can be central to the composition. None of the scenes has a clear narrative. Vegetal elements are rare; landscapes and buildings are entirely lacking.

Sizes of the figures vary. Generally, figures that are part of a scene (interacting with at least one other figure, human or animal) are large relative to the surface area and are distinguished from secondary decoration. Where figures are small, they are normally isolated, static, highly schematic, and reduced to essential physiognomy. In other words, there is a relationship between size, realism, and context: the bigger the figure, the more naturalistic his features and the more active his context. The smaller the figure, the more schematic his features and the less distinction made between main and subsidiary ornaments.

Division of the pictorial field is dictated by horizontal friezes, with human figures inserted into cavities or breaks in the running patterns. Vessels 3.3, 3.5—11, 3.13, 3.17, 3.18, 3.21, 3.23, 3.25, 3.28, 3.29, and 3.31 are decorated with human figures that are arranged within borders or patterns of some description. Framing devices can be symbols or patterns, but occasionally an animate figure serves the role of framing. This is the case with the figure on vessel 3.5, which is inserted between two enormous *hippocampi* tails. Vessel 3.23, from Tiermes, presents a figure framed by a tall vine and a horizontal leafy tendril. The painting on vessel 3.7 has tapered, wavy borders which follow the slope of the figure's body. Figures on vessel 3.3 are inserted as components of a horizontal figural frieze running round the vessel. The height of the wavy horizontal line over the men's heads increases in the blank spaces of the pictorial field, perhaps to suggest tension and movement (Pastor Eixarch 1998). The painter of vessel 3.16 has used the figures' legs, instead of decorative shapes, to create a visually rhythmic pattern. On this vessel, two giants frame the male figure: the giants' legs are evenly spaced and run in a horizontal sequence.

Often the distribution of figures is in harmony with the shape of the vessel. The three figures on vessel 3.3 were placed along the outside rim of a wide-mouthed bowl, ensuring their prominence. Figures 3.6a and 3.6b (vessel 3.6) are arranged on the upper portion of a large storage vessel, one on each side, framed by two small handles. The figure on vessel 3.21 is painted beneath the lip of the vessel, along its upper slope. The heads on vessels 3.26 and 3.27 are placed at the centre of the pictorial field on the outside surface, underscoring their importance.

Even where the pictorial space can be described as open and the figures are arranged freely, independent of friezes and horizontal bands, they are arranged in harmony with the contours of the vessel. Vessels 3.1 and 3.2, both pitchers with trefoil mouths and bulged ovoid bodies, are examples of this decorative approach. The figure on vessel 3.1 stands between two horses, one of whom he holds by the reins. A dog runs out in front of the reined horse. All four figures are painted on the upper surface of the vessel's ovoid bulge, on the widest part of the body, with the male figure almost directly opposite the handle. This allows for maximum space in

the pictorial field and enhances the figures' visibility. The horses and the accompanying concentric circles are arranged around the male figure for maximum visual symmetry. Because the figures are outlined in black and painted with bright orange, placed on a background that is white, their visibility is enhanced.

Vessel 3.2 has the same structural format, and its figural arrangement is similar: a male figure follows two horses, controlling the closer one with reins and holding a stick in his right hand. The scene is placed on the widest surface of the vessel, opposite the handle and in open pictorial space. In both cases, the lower portion of the vessel is blank.

Formal analysis of the figures

The visual vocabulary of a significant portion of the corpus responds to and is based upon geometric symbols and designs. Already in the 1931 publication of Schulten's excavations, it was said of the painted pottery, 'In der jüngsten Entwicklung wird die menschliche und tierische Gestalt streng geometrisch stilisiert' (*Numantia* II, 235). Indeed, few of the examples are rendered in visual terms that are 'realistic' (correctly proportioned limbs, curves instead of angles, delineated digits). Figures on vessels 3.8 and 3.19 exemplify the geometric approach, comprising simple inverted triangles and stick-thin arms (or without arms cf. 3.19). At the same time, there are ceramic vessels painted with figures whose proportions are realistic, and who are rendered not in silhouette or simple outline, but with internal details and sophisticated garments. What is to be made of these differences in figural form?

Taracena saw the geometric human figures as a shortcoming in Celtiberian art, understanding them to be products of 'infantile and primitive drawing,' in which the painters 'fail absolutely to achieve perspective' and visual harmony.⁷ Though some of the figures discussed in this chapter are extremely schematic, it is not the case that stylisation and lack of ability go hand in hand. Vessels 3.8, 3.10, 3.18, and 3.28 feature some of the most rigid and abstract figures, yet their painters display comfort and flair with secondary decorations and geometric symbols. The variety of borders, emblems, and friezes is sophisticated, incorporating a number of shapes and innovative patterns that create a rich ceramic tapestry. Vessel 3.8 presents a figure surrounded by an intricate system of friezes; moreover, lines are parallel, shapes are evenly spaced, and the tiniest brush strokes are identical. The altar and the framing border have the same VVVV motif, and thus complement each other visually. Yet the male figure is rendered in simple schematic language. His body is an hourglass set upon the ground, his arms are unrealistically thin, and his

⁷ Taracena 1954: 'El dibujo es torpemente naturalista y obedece a normas de primitivismo infantil,' 290. '(Las figuras) emplean todas las normas del dibujo infantil...' 291.

head is elongated. The painter was more adept at using geometric shapes and angles than the soft curves that more accurately reflect the human form (note the awkward differences between the sharp right shoulder and the sagging left shoulder). But the garment's hem and neckline are decorated with a line pattern that suits surrounding friezes, and the emphasis on geometric shapes allows the artist to display his talent. In this case, the stylised nature of the figure is precisely what makes the painting visually harmonious.

This point is further illustrated by another figure on vessel 3.8, figure 3.8e. His body is highly schematic: two inverted triangles for the upper and lower body, stick-thin arms protruding from broad, stiff shoulders, and an angular face with one line for the nose and two for the eyes. The scabbard at his waist drives straight through the body, parallel to the ground. He is static and stands rigid, facing the viewer. These features make for a simplistic human figure, but because the bordering friezes are complex and imaginative, the figure looks relatively sophisticated; or at least, he fits in well with his visual context.

Vessel 3.18 presents a figure whose body is stiff and angular, the broad shoulders tapering to a narrow waist and the hips flaring out in a variation of the inverted-triangles format. But his garment does not want for artistic imagination, embellished as it is with rich layers of patterns and friezes, and the painter has employed visual tricks to make the figure fit the painting. His large eye, comprising two circles around a central dot, complements the swirl in the upper right corner. The leaf-and-dart frieze running above his head re-appears (inverted) on the lower portion of his garment. Similarly, a figure on vessel 3.28 is stylised, but is obviously the product of a highly capable hand. The only parts of the figure that can be said to be realistic are the calves, which are convincingly rendered with muscle. Nevertheless the imaginative curls, curves, angles, and shapes that make up this figure, along with the dense field of friezes, swastikas, and interlocking Vs that surround it, demonstrate the painter's talent. It is not, then, lack of ability that explains the propensity of human figures painted in schematic visual vocabulary. In fact, stylised figures were put to use by ceramics painters to complement the geometric patterns that envelop them. Taracena's assertion to the contrary, pottery painters used geometric figures because they worked for what they wanted to express.

The Celtiberian pottery record also reflects an interest in naturalistic representation. The figure on vessel 3.1 has rounded shoulders, a gently tapered waist, muscular legs, and fingers. The head, with its exaggerated fish eye and enormous nose, is stylised, and the arms are not feasible. But the figure is active, correctly proportioned, and not bound by the inverted-triangle principle. Similarly, the male figure on 3.2 has rounded shoulders, a soft bend in the right arm, and sloping forehead. Vessel 3.6 presents two active and realistic figures that have been freed

from schematic physiognomies. Each figure has a fleshy chin and curved shoulders. The thighs are rounded and taper to kneecaps. Feet are in proportion to the body.

The range of scenes into which these characters were put is discussed in the next section. When put into context, they offer insight to the social values and ritual practices of the people who made and used the vessels.

V. Historical and Cultural Contexts

Historical situation in the central Meseta at the time of the vessels' manufacture

Putting objects into context means understanding something about the social, cultural, and historical circumstances that produced them. These painted vessels were made at a time of great change in the Celtiberian world. During the last part of the 3rd century and the early part of the 2nd, the Arevaci rose to political predominance and the tribes of the Vaccaei, Lusones, and Pelendones saw their power wane. The rise of the Arevaci can be chiefly explained by their development of an aristocratic class of well-equipped warriors and equestrians, giving them a military advantage over other tribes. Numancia was the principal town of the Arevaci, with a population of around 8,000, and it seems to have exercised considerable influence over the culture and economy of neighboring *oppida* (Almagro Gorbea 2001, 369-70). As the power, wealth, and size of the city grew, it became a centre of creative output, resulting in the rich collection of painted ceramics that was without parallel in the region.⁸

This was also a period during which successive waves of outside cultural influences touched Celtiberia. Given Numancia's location near the Duero River it was a logical stopping point for people travelling into or out of the central Meseta, and its privileged position brought to it a number of different cultures. Phoenician amphorae, Greek pottery, Carthaginian coins, Iberian painted vessels, and Gallic metallurgical products are all attested at Celtiberian sites and are likely to have passed through Numancia at one time or another.⁹ If these goods were symbols of power and wealth to the local aristocracy, it is no surprise that indigenous craftsmen took inspiration from their forms and iconography.

From the middle of the 2nd century BC, there was great instability in the region, as Roman forces entered the Meseta and warred with indigenous tribes, dividing loyalties, encouraging

⁸ On the renown and wealth of Numancia in the years before the war with Rome (153-133), see Strabo 3.4.13.

⁹ Phoenician amphora at Numancia: Ramon Torres 1995, fig. 271, map 87 (amphora T-7.5.2.1). Carthaginian coins in the Meseta: López Castro 1995, 83 fig. 28. Late-4th cen. Greek ceramics at western and eastern Meseta sites: Rouillard 1991, 362-3, carte 16. Gallic brooches: Ruiz Gálvez 1988, 191.

betrayal, and upsetting the balance of power. The Celtiberian Wars lasted from 155-133, ‘the last-ditch attempt by the indigenous people of the peninsula to expel the conqueror and reassert their former independence’ (Curchin 1991, 33). During this time, Scipio led Roman soldiers in a campaign in which settlements of the Arevaci and Vaccaei were attacked. Entire towns were razed, thousands of indigenes were slaughtered, and thousands more sold into slavery (Appian, *Iber.*, 51-5). The fall of Numancia in 133 signalled the end of Celtiberian independence.

The pottery that is the focus of this chapter was produced in an era of great transition in which a variety of cultural influences passed through the Meseta, Numancia reached its artistic apex, Roman military presence intensified, and political power was in flux. In light of the variety of cultural practices that circulated in and around the Meseta, the painted ceramic vessels found in Celtiberian sites should be considered as a reflection of a number of artistic styles – not, as Taracena and Wattenberg would have it, as a strictly Celtiberian style. Similarly, there is a multiplicity of ethnic and cultural identities on these objects – a phenomenon observed on the painted ceramics of other culturally dynamic regions in the Iberian Peninsula (Díaz-Andreu 1998, 207-11).

Archaeological context and questions of function

Contextualising objects also involves looking at their function. In this respect, the scholarship is divided between those who believe the paintings themselves reveal the vessels’ use, and those who use archaeological evidence to draw contextual conclusions. The former approach is more traditional, with Taracena, Wattenberg, and José Maria Blázquez concluding that ceramics painted with birds and fish were intended for religious use, since, according to Celtiberian belief, these creatures had otherworldly powers. This method is problematic: even if we accept that fish and birds had religious significance, their depiction on any given ceramic vessel does not mean that the vessel was made and used for ritual.

A better way of determining the vessels’ function is to look at their archaeological context and their shape and size. We are fortunate that Schulten recorded the stratigraphic levels of the city and the general provenance of objects. Unfortunately, the find-spots were noted with a wide variation in precision. His usual method of recording an object’s find-spot was to associate it with a building, without indicating the exact position within it. Thus, a vessel found in *Haus 8* is not placed in any particular room nor given coordinates with respect to the walls. Worse, are pots were found *unter die Straße* or *neben die Mauer im Ostquartier*, with no further information recorded. With such a range in the quality of the provenience information, there is a corresponding range of potential in contextualising the ceramic finds.

Vessels 3.1 and 3.3 were found buried together, along with a third polychrome painted vessel (*FRC 22*). Wattenberg attributes the first and the last of these to the same painter, called 'El pintor de los perros' for his signature canine figures (*Cerámicas 59*). All three objects contained ashes, suggesting their use as funerary urns. However, it is not certain that they were buried in a necropolis or delineated sacral area; they are recorded vaguely as 'desde las excavaciones de 1908 al noroeste de la ciudad' (Wattenberg 1983, 17).¹⁰ The vessels do not have the same form – one is a trilobular pitcher, one a cup, one a jug – but each is painted with a big figural composition. Incineration before burial was the normal practice in Central Spain during the 4th – 2nd centuries BC.¹¹ Evidence from several Celtiberian necropoleis indicates that corpses were laid flat on a pyre at an appointed site near the necropolis, burned, and the ashes put directly in the ground or deposited in an urn, then buried.¹² A relatively small number of the deceased were honoured with a tomb or other modest superstructure built over the burial site. In nearly every tomb, weapons were interred along with the urn. Unmarked burials could also contain swords or lances, but this was rare, presumably because those wealthy enough to be buried with a weapon were also wealthy enough to be commemorated with a marker above the burial site. Ashes were more likely to be placed in an urn than directly in the ground (Lorrio 1997, 134-44).

Archaeological data from Celtiberian necropoleis, then, demonstrate that ceramic ash containers played an important role in indigenous funerary practices. Moreover, the frequent appearance of weapons along with such containers suggests wealth was an important factor in burial distinction. Vessel 3.1 shows a man training horses. Vessel 3.3 depicts two armed men engaged in fighting. The third vessel (*FRC 22*) is richly painted in polychrome with a giant fish and fantastical horse. These are luxury pieces with lavish decorations that may or may not have been produced specifically for interment, but which, in any event, were deemed suitable for it.

The affixed clay faces with accompanying painted decoration on the vessels from Uxama have been interpreted as representations of urns. Neither vessel was found in a necropolis; they were excavated at two different domestic dwellings. A third vessel with the same decoration was, however, discovered at a necropolis at Uxama (García Merino 1992). If we accept that these affixed faces are representations of urns, it would be reasonable to expect the vessels bearing them to be associated exclusively with the funerary realm. It is possible that the first two vessels

¹⁰ Schulten searched tirelessly for a necropolis at Numancia but did not unearth one. In his publication of the excavations he mulls the possibility 'daß die Numantiner ihre Toten im Inneren der Stadt, etwa in den Häusern, begraben haben' (*Numantia II*, 171). Successive campaigns have continued the search for a necropolis at Numancia, but to this day none has been found.

¹¹ Curchin 1997, 10, 13. Secondary inhumation after cremation is attested in eighty pre-Roman necropoleis from the central Meseta.

¹² The evidence from La Yunta is especially useful: García Huerta and Antona 1992, 146.

were intended for interment at the necropolis, but for some reason never made it there. However, their domestic context suggests that this type of decoration was not limited to the world of the dead. Numancia has produced jugs with tiny human faces affixed, with completely different secondary motifs that do not suggest urn imagery (*Cerámicas*, Lám. 36, n. 1021; Lám. 37, n. 1041). In this case, the mode of decoration does not determine the function of the vessel.

Excavations at Numancia also unearthed polychrome vessels at domestic dwellings, where they are unlikely to have had ritual or funerary use. *FRC 29* is a medium sized bowl¹³ and *FRC 56* and *FRC 57* are large pitchers¹⁴ all found in three different houses in the town. Each vessel is painted with polychrome figures showing fantastical animals and fish. These are sophisticated, showy (and perhaps costly) pieces that bear no evidence of ritual or funerary use. Thus, the question of function is fraught with difficulty. Ceramic vessels with figured paintings were used for secondary inhumation, and may also have been prestige pieces appropriate for display, or useful objects considered appropriate for daily use (in the context of hauling water, storing foodstuffs, or eating and drinking).

Cultural context: Reading the images

The paintings can, however, tell us something about the cultural values of Celtiberians and the imagery that was important to them. The martial nature of the male figures in our corpus is obvious. Fifteen of the thirty-six figures are armed, six or seven are actively engaged in fighting, and two armed warriors have already been felled. The weapons depicted most often are spears (vessels 3.3, 3.13, 3.16, 3.20, 3.32) and swords (3.3, 3.17). Five figures have a dagger in a scabbard at the waist (vessels 3.8-10, 3.12) and four carry shields (3.3, 3.11, 3.16). Four figures carry a whip or a stick (3.1, 3.2, 3.8) for training horses.

Diodorus Siculus (5.33.2-3) reports on the armaments of Celtiberian warriors:

And this people, it would appear, provide for warfare not only excellent cavalry but also foot soldiers who excel in prowess and endurance. They wear rough black cloaks, the wool of which resembles the hair of goats. As for their arms, certain of the Celtiberians carry light shields like those of the Gauls, and certain carry circular wicker shields as large as an *aspis*. About their shins and calves they wind greaves made of hair, and on their heads they wear bronze helmets adorned with purple crests. The swords they wear

¹³ Diameter of the mouth: 23.4 cm. Maximum diameter: 25.5 cm. Height: 10.7 cm.

¹⁴ *FRC56*: Diameter of the mouth: 10.2 cm. Maximum diameter: 17.5 cm. Height: 21 cm.

are two-edged and wrought of excellent iron, and they also have dirks a span in length, which they use in fighting at close quarters. [...] Able as they are to fight in two styles, they first carry on the contest on horseback, and when they have defeated the cavalry they dismount, and assuming the role of foot soldiers they put up marvellous battles.

There is one figure (vessel 3.3) that might wear the 'rough black coat'. Of the four with shields, it is not clear whether these are 'light shields like those of the Gauls' or 'circular wicker shields,' though all of the painted examples appear round. It is interesting that of the figures actively engaged in fighting, four do so with a shield and three with a spear – perhaps the 'dirks a span in length', as noted in the text. As for greaves, five figures wear them (vessels 3.3, 3.4, 3.28).

Diodorus's passage should not be taken as an accurate depiction of Celtiberian soldiers, nor should the painted figures be accepted as exact renditions of Celtiberian men. Nonetheless, the message conveyed by both is martial prowess: the Roman writer highlights the ferocity of these fighters, and the painters have crystallised a few qualities that, to them, present an ideal. Often, the only part of the painted figure to be rendered with anatomical emphasis is the legs, and the calf muscles in particular. The bulging musculature and the greaves strapped over them make a powerful visual statement, drawing attention to the strength and heroism of the figure.

The most popular scenes for male figures according to the preserved Celtiberian ceramics involve aspects of courage (fighting) and physical power (training or riding horses). This fact must be read cautiously when studying the cultural identity of those who used the objects. In Chapter 2, it was stressed that the traditional view of Celtiberian society as structured around warfare cannot be supported by the physical evidence, and should not be extrapolated from the Greek and Latin texts (which stereotype the Celtiberians as barbarous and bellicose). We know of only a very small sample of the ceramic vessels made and painted in Celtiberia, and it is possible that there were many more scenes of female figures or male figures in irenic circumstances. With what we do have, however, we can conclude that male strength and power, particularly when applied in one-on-one combat, was a valued theme and in high demand for visual representation.

Do any of the paintings depict aspects of religious life? The archaeological record offers very little information about Celtiberian religion in the pre-Roman era. The major part of what we do have comes from epigraphy dated to the Roman era, always in the Latin alphabet and generally written in the Latin language. Appearing on *stelai*, sculpture, and ceramics, these writings refer to various aspects of indigenous religion including funerary rituals, sacrifice,

FRC57: Maximum diameter: 16.8 cm. Diameter of the base: 8.7 cm. Height: 21.3 cm.

mythology, and divinities. By the time such objects were made, Roman cultural influence had been around long enough for local religion to have become one with the Roman pantheon. For us, then, understanding ritual and religious beliefs in the years before the Roman arrival requires reliance on the visual evidence (votive statuettes, ceramics paintings) rather than the literary, since there remains no evidence of indigenous religious writings.

A scene, probably of religious meaning, occurs on vessel 3.8, where figures 3.8a and 3.8b stand at an altar and hold down a bird. A close look at 3.8b reveals him to be reaching for the bird's neck, holding a short, sharp instrument in his hand. High concentrations of bird and animal bones found near Celtiberian necropoleis suggest animal sacrifice was widely practiced. Vessel 3.8, then, may reflect real-life ritual. A figure on 3.18 wears the tall pointed cap and long garment also depicted on vessel 3.8. These costumes are unlike the short tunics worn by the majority of painted male figures, and may have represented a Celtiberian ceremonial costume.

The visual evidence suggests that animals played a significant role in Celtiberian religious practice. Among the vessels painted with animals, fish appear on almost half of them. Other important animals, in descending order of frequency of depiction, are birds, horses, dogs, and bulls. Bones of at least some of these animals (horses, bulls, and hares, among others) have been found heaped in pits near necropoleis at the Celtiberian sites of Molina de Aragón, Sigüenza, La Yunta, Aragoncillo, Aguilar de Anguita, and Carabias, and may be evidence of their use in sacrificial practice (Lorrio 1997, 337-40). Fish and birds recur often. Birds appear with human figures on vessels 3.8, 3.17, 3.23, 3.26, 3.27, and 3.31. In the scene on vessel 3.8, the bird is the victim of a sacrifice. On vessel 3.17, two birds hover over the corpse of two fallen warriors (one bird per warrior). The shard from Tiermes (vessel 3.23) shows two large birds perched over the head of a male figure. Vessels 3.26 and 3.27 alternate painted birds with affixed clay human faces. Vessel 3.31 presents a half-human figure with bird-like features. In the visual vocabulary of Celtiberia, birds had meaning in religion, death, and perhaps divination.

Figures 3.6a and 3.6b are described in numerous publications as illustrations of Celtiberian religion, always in conjunction with this text from Strabo (3.4.16):

The Celtiberians offer sacrifice to a nameless god at the seasons of the full moon, by night, in front of the doors of their houses, and dance in chorus and keep it up all night.

Schulten draws an exact correlation between the pot and the passage, but this is incorrect.¹⁵ This catalogue likens the figures' movement to flight, with their long outstretched arms (no hands) and airborne feet. But in truth our understanding of the figures is not straightforward. Their costumes are unusual, with heeled shoes, knee-length black trousers, striped sleeves, and short black cap. This is not clothing intended for training horses or fighting. The painter has made both figures active and uses several visual devices to emphasise their speed: leaning to the right, legs kicked up, energetic secondary decoration (wavy lines). These are extraordinary characters; are they meant to be real men?

Do the vessels present us with images from the world of men or of myth? Could it be that our painted female and male figures are heroes, divinities, or mythical warriors rather than humans? Are the scenes generic, or would ancient viewers have seen in them particular stories, myths, or historic episodes? There are two ways of trying to answer these questions: through analysing the figures themselves, and through dissecting the secondary elements. The former approach is taken first.

Figures conflating human and animal features are not from the realm of reality. This is the case with the figure on 3.18, which has the arms and legs of a man but the neck and head of a horse. The figure was part of a vessel that was decorated with rich geometric designs and intricate borders. Here, the conjunction of human and equine features makes for a powerful figure, whose strength is communicated by the muscular legs and long, solid neck. A different sort of figure arises from the union of human and bird features, as seen on vessels 3.29 and 3.31. The former presents a figure that has crude wings and bird's feet, with the inverted-triangle body of a man. The latter features a figure that has a man's legs, and the plumage and underbelly of a bird. As each figure is only partially intact and its scene lost, it is not clear what the pictorial function is. The impression is of fantastical figures with bodies that belong in the mythical realm rather than the human.

Nothing about the figure on vessel 3.16 indicates that it is anything other than human: the figure's body is schematised yet representative of the male physique. It is armed and engaged in conflict, neither aspect particularly unusual for this visual world. But the figure is battling with two four-legged giants, inviting mythical connotations and suggesting that the central fighter is not an ordinary man. Four short S-waves on the back of his head look more like Medusa's snaky locks than human hair. From his mouth shoots a fifth S wave, which Pastor Eixarch sees as a symbol of vigour or animalism (Pastor Eixarch 1998, 124-5). He holds two objects: in his left

¹⁵ Schulten, *Numantia* II, 239: 'Von den Keltiberern überlieferte Strabon Tänze und Feste im Mondschein, die einem ungenannten Gotte galten. Auf diese Nachricht könnten die beiden Darstellungen tanzender

hand a short, sharp spear or axe, and in his right hand a shield in profile. The left arm is straight as far as the elbow, but the forearm has the same S wave seen on the figure's head. Accepting Pastor Eixarch's interpretation that such waves were used extensively in Iberian and Celtiberian pottery to depict movement, dynamism, and superhuman actions, the left arm is important: it is perhaps just about to launch the weapon in a decisive blow against the giant. This painting is not a generic representation of an anonymous man engaged in battle. The four-legged giants, the central figure's unusual hair, his 'arma exótica,' and the episodic action are carefully depicted to communicate to the viewer a precise moment in a specific story.¹⁶

Personal attributes are helpful in analysing whether a figure is generic or individualised, real or mythical. On vessel 3.9, a figure wears a headdress comprising three horns or branches. Each extension originates at the top of the head and sticks straight up. The form of the extensions replicates the figure's arm, i.e. straight lines with five digits at the end. The figure is in silhouette except for the eye centred in the face, and the lower part of the tunic, which carries a framed X symbol. A dagger handle is visible at the waist. The exaggerated bend of the front (left) leg gives the figure dynamism; the intricate upper border indicates the overall care and effort that was put into the painting. This is a figure with unusual headdress, energy, and belaboured secondary elements. To the Celtiberian viewer, these visual cues would have been enough to identify a particular man or mythical character.

Two figures on vessel 3.11 present an intersection of real and unreal features, and the former is depicted with two attributes. This figure has a human torso but the large jaws and sharp teeth of an animal. Held in his right hand are six boughs. Laying aside for a moment Wattenberg's reading of him (a man wearing a wolf's pelt over his face), there is no clear distinctiveness between the real facial features and unreal mask or pelt. Rather, the jaws seem to be an organic part of the figure, not an artificial extension. The figure he faces has similar human features (powerful shoulders and thighs, tapered torso), but his head is elongated and thin and the helmet is tall and has two horns. Each figure holds out a shield prominently in front of him. The symbols on these, as well as on their respective breastplates, are clearly differentiated. Celtiberian viewers may have recognised these figures as members of two actual tribes wearing their distinct costumes. However, it is just as likely that these are mythical figures with attributes (animal's jaws, boughs, horns, special shields) that ancient viewers would have readily identified.

Männer bozogen werden (ref. vessel 6), deren Arme als Stierhörner verkleidet sind...'

¹⁶ The figure wields a weapon that is not commonly depicted in Celtiberian visual media. Lorrio identifies it as an axe and affirms its use in battle by Cantabrian soldiers, but 'no existiendo además ninguna evidencia sobre su utilización por los celtíberos.' (Lorrio 1995a, 77-8.) The mystery of the figure is

Secondary ornaments also give clues as to whether a figure can be considered mythical. When isolated, the female figure on vessel 3.5 might be assumed human on the basis of her realistic features. But she is surrounded by large *hippocampi*, setting her in the world of myth. The figure herself wears a large veil spread out behind her head – impossible for the viewer to miss – and her breasts are emphasised by large sunburst symbols consisting of concentric circles with a dot at the centre. On her upper arms she wears bracelets. Her frontal pose is also a sign that she is no ordinary figure, since the overwhelming majority of figures on Celtiberian ceramics are rendered in profile. Thus, the figure has all the features expected of a mythical character. She is surrounded by fantastical creatures, wears elaborate clothing, has at least one personal attribute, and is frontal rather than profile. These visual markers would have been enough for an ancient viewer to identify her as a particular character (deity or other mythical woman, perhaps), or at least as a figure outside the realm of the everyday.

Without knowing much about the mythical or religious beliefs of the people who made, used, and viewed these paintings, it is not possible to conclude with certainty whether the figures represented specific heroes, deities, or humans. But we do know that ceramic vessels with figure paintings were imported into the central Meseta from southern and coastal Iberia, depicted local deities and heroes, and were influenced by Greek pottery. In some sites, the archaeological record indicates that an increase in painted pottery coincides with a decrease in the production of votive statuettes, suggesting the former replaced the latter (Poveda Navarro 1985, 190-3). If Celtiberian pottery painters were aware of these developments among Iberian makers, it is possible that they too adopted ceramic vessels as a medium for portraying mythical figures. Certainly, this analysis of some of the figures strongly suggests that this was the case.

VI. Sources of influence and the issue of a ‘Celtiberian style’

The generic term *cerámica celtibérica*, as used by Spanish scholars, encompasses diverse ceramic productions of the Meseta tribes, most of them using a few types of clearly definable clays, shapes, and decorative schemes, which developed in general lines during the 3rd – 1st centuries BC. These decorative schemes, most scholars agree, emphasise animals (especially fish and large birds), vegetal elements (leafy vines), and geometric themes (astral symbols, swastikas, metope

compounded by the fact that the Celtiberians would not have used the axe, but would have been aware of far-off fighters who did.

friezes).¹⁷ Human figures are generally not included as part of the definition, since they are rare and appear in abundance only at Numancia. It is true that general categories such as fish, flowers, and swastikas encompass a great many of the painted ceramics found from Celtiberian sites. However, the style of birds on pottery from Clunia is very different from the style of birds on pottery from, say, Uxama, or Tiermes. Thus, in order to decide whether a fixed 'Celtiberian style' of ceramic painting existed, it is necessary to subject the paintings to close stylistic examination.

A recurrent visual element in the Numantine paintings is the swan's neck curve in the horses. This approach has deep roots in the Celtiberian artistic repertoire. A ceramic jug excavated at the early Iron Age Celtiberian necropolis of 'El Pradillo' (Burgos) is decorated in black paint with two horses, each one seen from the neck up. Their necks are filled in with dense layers of horizontal friezes, and the curve of each one is exaggerated (Blanco and Nuño González 1990, 172 & 176; fig. 3). The same treatment is given to birds painted onto ceramic vessels made in Clunia. Comparison can be made with a polychrome vessel from La Alcudia de Elche (Alicante), which depicts a large bird with a thick curved neck, one eye at the top and a long, pointed beak. The neck has a C-curve but not the dramatic S-curve of the Celtiberian examples. The treatment of the body is also different – it is not an empty cavity filled in with linear designs (Aranegui Gascó 1992, Lám. 8 n. 14).

Vessels from Clunia painted with running rabbits depict them in profile, with big amorphous bodies and soft curves – no sharp angles or shapes as with the Numantine hares. Generally, the rendering is less schematic and static. Another pot from Clunia is painted with meandering vines and leaves, with circles and stars sprinkled among the leaves. These are simple designs, but rendered with more naturalism and realism than in the Numantine examples.¹⁸

Human figures painted onto Celtiberian vessels show significant differences in style and form when compared to figures on vessels from outside the region. Examples from La Alcudia de Elche and Lliria (Valencia) bear images of men and women with long legs, angular torsos without narrow waists, small eyes, and ethnic costume. The figures are better proportioned and have a physiognomy more like those found on 6th century BC Attic black-figure vases. Greek merchants had, after all, been establishing colonies in southern and coastal Iberian sites since the 7th century BC, and it is inevitable that their pottery forms and decorations influenced the indigenous productions in nearby areas. However, Celtiberian ceramic makers, especially those in the eastern Meseta city of Numancia, were also within striking distance of Greek cultural influences, including those emanating from Emporion, Ullastret, and other coastal sites in Catalunya. Rudolf

¹⁷ On the 'Celtiberian style': de Palol 1994, 131; Abascal Palazon 1986, 73.

¹⁸ Taracena 1931-32: Rabbits: Lám. 1, figs. 1 & 2. Meandering vines: Lám. 2, fig. 10.

Paulsen, in his chapter on Numantine ceramics found in the Schulten excavations, argued that the earliest phase of Celtiberian painted pottery was influenced indirectly ('über den Umweg') by Greek elements at sites on the eastern coasts of Iberia. Greek *amphorae* and *kylikes* were produced at these sites in the 7th and 6th centuries, and a few fragments are known from Meseta sites, suggesting awareness among Celtiberian pottery makers of the Greek models (Miró 1989).

The material evidence demonstrates the influence of southern Iberian culture groups on the Celtiberian visual vocabulary. Sánchez-Moreno's study of the institution of *hospitium* in ancient Iberia traces the 'principales cañades' (principal drovers' roads) that connected the northern Meseta with southern sites in Extremadura, Alicante, and Murcia. He argues that long-distance transhumance was common practice in Iron Age Iberia, and that peoples from the northern regions came into contact with southern peoples 'with whom they exchanged orientalisising objects, models and techniques that were to a considerable degree incorporated into the local process of creating ethnic identities' (Sánchez-Moreno 2001, 404). This pattern of exchange may have introduced Celtiberians to the idea of painting human figures on ceramics, or at least greatly influenced practice. But other sources of influence originated in the region north of Celtiberia; this is known because figures with horned helmets are reminiscent of Iron Age Celtic figures from Galicia and Gaul. The picture that emerges, then, is of Celtiberian ceramic painters coming into contact with a mix of goods from the south, east, and north, reflecting Phoenician and Greek colonisation, Gallic trade, and intra-peninsular migration. If there is a single Celtiberian style, it must be defined as including ideas from each of these sources, changed and arranged into patterns, forms, and colours that suited local needs and tastes, with an emphasis on animals and schematic figures over realistic figural and vegetal motifs.

Conclusions

The destruction of Numancia in 133 BC was not the end of ceramic production in Celtiberia. After Roman soldiers razed the city, painted pottery was produced at Clunia, Tiermes, and Uxama. The evidence from Clunia shows that local production of ceramics of an indigenous style continued until 49 BC, the year the city was re-founded as a Roman *colonia*. Thereafter, Celtiberian ateliers began to produce fine-walled vessels that could compete with the *terra sigillata* imports from southern Gaul and coastal Tarraconensis. Figural painting continued to some extent, but subject matter changed (fewer fish and birds, more vegetal motifs), and no human figures were painted on vessels after the sack of Numancia.

Ceramic vessels from Celtiberia painted with human figures in the years before the arrival of Roman cultural influences show that scenes dealing with fighting and horses were especially popular. The scenes tell us something about indigenous religious practices and a belief in the importance of animals (particularly fish and birds). Figures are never isolated in space, but are always part of a scene with another figure or animal or, at the least, secondary geometric and vegetal decorations. The great mix of styles in the anatomy and physiognomy of the figures reflects the rich assortment of cultural influences that was at play in late Iron Age Celtiberia. It is not possible to conclude with certainty whether these Celtiberians painted figures are meant to represent real mortals or mythical personages or deities, but there are some visual clues (zoomorphic features, attributes, fantastical creatures) that hint at other-worldliness.

The overall impression gleaned from the figure paintings is that Celtiberian society valued strength and martial prowess, observed religious ritual, and to some extent believed in mythical characters. The iconography represented in the ceramics also points to a preference for aristocratic themes on the Celtiberian (and especially Numantine) pottery, including a bias towards the portrayal of (real or mythical) personages of high status – armed warriors, horses, and elaborately dressed figures (Díaz-Andreu 1998, 208). As discussed in Chapter 2, very few burials contained elements associated with horses or warriors. There is also a bias towards the portrayal of adult men; only one female figure and no children or old people were portrayed, according to the record. This seems to indicate that Celtiberian pottery was not representative of the population, and that its message was especially directed at a particular segment of society – adult men of high status.

This study also suggests that, on the basis of clear evidence of outside influence on local ceramic manufacture in the late Iron Age period, the term ‘indigenous pottery’ is unhelpful because the pottery was the product of a mix of visual traditions from many sites and culture groups. Seeking Taracena’s ‘pure Celtiberian style’ (1924) is an unfruitful pursuit. When ceramic makers in the central Meseta shifted their emphasis from painted vessels to fine-walled Campanian B imitations in the 1st century BC, they were continuing the process of change and adaptation that had begun many centuries earlier.

CHAPTER 4: COINS FROM PRE-ROMAN AND EARLY IMPERIAL CELTIBERIA

Coinage, according to Fergus Millar, was the most deliberate of all symbols of public identity in the Roman world (Millar 1993, 230). Coins' potency is rooted in the iconographic messages they bear, which were issued by a minting authority. They represent deliberate political choices made by a powerful minority and are not, therefore, unmediated guides to the cultural identities of communities. The social attitudes of the people *not* in control may be mirrored on the coins, modified by them, or ignored completely by the coins.

Nevertheless, coins have much to tell about the shared cultural values of communities, and the evidence from the Celtiberian-speaking regions supports Millar's statement in the form of 500 coin types minted over a 250-year period (from some forty-seven mints). This numismatic material has made possible the verification of towns previously known only through Greek and Latin literary sources, opened the way to the decipherment and grammatical reconstruction of the Celtiberian language, and clarified modern understanding of ancient monetary practices.

At the centre of this chapter are the so-called *jinete* (horseman) coins of Iberia. This type features on its reverse an armed male figure on horseback riding to the right, carrying a weapon or palm. The obverse presents the profile of a youthful male figure, with a full head of curly or wavy hair, usually without a beard. In addition to the central images, symbols, a legend in exergue, or a single letter may also be found on the coin. The *jinete* coins were eventually replaced with issues bearing portraits of Augustus. The Augustan-era coins were hybrids in the sense that they bore both old (pre-Roman) and new (Roman) images and legends. By the end of the 1st century BC, coins from this region have no vestigial signs of Celtiberian numismatics: Latin replaces Celtiberian, Augustus replaces indigenous obverse figures, and the horseman is traded for a variety of traditionally Roman reverse figures.

The coins of central Iberia have been extensively published, and this chapter joins a large body of work whose foci have included linguistics, local socioeconomic structures, cultural exchange, and distribution. Several questions concerning chronology, purpose, function, and value remain unanswered. Some of these topics will be considered here, but the main concern here is with the images – what they meant for the people who designed and viewed them, and how numismatic designs changed as Roman political and cultural power came to dominate the region. In accordance with the focus of this thesis, the images are assessed for their significance as markers of cultural identity.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section gives a summary of previous iconographic studies of the coins. The second section presents case studies of four sites whose

minting activity was more or less continuous during the period late 2nd century BC – early 1st century AD. Each case study examines the pre-Latin and transitional emissions from the town, tracing the changes in iconography and language. The third section discusses the significance of the numismatic images, and offers interpretations. Of particular concern are the internal and external reasons for the appearance of the male portrait and mounted rider. The concluding section fits the numismatic images into the range of images on various objects produced and received by local peoples.

The corpus of surviving coins is vast, and this study does not purport to be an exhaustive numismatic catalogue. The most complete catalogue of the pre-Latin coins is Leandre Villaronga's 1994 *Corpus Nummum Hispaniae ante Augusti Aetatem (CNH)*, which contains 167 coin types from the region he considers Celtiberia, and an additional 319 coin types from the northern-central Meseta. For transitional and imperial issues, the best source is *Roman Provincial Coinage (RPC)* (1992) by A. Burnett, M. Amandry and P. P. Ripollès. Drawing from the *CNH* and *RPC*, plus A. Vives y Escudero's *La Moneda Hispánica* (1926), and a few other catalogues¹ and publications,² this study presents coins that are representative of the range of images used on the pre-Latin and Latin coins. As the focus here is iconography, coins with interesting non-pictorial details, such as the issues from *Šekaisa* with neo-Punic countermarks, or grammatical anomalies in legends from *Kar'aues*, and *Usamus*, have been excluded (see Alfaro Asins 1995 and Villar 1995, respectively).

There is disagreement over which mints in the northern-central Peninsula were Celtiberian, and which Iberian. Some scholars use the reports of ancient authors to assign a town to a particular tribe, deducing ethnic identity from tribal affiliation. Some rely on the roots and endings of the toponyms. Others look at the form of the letters in the coins' legends to determine whether a Celtiberian or Iberian dialect was used.³ This chapter focuses on the coinage of four towns, all of them situated in the upper and middle Ebro valley. These towns have been selected on the basis of their long and sustained coin production (from at least the middle of the 2nd century BC to the end of the 1st century BC), which allows us to assess changes in numismatic images during the process of intensified Roman cultural presence in Celtiberia. Two of the four towns belonged to tribes considered Celtiberian because of their language and material culture (*Bilbilis* and *Turiasu*). A third (*Kelse*) did not use the Celtiberian language, but there are strong links between its material record and Celtiberian culture. The fourth (*Bol'skan*) was not

¹ Domínguez Arranz 1979; Untermann 1975.

² Alfaro Asins 1997; Domínguez Arranz 1988.

³ The Celtiberian language differed from Iberian in grammatical structure and vocabulary, but its written form used the Iberian alphabet.

Celtiberian. Tribal affiliation is not especially important for this chapter because its focus is cultural identity, as reflected by numismatic images, in the general region. Moreover, the recurrence of certain numismatic images throughout northern Iberia indicates that they were not limited to certain tribes or ethnic identities.

I. Previous iconographic studies

*The pre-Latin coins*⁴

Serious study of the pre-Latin coins' iconography began in the late 19th century. Previously, the images were described in passing and then only to identify the obverse figures, which depicted either a deity or a man. Since A. Delgado wrote in 1876 that many of the obverse figures on coins minted in Italy depict 'Hércules italiota,' scholarship has been dominated by the study of Hellenistic influence on the coins and identification specifically with Herakles (Delgado 1876, 153). Delgado's assertion was taken a step further by O. Gil Farrés in 1966 when he claimed that *all* of the coins portray Herakles on the obverse (Gil Farrés 1966, 130). He ascribed the image to Greek engravers at Emporion and Tarraco, from where 'the major part' of all Celtiberian coins was issued (129), stressing that the iconographic roots of this 'Hércules ibérico' were indigenous to the Peninsula, in contrast with from Delgado's foreign 'Hércules italiota.' A.M. de Guadán echoed Gil Farrés in 1969 when he associated the obverse figures with 'el Hércules tirio,' alluding to the Phoenician assimilation of Melqart, patron deity of Tyre, and Herakles (De Guadán 1969, 44).

A variation on the theory of Hellenistic 'influence' points to Sicily and the issues of Hieron II, published by Vives in 1929 (although he did not identify the obverse heads as Hieron II himself but left it as 'la cabeza indeterminada de las ibéricas' [Vives II.30]). The general tendency is to associate the obverse figure with a Greek-inspired Herakles from Magna Graecia ('italiota') or an Ibero-Phoenician Herakles-Melqart.

There are problems with the Herakles interpretation, arising from inconsistencies in the representations. None of the Celtiberian issues includes classic Herakles attributes, such as a lion's pelt or club. These objects were included on 2nd century BC coins from Gadir, Asido, Lascuta, and Sexs, so the iconography was to hand.⁵ Herakles cannot be identified as the obverse figure beyond a reasonable doubt. An alternative theory holds the figures to be chthonic gods or divine images of chieftains and heroic warriors. In 1859, P.-A. Boudard speculated that each

⁴ Issues with Celtiberian legends are called 'pre-Latin' coins, and those with Latin legends 'Latin' coins.

⁵ CNH 82-90 (Gadir), 103-7 (Sexs-Sexi), 122-3 (Asido), 126-7 (Lascuta).

obverse figure is ‘probablement un chef de la peuplade’(Boudard 1859, 143) but this view has gained support only in the past twenty years, espoused by scholars who resist the Helleno- and Romano-centric thinking of their intellectual forebears. Martín Almagro-Gorbea, who considers the obverse head a local deity whose symbolic function was rooted in the Celtiberian value system (Almagro-Gorbea 1995, 61), agrees with Boudard’s interpretation. He interprets the obverse figure as a deity with ethnic-civic characteristics – that is, a deity connected with a given city’s founding myth. He understands the dolphins that often appear on the obverse as anthropomorphic representatives of a river, and as symbols of passage to the afterlife in the mythical ‘Más Allá’ (Almagro-Gorbea 1995, 56). This ‘chthonic deity/divine patron of the city or populace’ takes its formal aspects from the Melqart-Herakles coins of southern Iberia, where the god was the divine protector of Gadir and the Barcid dynasty (Almagro-Gorbea 1995, 55). According to Almagro-Gorbea, the obverse male head is the masculine version of the La Tène Mother Goddess. As for the reverse images, he concludes Celtiberian engravers were inspired by 4th century Macedonian coins, but stresses that the ‘iconografía del jinete’ reflects the ideology of *local élites* who used equestrian imagery to promote their power (Almagro-Gorbea 1995, 61).

Almagro-Gorbea understands the Celtiberian obverses to be the product of Macedonian imagery, La Tène Celtic religion, and indigenous mythology and ideology. A few aspects of Almagro-Gorbea’s arguments find support in R. Olmos Romera’s study of the coins’ images. Olmos Romera sees founding myths as a source of inspiration, where the dolphins on Celtiberian coins are the equivalent of ‘founding type’ coins from Magna Graecia and Sicily, which are adorned with nymphs and pegasuses (Olmos Romera 1995). He also makes some iconographic attributions to the Hellenistic repertory. Accordingly, on the eastern coast of Iberia during the 2nd century, Greek conventions – ‘de la imagen o de la palabra’ – comprised an international language (45-6). It was in order to complement this international visual language that the Celtiberian minting authorities used obverse and reverse figures with Hellenistic overtones.

Outside cultural practices contributed to the appearance of the *jinete* coins, either directly (copying Greek coins) or indirectly (Celtic ideology filtering through the Pyrenees). It is wrong, however, to explain the coins’ appearance as a consequence of ‘foreign influence’, where ‘influence’ implies change. Influence has to be exerted onto something; it does not exist in a vacuum. Because the Celtiberians had neither used nor minted coins before the middle of the 2nd century BC, there was nothing to influence in the way of coinage. That the *jinete* coins were the first is significant: their images were deliberately chosen and had meaning for their creators and users. We want to understand the motivations of the designers, and their contributions to their own artistic record amidst the variety of coins from the Greco-Roman world.

While it is clear that the engravers were aware of foreign images, it is a pointless endeavour to seek the origins of influence. The Iberian Peninsula hosted a variety of languages, cultural practices, and artistic styles during the 3rd and 2nd centuries. The northern-central Meseta, heartland of Celtiberia, was situated between two major cultural zones: Greek immigrants and Hellenised Iberians to the East, P-Celtic speakers from Gaul and Galicia to the west. Neither the Pyrenees nor the Meseta was impermeable to outsiders, and trading routes connected Narbonensis to Celtiberia, Celtiberia to southern Iberia. A variety of objects was exchanged, exposing Celtiberians to several iconographic traditions. In light of this heterogeneous cultural situation, it is impossible to credit a single tradition with the *jinete* coins' images.

Some aspects of the numismatic images *do* suggest awareness of stylistic conventions that had been used on earlier, 4th century BC Macedonian coins, but it is unlikely that the Iberian engravers worked directly from them. Celtic mercenaries brought back Macedonian coins to Gaul, and the practice of numismatic imitation was adopted by some Celts in or before the latter part of the 3rd century (Allen 1980, 3). Within a century they had access to coins from Etruria and Massilia in addition to Macedonia. But the evidence indicates that Greek coins penetrated Gaul in small numbers, so the diffusion of the horseman is owed to coins issued locally in Gaul, with genuine Greek coins serving as models in the early years. Isolating the artistic roots of the images is not the goal of this study, but understanding that the *jinete* images may have come to northern-central Iberia from the Celtic world has implications for their possible ideological connotation.

The Latin issues

The legends and types of ancient coins could be used in two ways, to indicate the authority responsible for the coins and to convey a message put out by that authority (Crawford 1974, 712)

The images on coins minted in northern-central Tarraconensis are important because they provide a visual narrative of the Roman expansion and takeover. In light of this, it is surprising that little has been made of the messages conveyed by those images. Publications of the coins minted in Celtiberia with Latin legends tend to focus on dates, value, purpose, function, and mining. *Roman Provincial Coinage* includes coins from Tarraconensis, and primarily examines their metrology, distribution, and chronology. Studies by M. Crawford, R. Knapp, and J.S. Richardson use the Imperial issues from Spain to answer questions about Roman involvement in local administrative affairs, prioritising the coins' purpose and function over iconography. A few publications on

particular sites examine the iconography of Republican and imperial coins that were minted in Roman Celtiberia, but they make scant or no mention of the coins that came before.⁶

Crawford's analysis of the images on Roman Republican coins notes the progression from a Republican attitude to an Imperial one. In their first hundred years, Roman coins referred exclusively to Rome or her gods. But gradually the designs were changed to include the names of magistrates responsible for the production of coinage, unleashing fierce competition among the ranks of the *nobilitas*, who recognised the great potential for personal power and advancement through numismatic advertisement. With the beginning of the Civil Wars, the heads of Caesar, Antony, Brutus, and Octavian appeared on the coinage, 'in imitation of the coinage of the Hellenistic monarchs' (Crawford 1974, 712). The message conveyed by these images, which stress individuals' portraits and titles over politically neutral civic emblems, is that of oligarchic power. This is an important visual marker of the change from Republican to Triumviral to Imperial coinage. By the time Spanish mints had switched from using Iberian to Latin legends, obverse portraits of Octavian/Augustus were ubiquitous coin images throughout the Empire.

It is not clear how much everyday Iberians knew about political events in Rome when local coinage began to bear portraits of their new Emperor accompanied by Latin names and titles. For them, the significance of the new 'emperor' issues had less to do with political intrigue in far-off Rome, and more to do with the changes that affected local life as the chieftain-led village became a *colonia* or *municipium*, ultimately controlled by the provincial governor at Tarraco. Of interest is, how Augustus is presented on the coins from Roman Celtiberia, and what message his portrait carried. Moreover, what images, symbols, and legends did the authorities select, and why?

In order to answer these questions it is important to consider the pre-Latin and Latin coins together, particularly the so-called transitional emissions. Coins used during the period of cultural transition from pre-Roman to Roman Celtiberia have long been recognised as important for the insight they give to the spread of the Latin language. Their images are not well analysed or understood, even though they are no less important than the writing. They document the phasing in of Roman Imperial iconography: an intentionally gradual process completed over several years and several series. Rather than outright imposition of official Roman images on local civic coins, subtle changes culminated in the production of Augustan and Julio-Claudian *asses* and *denarii*, whose obverses and reverses would have been recognised in any town of the Western Empire.

⁶ A notable exception is a recent study of coins from *Segobriga* that examines the evolution of emissions from hybrids with traditional *jinete* images and Latin legends, to Roman Imperial issues: Ripollès and Abascal 1996.

I would argue that the gradualness of the transition reflects contemporary political circumstances. Even after Rome destroyed Numancia, the last Celtiberian holdout, in 133 BC, uprisings and revolts were frequent among the tribes of the north and northwest. Alliances were made and broken, Roman generals bribed treacherous native tribes, and Celtiberian warriors fought for the side that paid better. There was little stability, and Rome was not yet secure enough in her rule to impose a set of recognisably Roman images. Further, Roman coins were themselves undergoing significant changes in the second half of the 1st century. Changes in political and judicial organisation, locally and in the city of Rome, were, then, among several factors that shaped the design of Celtiberian coins. These factors also affected the rate at which new 'Roman' designs were phased onto the local coinage. Before looking at the symbolic importance of the transitional images, we begin with their antecedents.

II. Four towns and their coins: Case studies in iconographic evolution

Coins with Celtiberian legends were produced at no fewer than forty-seven mints on the Iberian Peninsula, of which thirty-three were in the northern-central interior. The number of mints in the Celtiberian-speaking areas is exceptionally high when compared to other areas of the Peninsula. Wherever there were Celtiberians, there was coinage: the valleys of the Ebro and Duero rivers, the Northern Plateau (Carpetania), and the Mediterranean coast as far south as Malaga. Most of the Celtiberian mints between the Ebro and Duero rivers struck only bronze *asses*; silver *denarii* were produced at only seven sites in the same area (Map 2).

Many tribes in northern and central Iberia neither produced nor used coins – the Vacceans, Vettonians, Cantabri, Astures, Gallaici, Celtici and Lusitanians – so coinage is one way of identifying Celtiberians. It is a difference explained in part by social and economic structures, in part by proximity to Roman cultural practices. The non-minting areas were Romanised late and incompletely, whereas the five Celtiberian tribes were under Roman control by the late 2nd century. The first Celtiberian emissions are normally dated to the mid- to late-2nd century, based on stratified finds and hoards. The decision to mint may have come at the behest of Roman officials, as minting activity suggests. It is likely that the Romans encouraged minting activity, that local leaders saw it as a shrewd and potentially lucrative move, but highly *unlikely* that the Romans forced it. In the middle of the 2nd century the Roman administrative apparatus was not in a position to impose and organise coinage throughout the Peninsula. It is important to

note the onset of Celtiberian minting activity and the simultaneous encroachment of Rome. The great changes in political alliances, languages, and cultural identities explain, I would argue, why the *jinete* coins look the way they do.

*Bilbilis/Bilbilis*⁷

The first issues from *Bilbilis* are bronze *asses* in twelve series and silver *semisses* in two series (Issues 4 and 13, as they are referred to in *CNH*). Each issue is distinguished by a certain letter and symbol. An S occurs behind the portrait head on the obverses of Issues 1—6, and is replaced by the letter BI on Issues 7—14; a dolphin is placed to the right of the portrait head on obverses of all issues except number 5, which features two dolphins. BI abbreviates the name of the town, but the precise significance of the S and dolphins is unknown; it is possible they refer to a chieftain or the issuing authority. The reverse iconography is generally the same, showing a mounted rider wielding a lance with the right hand. The horse appears alone on the *semisses*, Issues 4 and 13, its rider replaced by a crescent moon. The metrological aspects of the bronze *asses* are consistent, with those marked S averaging 12.54 grams, and those marked BI averaging 11.82g (Villaronga 1979, 185).

An issue dated late 2nd/early 1st century presents on its obverse the profile head of a youthful male figure, facing right and without beard or headgear (Fig. 4.1). The hair is arranged in locks ending in hooked curls that lie evenly along the hairline, with two behind the ear and one prominent curl at the top of the forehead. The nose is long and straight and its tip is pointed. Lips are fleshy and the right eye is over-large and triangular. The bust is neck-length and ends with a wisp of fabric at the throat, perhaps the collar of the figure's cloak. In front of the face, level with the lips, is a dolphin curved into an inverted S; behind the head is the Celtiberian letter for S.

The reverse presents a male figure on a horse riding to the right and holding a lance. The rider sports a helmet with a crest and a visor. His round, prominent shoulders suggest that he is wearing armour or protective gear. He holds the lance with his right hand and the horse's reins with his left. The horse leaps, its forelegs in the air and the hind legs on the ground. Its tail hangs too slack for the speed that it is meant to be running. The mane is braided and short. In exergue is the legend *bilbilis* in Celtiberian letters, underlined by a single straight line that runs roughly parallel to the lance.

Succeeding issues in the first three quarters of the 1st century present the same constituent elements: obverse portrait of a youthful, clean-shaven man with thick, curly hair; reverse image of a helmeted horseman holding a lance, town name below. Sometimes the obverse figure sports

a row of small dots along the neck, at the bottom (Issues 4 and 12), or higher up (Issues 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 4). The figure on Issue 9 wears an ornate collar at the base of the neck. Whether the obverse presents the same male figure throughout is not clear. Issue 7 presents a figure with shorter locks and no curls, and an unusual bump on the bridge of the nose; issues 10—13 present figures with straight or wavy hair and distinctive triangular eyes, much narrower than the eyes on earlier emissions. However, since none of the figures can be said to have true portrait characteristics, and accompanying symbols remain consistent throughout, the stylistic differences may be have reflected changing engravers rather than changing subjects.

Pictorial variations in the reverse images are subtle, manifesting themselves in the letter shapes, height of the horse's legs, and angle at which the lance is held (usually the point slightly tilts to the ground). Equipment is consistent: the rider wears a distinctive helmet with a round visor circling the head and a crest attached to the bowl, sometimes by a small holder like a narrow tube (Issue 9). His clothing consists of a short pleated tunic, a cuirass, and boots with cuffs.

According to Pliny (3.3.24), the town was re-founded in the Augustan period as *Augustus Bilbilis* and given the right of citizenship. The construction of monumental buildings in the Roman style continued into the 1st century AD: the temple and its platform must have been finished by AD 28, for an inscription records the dedication to the Emperor Tiberius in his twenty-ninth *Tribunicia potestas* (Mierse 1999, 152). Along with the changes in status and infrastructure at Bilbilis, important changes occurred in the city's coins. The basic images – a youthful, clean-shaven male figure on the obverse and a rider with a lance on the reverse – remain, but Latin letters replaced Celtiberian letters and the dolphin is omitted. The obverse portrait presents Augustus accompanied by the legend BILBILI, spelled alongside the face with the first B at the base of the neck and the final I level with the eye. The portrait is unmistakably that of Augustus because the casual hairstyle of short, brushed locks arranged evenly along the forehead matches the type minted at Caesaraugustus and Calagurris (*RPC* cat. nos. 314; 431-440). His head is bare and he is without symbols or attributes. The reverse presents a horseman riding to the right, holding a lance and wearing the same short, pleated tunic, boots, and crested helmet. Beneath the horse is the legend ITALICA. This particular example is a bronze *as* measuring 2.7cm across and weighing 12.92g, close in size and weight to the pre-Latin issues.

Augustus Bilbilis minted three issues in which Augustus's portrait is on the obverse with the legend BILBILI, a fourth with BILBILIS, and all with reverse images of a horseman holding a lance and riding over the legend ITALICA (fig 4.2) (*CNH* pp. 239-40). The portrait's resemblance to those of the Caesaraugusta coins, dated to 19/18, suggests a similar date for the Bilbilis issues.

⁷ *NAH* 184-5; *CNH* 237-40; *RPC* I.i.127-9.

The next phase of coinage includes Augustus's name on the obverse, the legend evolving from AVGVSTVS to AVGVSTVS DIVI F to AVGVSTVS DIVI F PATER PATRIAE and the portrait from bare to laureate (figs. 4.3 and 4.4). In the same period there is a great change in the reverse designs. ITALICA is replaced by BILBILIS and while the lance-wielding horseman is initially featured on the new series, his helmet is no longer crested, the lance is sometimes hoisted above the shoulder rather than held at the side, and a saddle is depicted. Stylistically, the horse is much more dynamic, its forelegs higher and its body stretched further. The horseman remains on the reverse for the first two Augustus laureate issues, but from 2 BC is replaced by a laurel wreath (*Victoria Augusti*) encircled by magistrates' names (one issue presents a thunderbolt instead of the laurel wreath, still including the magistral information). At the centre of the wreath is II VIR. This is the first time the city's legal status is recorded.

Under Tiberius Bilbilis three issues were struck, all of them bronze *asses* with the laureate Emperor facing right on the obverse, encircled by TI CAESAR DIVI AVGVSTI F AVGVSTVS. On the reverse is the laurel wreath encircled by the magistrates' titles, COS (*consul*) at its centre. Roman coinage at *Augustus Bilbilis* ends under Caligula, whose laureate portrait appears on a single short issue of *asses*. The reverse image of the Caligula issues is an oak wreath surrounded by magistrates' titles and II VIR at its centre (*RPC* cat. no. 400).

*Bol'skan/Osca*⁸

Pliny (3.3.24) writes that the town Osca belonged to the Suessetani. Its importance is demonstrated by the coins it produced: a large number of emissions of *denarii*, *asses*, *semisses*, and *quadrantes* over a long period of time, which were dispersed widely throughout the Peninsula. The first *denarii* were probably put out c. 155.⁹ Three series of issues were produced during the 2nd century, and a fourth in the early 1st century. Sertorius made *Bol'skan* his capital during his wars against Rome (80—72 BC). After his murder and the defeat of the Sertorian allies, Pompey sacked the city. All but abandoned, it was later re-founded as a Roman town and given a new name, Osca. The Roman coinages of the *Municipium Urbs Victrix Osca* began with Octavian in or about 27 BC.

The first of the pre-Latin issues, dated to the second half of the 2nd century, presents a bearded male figure on the obverse and a horseman on the reverse (figure 4.5). (The exception to this is Issue 5, which substitutes a pegasus for the horseman.) The obverse head has thick curls

⁸ *CNH* 210-13; *RPC* I.i.114-7; *CIVE* 86-99; Vives 102-3; Jenkins 1958.

⁹ Jenkins 1958, 143.

arranged into three tiers, usually with two curls behind the right ear. The beard is typically picked out in a series of dots, following the jaw line and covering half the cheek. Most of the issues present the obverse figure wearing a torque. On two issues of *quadrantes*, the figure is clean-shaven and wears a diadem high up on his head, leaving a wreath of hair around the face (CNH Issues 10 & 11). Eleven of the fifteen pre-Latin issues include the Iberian letters BO at the back of the head (figure 4.6), whereas the other four include a dolphin in the image.

The reverses are all of the equestrian character, whether bearing images of a pegasus (Issues 5 and 9), horse without rider (Issues 10 and 11), or the mounted rider with lance (all remaining issues). *Bolskan's* reverse rider wears a short tunic belted at the waist, long trousers, and a helmet. On Issues 4, 8, and 14, an astral symbol occurs just behind his crooked right arm.

In 39 BC, the town minted a *denarius* that showed the first signs of Roman imagery. The obverse presents a male figure familiar from the pre-Latin issues: he has the same arrangement of locks, style of beard, and collar. So similar, in fact, that he looks as if he had been lifted directly from one of the earlier dies – except that the legend next to his head is OSCA in Latin letters (figure 4.7). The reverse is unlike anything previously produced at the Oscan mint. It presents four pontifical symbols: the *simpulum*, *aspergillum*, axe, and *apex*. Along the rim of the face in Latin letters is the title DOM.COS.ITER.IMP, marking Cn. Domitius Calvinus as having been responsible for the emission.

This *denarius* has one face toward the indigenous numismatic iconography, one toward the Roman. The obverse keeps the traditional bearded male figure, but replaces the Iberian letters with Latin. Even viewers unable to read the new language would recognize the significance of this change. The reverse boasts unmistakable Romanness. Domitius Calvinus associates himself with piety and gratitude to the gods (for his victory over the Ceretani) via pontifical symbols. For local eyes, this may have been the first exposure to visual elements of their conquerors' religion.

The first post-Actium coins minted at Osca date from 27, and they bear Augustus's portrait. Although he is not yet identified by name, the hairstyle – smooth, straight locks arranged casually – matches that of other Augustus coin portraits.¹⁰ The Emperor has a young, unlined face, with a pronounced angle between the back of his head and neck (fig. 4.8). He is accompanied not by his name or title but by VRB.VICT, reflecting the town's new status as the *Municipium Urbs Victrix Osca*. The reverse shows the horseman, riding right and carrying a lance. In exergue is the legend OSCA. For the first time, the rider wears a crested helmet.

Another issue dated to c. 27 is a *quadrans* that presents a male head in profile on the obverse, a pegasus flying over the legend OSCA on the reverse. The identity of the obverse figure

is unknown and there are no attributes or inscriptions to help clarify the matter. He is Roman in character: clean-shaven, short hair, and sharper features than the pre-Latin obverse figures.

The next series of emissions depicts Augustus laureate on the obverse, encircled by DIVI.F.AVGVSTVS (fig. 4.9). At the back of his head the ribbons binding the wreath are knotted and the ends hang loose. This is the first time Osca produces a numismatic portrait with headgear, and it coincides with an Empire-wide shift to numismatic portraits of the emperor laureate (*RPC* I.i.39). The Emperor's face is tilted upwards, his chin is thrust forward, and there is a less pronounced angle at the back of the head. Oscan coins thenceforth bore mature portraits of the emperor, with a fuller neck and the laurel wreath. The reverses of the new DIVI.F.AVGVSTVS issues present a horseman riding right, holding a lance in his right hand. Underneath the horse is V.V / OSCA, divided into two registers by a horizontal line. The basic imagery has not changed, but the rider no longer wears long trousers and his tunic is different; it is now belted at the waist and marked by vertical lines, which represent drapery folds.

*Kelse/Lepida-Celsa*¹¹

Kelse was a town of the Sedetani situated in the Ebro Valley (Zaragoza). The town minted coins from the middle of the 2nd century BC until the AD 40s, when it attained the status of the *Colonia Victrix Iulia Lepida* under the provincial governor M. Aemilius Lepidus. A series of Triumviral coins went out under the name Lepida (c. 44-36). After Lepidus's fall and dishonour, the name of the *colonia* reverted from Lepida to Celsa (c. 36). Under Augustus, five coin types were issued, all of them identifying the city as C.V.I.CELSA. The city fell on hard times after Caesaraugusta was chosen as the *Conventus* capital, and was finally abandoned in the 40s. The last coins were issued under Tiberius.

Kelse's pre-Latin coinage constitutes a large body of numismatic evidence, which has seen several attempts to divide it into chronological categories (*CIVE* 121). Vives identified eight emissions, a scheme supported by Villaronga and Beltrán Lloris. Domínguez proposes ten emissions: four major series of *asses* and eleven sub-types; five series of *semisses*; and one series of *quadrantes*. There is still disagreement over the best way to organise the coinage, but Domínguez's study is the most recent and detailed, and gives an idea of the voluminous and complicated numismatic output of the city.

The archaic letters used on some of the *asses* suggest that they were produced in the first half of the 2nd century. These early coins present the head of a clean-shaven male figure on the

¹⁰ *C.f. aureus* from 'Gaul or Italy': Toynbee 1978, 53 fig. 66.

¹¹ *CNH* 221-5; *RPC* I.i.110-4; *CIVE* 118-29; Vives II.150-4.

obverse, facing right, with a dolphin behind the head (figure 4.10). The convention of including the first letter of the town's name behind the obverse head, seen on coinage throughout the region, was not used on coins from *Kelse*. The male figure has thick, curly hair, deep-set eyes that are overly large, and wears a torque. The reverse images are more variable. The horseman with lance shows up on three of the early types, but the winged horse is just as common. One type presents a horse galloping right, an astral symbol above his back. The name of the town is always on the reverse in exergue, but the Iberian lettering changes from an archaic form to modern.

The second half of the 2nd century BC brought significant changes in the numismatic images of *Kelse*'s emissions. The obverses still bear a male head but the details have become much more ornate, with lavish curls, elaborate torques, occasionally a laurel crown, and three dolphins encircling the head instead of one (fig. 4.11). One type presents the male head wearing a laurel crown, the first numismatic instance of this at *Kelse*. On the reverse, the horse is still a standard feature, sometimes ridden by a male figure, sometimes bareback, a crescent symbol replacing the rider. The male figures have lost the lance and now carry the palm. This change is emphasised by the size of the palm branch, which curves prominently over the rider's right shoulder, each leaf carefully differentiated.

Up until the end of the 2nd century the coins had a decidedly Iberian flavour, with the thick, curly hair and big, hollow eye of the youthful male figure on the obverse, dolphins, and the traditional equestrian on the reverse. Around the turn of the century, Roman visual vocabulary permeated the engraving. An issue dated to that time presents a male head in profile to the right, two dolphins in front of his face (*CNH* p. 223 no. 16). His hair is short and combed straight, with an even fringe along the forehead. His neck is thick and powerful and his jaw is prominent and heavy. The impression is of an older, wizened man, and his features point to Roman portrait characteristics. The reverse of this coin presents the horseman with palm.

Roman presence is clearly signalled on coinage for the first time in 45/44 BC, with the issue of a coin with Latin on the obverse (figure 4.12). The male head on the obverse faces right and has a small, almond-shaped eye with pupil. His neck is thick and his nose prominent. His hair is combed flat against the head and three curls hook over the forehead. In front of his face are two dolphins. At the back of the head are the Latin letters CEL. The reverse presents the horseman with palm branch, and the horse's forelegs high in the air. Underneath the horse is *Kelse* in Iberian letters. This bilingual issue illustrates the move towards a more visible Roman character in the obverse portraits, including the town name in Latin on the obverse. It also marks an attempt to transliterate *Kelse* into Celsa, a change that was made official a decade later after the town's phase as the *colonia Lepida*.

Lepida's triumviral issues were produced by three colleges of *praefecti pro II viris* (*asses*) and two colleges of *aediles* (*semisses* and *quadrantes*). The issues present standard Republican images, which were totally new to local coinage: reverse images of a yoke of oxen driven by a male figure (Fig. 4.13), standing or butting bull, or sheep, and obverse images of radiate Sol facing front, the head of Victory, and the helmeted head of Mars. Coins from this period generally identify the city's status on the obverse (COL.VIC.IVL.LEP or C.V.I.L.) and the title of the issuing authority (*praefectus* or *aedile*) on the reverse.

The metamorphosis from the *colonia Lepida* to the *colonia Celsa* brings new coin legends and a new standard obverse image. One issue dated to before 27 may present Octavian (RPC II. plate 19, 269); he is identified clearly on an issue dated slightly later, with the legend AVGVS next to his portrait (figure 4.14). Successive issues see the adoption of Augustus's standard features and attributes for coin portraits: smooth, youthful face, laurel wreath, and DIVI.F.AVGVSTVS. The reverses show little variation during the imperial period. After the range of images used on the triumviral issues, the reverse settles down to the standing bull, used for all of Augustus's issues. The bull faces right and has his head cocked. His tail swishes about his backside. Names of the *duoviri* are above and beneath. The bull emphatically does not run or charge, which it does in turn on triumviral issues, but is stock-still. The lance-wielding horseman of *Kelse* has given way to a sedate, irenic agricultural animal.

Turiasu/Turiaso¹²

Turiasu was located in the upper Ebro valley, inhabited by the Vascones. Its situation allowed for frequent contacts with the Sedetani and Celtiberians. Before being re-founded as the Roman *municipium* Turiaso, it minted several issues of silver (*denarii* and *quinarii*) and bronze coinages (*asses* and *semisses*). Its first Latin emissions date to around 27, and with the appearance of Augustus's portrait for the first time c. 2 BC, traditional imperial images and legends prevail.

Turiasu was one of the most productive of the pre-Latin mints in northern Spain, putting out a large and varied coinage beginning in the second half of the 2nd century. Five series of *denarii* (comprising nine sub-types), four series of *quinarii*, ten series of *asses*, and three of *semisses* were minted. The principal obverse image is a bearded male figure facing right with a collar at the neck. The principal reverse image is a horseman wielding a weapon with the legend in exergue. An early series presents the rider holding a sickle ('hoz de guerra') instead of a lance (Fig. 4.15). Five types of *asses* show the sickle; later *asses* show the lance, which becomes the standard attribute.

The obverse figure has a beard picked out in individual dots, a technique seen in emissions from *Bolskan/Osca*. He has a thick head of hair styled into three rows of locks. The eye tends to be overly large and to lack a pupil, becoming more deep-set in a triangle as time progresses. Typically, the secondary obverse symbols are a dolphin in front of the face and the Iberian letter KA behind. One late 2nd century issue presents a helmeted female head facing right, without dolphin (figure 4.16). This coin's reverse presents a horseman without a lance: he holds the reins and is accompanied by a star-and-crescent symbol.

Apart from minor variations in style, no doubt the result of different engravers, the images on the pre-Latin coins from *Turiasu* are generally unchanging. By the early 1st century, the obverse features the Iberian letters S and TU in addition to KA. There was a lengthy period from the beginning of the 1st century to the early imperial period when no coins were minted. Such a long break suggests disruption in the city and insufficient stability to continue with the mining, melting, and striking operations. It also means that after some eighty years' pause in minting activity, new coin authorities and engravers replaced the previous generation of minters.

The first coins assigned to the imperial era bear Latin legends and Roman images (figures 4.17, 4.18). The obverse presents a female head facing right, crowned by a laurel wreath, her hair pulled back in a chignon at the nape of her neck. Next to her face is the legend SILBIS, interpreted as an epithet for a local nymph or deity (*RPC* I.i.130). The reverse presents a man on a horse, but this is not a classic Iberian *jinete* figure. The horse faces left and lifts his right foreleg daintily - a restrained walk rather than a gallop. The rider wears a short belted tunic and is without a helmet. He holds the reins with his left hand and holds up his right arm *ad locutio*. This is the stock pose of a Roman equestrian statue (Bergemann 1990). In the exergue is TVRIASO, the first time the city name is transliterated into Latin. Another SILBIS issue presents a reverse horse-and-rider of a much more Iberian character: the horse faces right and gallops with forelegs in the air. The rider holds up his right hand but it is empty. The reverse bears a mix of visual languages - the upraised right hand of the *ad locutio* equestrian statue, and the right-facing gallop of the pre-Latin coinage.

After 2 BC, Augustus appears on coins from Turiaso, at first on the reverse rather than the obverse. The obverse still presents the female laureate head, but the SILBIS legend has been replaced by TVRIASO. The reverse presents the laureate head of Augustus facing right, encircled by the legend IMP.AVGVSTVS.P.P. Three such issues are produced before Augustus replaces the female figure and an oak wreath is introduced on the reverse, with MVN at its centre and TVRIASO underneath. The Augustan obverses continued to bear IMP.AVGVSTVS.P.P rather than the more habitual legend of Tarraconensian coinage: AVGVSTVS.DIVI.F.

¹² *NAH* 173-4, 177-8, 194, 244; *CNH* 262-7; *RPC* I.i.130-3; *CIVE* 172-86.

Thus the early imperial coinage from Turiaso carries a mix of indigenous and Roman elements. The reverse equestrian statue on issues dated c. 27 harks back to the reverse horseman of the pre-Latin coins. The female figure 'Silbis' is kept on the obverses for the first few Augustan issues, relegating the emperor to the reverse until he replaces her; the coinage thereafter is standard early Imperial in appearance.

III. Interpreting the images

The Obverses

(1) The heads

The obverse images are not portraits. None of the figures has distinguishing features, hairstyle, or dress. The accompanying symbols (dolphins and Iberian letters) were in widespread use and cannot be taken as personal attributes of any known person or deity. The obverses are without titles or names and there are no comparanda from the ceramic, stone, or metallurgical records from which to derive this information. These are generalised images of a male figure of authority, and at present we lack the evidence necessary to assign them specific identities.

It is more helpful to think generally about the symbolic role played by the obverse images, and what they might have meant to the viewers. The visual language to which these male heads belonged was fundamentally different from images the Celtiberians had previously used or created. The material record reveals that most Celtiberian villages produced pottery, brooches, and carved stone decorated with geometric motifs. There was little or no artistic conception of realism. In the few villages that did paint human figures onto pots or carve them out of stones, the 'art' was highly abstract. For most of the men and women of Celtiberia, then, we can imagine that the obverse figures were more expressive and realistic than the images produced locally.

In the first phase of minting, die-engravers probably relied on a coin model, unused (as they were) to creating realistic representations. It is not easy to trace the prototype. Male obverse heads were very popular and can be found throughout the Mediterranean world, on Greek coins as well as on Roman ones. Furthermore, local die-engravers interpreted rather than copied their model; in other words, they did not intend for their coins to be direct imitations of Greek or Roman models, but adapted certain numismatic elements and conventions from the Greek and Roman tradition to suit local needs. This would explain differences in the hairstyles, beards, and torques of the obverse figures, and secondary symbols on the obverse and reverse, on the Celtiberian coins.

The style of the *jinete* obverse figures is widely described as Greek. Domínguez Arranz points to the triangular eye sockets and beard styles in the first emissions as evidence of ‘a clear Greek aesthetic [...] in particular from the coastal mints,’ and attributes what she sees as a degeneration in style during the last period to ‘a deliberate shrugging off of Greek influence in favour of a more local aesthetic’ (my translation) (Domínguez Arranz 1998, 167). A ‘deliberate shrugging off’ is not clear from the coins, since stylistic changes resulted from new die-engravers and may have been unintentional. The Greek aesthetic that is apparent in these obverses probably did not reach Celtiberia via actual Greek coins (which have not been found in any substantial number in Spain). Iberian towns already actively minting are a more likely source of models. East of the Ebro River, *Iltiřta* minted ‘dracmas de imitación emporitana’ with male obverse heads in the late 3rd century (CNH 175). Within a few decades, nearby *Iesó* and *Iltiřkesken* similarly produced coins with male obverse heads. *Emporion*, the largest Greek colony on the eastern coast, had issued coins with obverse heads since the early 3rd century. In sum, the Celtiberians came into contact with many examples of coins with obverse male heads – examples of how they ‘should’ look.

Thus, one explanation for the choice of the male obverse head is simple: it was part of the numismatic iconography that Celtiberian mint authorities, and perhaps local residents, understood to signify legitimacy. The portrait was a standard numismatic image whose adoption made the coins look official. Because the coins of the 2nd century BC represented Celtiberia’s first venture into minting, the issues had to appear genuine in order to be accepted both in local towns unaccustomed to coinage, and extra-regional cities whose own coinage looked similar. A male figure was chosen for the Celtiberian coins because a male obverse portrait head was part of mainstream coinage throughout the northern and coastal zones of the Peninsula. Thus, one message conveyed by the male head is fiscal legitimacy.

It is clear that the meaning of the male head goes beyond the purely functional, however. There were a number of numismatic models from which to choose. Third century coins from *Emporion* present obverse images of Persephone or Arethusa wearing headdress, often accompanied by dolphins, while in the 2nd century, the Roman goddess Diana is shown. All three goddesses are depicted with their traditional attributes (figures 4.19 and 4.20).¹³ Several indigenous tribes near Celtiberia used the visual language of Greek and Roman gods. The Indigetes at *Untikesken* chose Athena in her trademark crested round helmet with the visor propped up on the forehead for issues from the mid-2nd to mid-1st century (figure 4.21). Further

¹³ CNH 17-30. A traditional attribute of the nymph Arethusa is a dolphin representing a fountain or spring; of Persephone, a torch, crown, sceptre, and/or stalks of grain; and of Diana, a bow and/or faun.

south, coins bearing obverse portrait heads of Venus, and reverse images of Eros with his bow, were minted at Corduba from the middle of the 2nd century BC. Given the range of numismatic images in circulation throughout the Iberian Peninsula, why did the Celtiberian minting authorities retain the male figure?

The material and literary records suggest that fighting, strength, and bravery were rewarded by social privileges and lavish burials. In a society where traditionally masculine qualities are prized (as observed on the equine fibulae and painted ceramic vessels), the image of a vigorous, strong-featured young man is strikingly resonant. It represents not a specific person or deity but an ideal. In the tradition of Hellenistic divinised portraits, the visual language is purposely confusing. The mix of idealised and realistic features blurs the lines between mortal and immortal, real and unreal, human and divine. This is an effective strategy for communicating to the viewer the importance and superiority of the figure presented.

(2) Dolphins

The dolphin is a glaringly foreign detail whose presence may be explained by contact with coastal coins. It has been interpreted as having anthropomorphic and religious value, and marking power and authority. The dolphin is not a creature found swimming up the Ebro River. To everyday Celtiberians it was an exotic symbol associated with foreign and élite culture. The dolphin was so common on Iberian coins during the late 2nd and 1st centuries, and used in such a variety of combinations (one, two, or three; accompanying male and female figures alike; in exergue or more central), that a more precise symbolic meaning is not clear.

(3) Iberian Letters

In most cases the Iberian letter on the obverse, in exergue or to the side of the head, is the first letter or syllable of the name of the town that minted the coin. It is rare that the obverse letter does not conform to this rule, leading to disagreement over its function. Perhaps the letter is an engraver's mark or now-unknown epithet (Morán 1995; Olmos Romera 1995).

The Reverses

(1) Horse and rider

That the Celtiberians were great horsemen is a fact stressed by ancient literary sources and suggested by the archaeological record. The manufacture and use of horse- and horseman brooches, vases painted with figures riding or training horses and tombstones carved with images

of men riding horses, points to the social and military importance of equestrians in Celtiberian society (Prieto 1977). This aspect of Iberian identity was so important that mercenaries from the *Hispaniae* who settled at Morgantina (Sicily) in the 1st century chose the horseman to be the reverse image for the coins they minted there (Erim 1989, 45).

In a study of numismatic iconography from Gaul and Britain, M. Green describes the horse as 'the Celtic coin-animal *par excellence*.' She attributes this to 'the fact of its being copied from the Macedonian image of the chariot of the god Helios or Apollo [but also because] in a Celtic context, horses stood for prestige and war, both in terms of chariots and in terms of cavalry' (Green 1992a). Horses were emblems of power, wealth, and social status in the Celtic world, and these aspects of their symbolic value held true in the Celtiberian world.

The imagery of the equine fibulae is static and simple: horse and rider tend to be angular and rigid, with little in the way of physiognomic detail. There are no reins, weapons, or clothing, and the rider is often shapeless and without limbs (Almagro-Gorbea & Torres Ortíz 1999). What ceramic evidence remains of horseman paintings, is limited to finds from Numancia, the main city of the Arevaci, which was razed by the Romans in 133. These paintings present geometric figures comprising lines and shapes, usually without weapons. Often, a male figure is featured on the ground training horses or a single horse (chapter 3). In the stone register, *stelai* carved with images of male figures on horseback have been found throughout Celtiberia. The imagery is very close to what appears on the coins - rider facing right, holding a lance in the right hand with the tip pointed down, horse in mid-gallop (chapter 5). Since most of the tombstones have Latin inscriptions and commemorate men with Latinised or purely Latin names, they must have been produced after the new language had taken root – not before the early 1st century AD.

However, one discoid *stela* with a Celtiberian inscription, and two others of similar shape and format, can be dated earlier (García y Bellido 1949, pls. 366-8). In these examples, the horse and its rider occupy the entire surface of the roundel with the horse's ears, tail, and spear point overlapping the border. The figures are heavy, the action belaboured. Each rider holds a large round shield and, in two cases, a spear. No incisions mark facial features, clothing, or riding equipment. The horse runs in one example, stands in two. These *stelai* images belong to a different visual vocabulary, though they send the same message the coins do - the honour of the mounted warrior. Given its importance in the Celtiberian value system, the horseman icon was an obvious choice for the coin reverses.

It is important not to over-emphasise the importance of the mounted warrior in real life. The *jinete* reverses are explained as documents of 'the ideology of local *equites* that ruled the *civitates* that minted the coins' (Almagro-Gorbea 1995, 53). There is reason to believe that

mounted warriors were of elevated social and class status (resources were necessary in order to buy equestrian equipment and maintain a horse) and this may have given them decision-making positions. But it is not certain that a ruling class of equestrians supervised numismatic design.

The horseman icon makes a general point: the authorities issuing the coins wished to stress horsemanship or warrior imagery. The type of object held by a given rider is what individualises the message. Among the coin reverses produced at *Bilbilis*, *Bolískan*, *Kelse*, and *Turíasu*, the riders hold a variety of objects. The lance is continuous on *Bilbilis* reverses. *Bolískan*'s reverses often present a horseman with a lance, but sometimes a galloping horse or winged horse is shown without a rider. Examples from *Kelse* present a winged horse or male figure on horseback with a lance in the first phase, later, a horseman carrying a palm branch or a horse without rider. At *Turíasu*, weapons are always included in the 2nd century issues, whether the *hoz de guerra* or the lance, whereas 1st century reverses often present the horseman with a lance but also include the rider-less horse for several issues.

These variations are part of a larger pattern that becomes clear when one considers coins from throughout northern-central Iberia. Coins produced by the coastal tribes tend to depict the reverse rider carrying peaceful emblems, especially the palm, whereas at inland sites he tends to carry a weapon. In 1964, Jürgen Untermann made this observation in a study of the coins' linguistic typologies. Among several maps that divide the region into numismatic zones is one that illustrates the predominance of certain reverse weapons and accoutrements. Untermann's focus was Celtiberian dialects, and he was interested in the weapons only in so far as they helped him to this end. His comments are brief:

Das einzige gut greifbare Merkmal, das bei den Assen und Denaren eine regionale Gruppierung erkennen läßt, ist das Attribut des Reiters. Die Palme ist für die Küstenzone typisch, die Lanze für das Binnenland; nur wenige Orte zeigen beide Motive im Wechsel, nur ein Ort im Küstenland hat [...] immer den Lanzenreiter. Andere Waffen – Sichel, Speiß, Schwert – sind selten [...] (Untermann 1964, 126-7).

Why is the palm typical to coins minted along the coast? Why does the rider carry the lance more often on inland issues? Perhaps it is no coincidence that the eastern tribes conquered early on by the Romans present peaceful emblems, whilst the inland tribes conquered later chose weapons. The towns that had made their peace with Rome and were no longer engaged in regular

conflict may have chosen the reverse horseman because it fitted the fashion for reverses used throughout the region and because it allowed them to advertise the native tradition of equestrian prowess. The engravers handed the rider a palm branch rather than a weapon. The inland tribes, still fighting Roman soldiers (and each other) until the early 1st century, chose a horseman with a weapon because they continued to identify with collective armed struggle. But it is unwise to be heavy-handed in the historical interpretation of these images: it is not as simple as the rider with palm branch representing peace, the rider with weapon representing war. Indeed, it is not clear that the palm branch was an emblem of peace in Celtiberia, the way it was in Rome.

The Celtiberian town of *Śekaisa* demonstrates how the numismatic images might reflect historical circumstances. A silver *denarius* from the town presents a youthful male figure on its obverse (figure 4.22). The figure is clean-shaven and has a full head of hair brushed into long locks that end in hook curls. Each lock consists of five parallel strands of hair. Along the forehead is an arrangement of dots delineating the hairline. Around the figure's neck is a line of dots that could be a torque, the collar of his garment or a thick cord attached to a cloak. At the back of the head are the first two Iberian letters of the name of the issuing town.

The reverse shows a male figure on a horse riding to the right. The rider holds a large palm in his right hand. He wears a short pleated tunic that ends mid-thigh, boots, a cuirass, and a helmet. The horse is reined and bridled but not saddled. Its tail is loose and its mane is braided.

The coinage from *Śekaisa* is one of the most important in Celtiberia. The town was among the earliest to mint coins, and its numismatic output was exceptionally high with respect to volume and variety. In its first phase, the town was inhabited by the Belli and situated in the valley of the Perejil River (modern-day province of Zaragoza). In 153, the Belli and the Titti, a neighbouring Celtiberian tribe, enlarged the walled perimeter of the town and encouraged the inhabitants of smaller towns to settle there, a move expressly forbidden by the treaty clauses signed with Rome 25 years before. On orders from the Senate, Consul Fulvius Nobilior, the new governor of *Citerior*, marched to *Śekaisa* with 30,000 troops and destroyed the town. Most of the town's inhabitants had already fled to Numancia, the capital city of the Arevaci, whose bitter resistance, prolonged siege, and eventual destruction in 133 brought the Celtiberian tribes to their knees (Burillo and Ostalé 1983-4; Keay 1988, 35-6). At the conclusion of the Numantine War, *Śekaisa* was re-settled and occupied until the Sertorian War, after which point there is no evidence of its continued inhabitation.

These distinct phases of the town's history can be traced in the numismatic record. Stratified finds indicate that the first coins were minted between the signing of the peace treaty with Ti. Sempronius Gracchus in 178 BC and the destruction level associated with 153 BC. Coins

from this period present the horseman holding a lance or a standard, sometimes accompanied by an eagle. Post-destruction layer, the horseman is without a helmet and holds a palm, or there is a horse with no rider. Coins from layers dated to the first half of the 1st century present the horseman once again wearing a helmet and carrying a lance. These were the last issues to be minted at *Šekaisa* before the Sertorian revolt (CNH 231-7).

Figure 4.22 is typical of issues dated to the first half of the 2nd century in presenting the rider with a lance. The other major type that is dated to this period shows him with a standard and eagle instead of a lance. This type is typified by a bronze *as*, the reverse of which depicts a mounted rider carrying a standard (*insignia*). In front of the horse is a bird, probably an eagle, to judge by its size and form. In exergue is the name of the town in Celtiberian letters. The coin's obverse presents a clean-shaven male figure that faces right and is bareheaded. His hair is arranged in round curls laying in a neat row along the forehead. Around his neck is a torque. In front of the figure's face is a lion.

This coin belongs to a series of emissions (that include a lion, eagle, and standard) called the *Vogelreiter* coins (Beltrán Martínez 1991-3). The respective positions of the eagle and lion vary: sometimes the eagle is situated over the right shoulder of the horseman, and the lion behind the portrait head. The precise symbolic value of these images is not certain, but it is likely that they communicated power and status to the viewers. Lions' heads were featured on obverses of coins from sites in southern Iberia, and Greek-influenced Narbonensis produced reverse images of running lions.¹⁴ There are no known Iberian parallels to the *Šekaisa* lion type – prowling along the rim of the obverse next to the male head. The size and shape of the *Šekaisa* lion fits the regional convention for secondary obverse symbols: dolphins, cornucopia, palms, and *caducei*, in front of or behind portrait heads, are formed in harmony with the head and rim, often curved or S-shaped. The engravers who worked at *Šekaisa* on the *Vogelreiter* series adapted their own symbol (the lion) to fit the conventional format of the obverse.

Coins and cultural identity

So far, messages about political alignments, civic status, and relationship with Rome have been 'extracted' from the numismatic images. That is to say, these are forms of identity that are applicable at the official or group level, ones to which individuals may not have felt allegiance. How much did the owner of a coin care about the message it sent about Augustus's emergence as *princeps* as long as it was accepted for trade in goods? As stated at the beginning of this chapter, it is the more personal, subtle forms of identity that are harder to detect on the coins. One

observation that can be made about cultural identity and coinage is that the Celtiberian coins are local and not imperial. The local character of the coins is marked by their legends (in Celtiberian) and style of 'ruler' portrait (frequent inclusion of a torque). This is significant because Imperial coinage generally reflects preoccupation with the centre. Where it does, on the rare occasion, look out to the Empire as a whole, it is only Rome's view of others, not provincials' view of themselves that is seen on the coins (Williamson 2002, 6). Local coins, in contrast, offer a look at how provincials wished to present themselves.

Which provincials were 'presenting themselves' on the coins? For the most part, they were local élites deeply complicit in the continuation of the Roman system. Their version of local cultural identity and their version of shared values were chosen for representation on coins in the form of icons and symbols. The consistent use of the horseman icon would appear to demonstrate local pride in and/or recognition of equestrian prowess and identification with warriors. Lorrio interprets the weapons reproduced on the coins as emblems of social and class values, and argues that the horseman iconography is rooted in indigenous visual language full of highly charged symbolism unrelated to the value world of the Roman invaders (Lorrio 1995a). Burillo Mozota takes the argument a step further in arguing that the coins illustrate ethnic unity among tribes, and that their decision to conform to a more or less standard reverse image came as a reaction to Roman domination in the region (Burillo Mozota 1995). But neither scholar addresses the constraints there would have been on provincial coinage. Minting and distributing coins – indeed, the very existence of coinage – depended on Roman authorities' acceptance of the provincial coins (Williamson 2002, 6). In this light it is highly unlikely that 'resistance' types were permitted or successful. Moreover, even in the case of the 'local' markers outlined above – Celtiberian language and riders' weapons – the boundary between Celtiberian and 'Other' is not clear. Language itself can be a component of various ethnic identities and this is especially the case with Celtiberian, which was written in a borrowed alphabet. The rider's weapon is on occasion Iberian (e.g. the *falcata*) but much more often it is a sword, sickle, or lance, in use in many regions of the Empire.

The horseman icon's recurrence on coins throughout the Iberian Peninsula – well beyond the Celtiberian region – led Untermann to conclude that there is nothing 'exclusiv keltiberisch' about the Celtiberian coins and that the coins cannot be taken as markers of ethnic or cultural identity (Untermann 1984). Jonathan Williams makes an argument similar to Untermann's in the case of 2nd and 1st century BC coins in Gaul and Britain: indigenous issues cannot be taken as simply 'tribal' or 'ethnic' coinages (Williams 2002, 2). Personal names are more frequent on the

¹⁴ CHN 4-8 (Massaliot coins); 435-6 (Narbonensis).

coins than are ethnic or tribal names and they all use a wide range of recognisably Roman-style imagery. Although the obverses bear portrait heads that are 'clearly modelled on those of Augustus', the heads are named for local rulers. These local rulers used Roman objects, language, and styles to present themselves as legitimate heirs to tribal 'thrones', and although the coins stress indigenous legacies and adoptions, the Roman world is 'supremely present' in the numismatic images (Williams 2002, 6).

Untermann is probably correct: many non-Celtiberian mints produced coins with reverse images of male figures on horseback for their own local uses, so there is nothing about the icon that is exclusively Celtiberian. Nevertheless, the icon was chosen because it carried a message or set of messages, and regardless of whether the Celtiberians felt it was their own special symbol, the horseman represented shared values on at least the official, civic level. Another possibility, that will not sit well with the proponents of the 'Celtiberian-coinage-as-resistance' argument, is that Roman minting authorities decided on the horseman figure and encouraged (or enforced) its use – in other words, the horseman can be seen as an ethnographic stereotype in the same way the ibis bird is on Hadrianic coins from Egypt and the elephant scalp is on coins from Africa. Whether Celtiberians with little or no connection to the ruling élite identified with the values represented by the horseman icon is not made clear by the nature of the evidence.

On another level, coins affect cultural identity and self-perception by their association with places. Coins were issued under Roman auspices and according to Roman monetary values, and mints were established in those settlements that were deemed large and important enough to warrant one. Some settlements, inevitably, did not have a mint and therefore the inhabitants of those settlements did not use coinage bearing their own images and place-names. Coinage meant that for the first time, Celtiberians were identified according to polity. This was an Italian means of socio-political organisation (Cerdeño, Sanmartí, and García Huerta 1999, 291), and represents a break from the pre-Roman practice of dividing the Celtiberian peoples along tribal lines. For a city to host a mint and/or boast coins with its name on them would have brought prestige and status to the city and its residents. It is likely that Celtiberians' perception of themselves and their settlements, was affected by which towns issued coins and which did not.

Conclusions

How does the numismatic situation in northern-central Spain compare to that of other areas? Is the same process of transition from indigenous to Roman coin images apparent?

The city of *Sekobirikes* was an Iberian town situated 140km west of *Turiasu*. Coins were minted there from the last third of the 2nd century, demonstrating a clear preference for the clean-shaven male head on the obverse and horseman with lance on the reverse (CNH 291-2). Behind the obverse head is one of two symbols, the palm or crescent moon. The town's name appears in Iberian script beneath the reverse horse. Until the middle of the 1st century, the images do not change. The first sign of Roman iconography comes in an issue dated to the early Augustan period.¹⁵ The emperor occupies the same position that the indigenous head always had before: facing right on the obverse, between a dolphin (in front of the face) and palm branch (behind the head). His hair is short and straight, combed flat against the head. Augustus's standard coin portraits do not include secondary elements or symbols, so the inclusion of the dolphin and palm is unusual and clearly intended to accommodate local norms. The reverse presents the horseman with a lance and the legend SEGOBRIGA in exergue. The next issue depicts Augustus laureate on the obverse, encircled by DIVI.F.AVGVSTVS, without the palm and dolphin. The horseman with lance remains in place until the early Augustan period, but soon thereafter, the oak wreath encircling SEGOBRIGA replaces the horseman icon.

On the eastern coast, *Arse* minted for the first time at the end of the 3rd century BC. Several silver and bronze issues bore Iberian legends and a mix of images that were probably taken from coins from southern Hispano-Punic and northern Hispano-Greek sites - obverse male heads, without beard and sometimes laureate, reverse horseman with the lance or a standing bull (CNH 304-14). After 120, the city produced new types and adopted a new metrology taken from Republican coinage. From then, the only connection with the Iberian world was the Iberian script: the helmeted head of Roma was the most popular obverse image, and the ship's prow was typical for the reverse (RPC I.i.99-101). Soon thereafter the Iberian legends gave way to Latin and the new ethnic SAGVNTVM. As a coastal city, *Arse*/Saguntum had longer and more sustained contact with foreign cultures than the inland sites had. The move to Roman images came early, at a time when many inland cities were beginning to mint. Yet here, too, the transition was gradual, with Iberian script accompanying Roma and the ship's prow, before Latin was used.

In all societies, coin-types have an important function and are carefully designed by the authorities. One thinks, for example, of the series of coins issued by Jewish leaders during the Bar Kochba revolt in Judea (AD 132-135), which became potent symbols of resistance to Roman authority (Mildenberg 1980). The importance of coin images was fully understood by the Celtiberians and they acted thoughtfully when they began to mint. As everywhere else, the images were carefully selected to accord with local cultural practices and social ambitions. It was

¹⁵ RPC I.i, 142-3; I.ii.pl. 33, nos. 470 & 472.

not so important that the images were unique or original. In ancient times, originality was not looked for as it is today: copying was a normal practice by Greeks and Romans alike. When the Celtiberian tribes were confronted with the Roman world and its monetary system, they deliberately selected obverse and reverse images that were of a visual language and style utterly different from their own, but that had resonance in the indigenous value system. As time passed and Roman cultural practices took root, coins with Latin inscriptions and emperors' portraits replaced the pre-Latin issues. The hybrid coins, presenting a mix of old and new images and legends, were a way of introducing a new system of rule and a new set of images gradually. Such a transition was necessary for Rome, whose control over the region was shaky and whose own official visual vocabulary changed to reflect the fledgling dynastic rule of Augustus.

CHAPTER 5: MEN'S FUNERARY MONUMENTS

Coins allow us to examine visual language in Celtiberia from the late Iron Age to the early Roman imperial period, and the continuous evolution of images that occurred over this period. Coins are an excellent way to study corporate identities in the ancient world, as their emblems and legends represented entire settlements or regions, not just an individual. The horseman icon was of obvious significance to corporate identity in the Celtiberian world, as evinced by the recurrence of the icon over time and distance. The closure of the Celtiberian mints in the Julio-Claudian period did not bring use of the icon to an end. Men, probably elite men, were commemorated with freestanding slabs of limestone and sandstone, carved with horseman imagery, from the 1st century BC until the AD 2nd century. These *stelai* can give us insight to how Celtiberian society memorialised its men, and idealised male gender roles. Whereas the coins attest to communal allegiance to or affinity for the horseman icon, the *stelai* testify to a more personal, individual connection to the icon.

There is very little evidence for the use of freestanding stone funerary monuments in Celtiberia before the Roman phase (that is, before the mid- to late-2nd century BC). Traditional markers of burial or interment in pre-Roman Celtiberia were cylindrical ceramic urns or 'house urns': small ceramic containers with four walls and a sloping roof. The first limestone and sandstone *stelai* come from sites dated to approximately 120 BC and later. The preferred style of visual commemoration for men established itself early with scenes of war and hunting. The horseman icon, as on fibulae and coins, enjoyed widespread popularity on funerary monuments.

This chapter examines men's funerary monuments from Celtiberia and focuses on the equestrian motif and war scenes, and what these scenes tell us about social and cultural changes in the region. The continued use of the horseman icon, it is argued, reflects the retention of traditional iconography whilst Celtiberian society changed in response to Roman cultural influences. The monuments demonstrate that despite the continued use of the horseman icon, over time the icon diminished in importance as a marker of identity. New ways of marking identity and self-perception, particularly Latin epitaphs, led to the horseman and related icons being used complementarily, rather than primarily, to commemorate an individual. *Stelai* set up for women will be examined in the following chapter (chapter 6). The monuments are divided along gender lines in order to facilitate study of gender ideology, social roles of men and women, and iconographic similarities among men and women's *stelai*.

The starting point of this chapter is Francisco Marco Simón's 1978 catalogue, *Las estelas decoradas de los conventos Caesaraugustano y Cluniense* (Marco Simón 1978). His

documentation of funerary monuments from northern central Tarraconensis remains the most complete. Monuments to which reference is made, but which do not appear in the thesis catalogue, are identified by Marco Simón's catalogue numbers. Many of the pieces were also published in Antonio García y Bellido's monograph, *Esculturas romanas de España y Portugal* (1949), as well as in several shorter books and articles, to which reference is made where necessary. The publishing peak for these objects was reached in the 1960s and 1970s, but since Marco Simón's catalogue, there has been no thorough investigation of the monuments and no fresh debates on their significance as markers of changing social processes and cultural identities. Traditional Spanish archaeological work scrutinises relief sculpture for quality, describing them in subjective terms such as *repugnante*, *desagradable*, and *infantil*. Similarly, previous publications have tried to distil what is 'Roman' in the reliefs – a defensive position that requires the impossible task of defining the essence of Romanness. This discourse imposes the values of the Roman metropolitan elite on provincial art and discounts the needs and abilities unique to local stonecutters.

The present chapter offers three new perspectives on the men's *stelai*. It considers the social importance of public funerary monuments and the significance of adopting a Roman medium in a non-Roman context. Second, it uses nomenclature to examine the ethnic background and social status of the deceased. Third, it considers style as a marker of cultural change. This investigation is the first to ask social and cultural questions of the monuments.

The study is divided into six major sections. The first section examines the social significance of funerary monuments. The second section explains the provenience, materials, and format of the group of 135 *stelai* from northern-central Tarraconensis, and considers their production dates. The third section is devoted to the iconography and a typological discussion, and gives particular emphasis to the equestrian motif, since it was the most popular choice for men's commemorative art. The fourth section looks at inscriptions and nomenclature as evidence of how Celtiberians' sense of cultural identity changed as they took up Latin and Latinised names. The fifth section discusses style as a means of understanding cultural changes. The final section looks at some of the interpretations that have been put forward to explain the symbolic significance of the equestrian icon.

I. The social significance of funerary monuments

The most striking difference between the cylindrical ceramic urns of Iron Age Celtiberia, and the engraved *stelai* of the Roman period, is anonymity. If the ceramic urns were once clearly marked,

this is not now the case: they are without names, faces, or figural details, and no distinguishing features set them apart from each other. It is likely that mourners were able to know the precise location of their loved one's urn by associating it with particular landscape elements. In contrast, a figural composition and a name (or names) were carved on to stone slabs, constituting permanent reminders of the deceased. Some 2,200 years after their erection, we are still able to identify the person or persons to whom a funerary monument was dedicated.

Tombstones, or *stelai*, are monuments – a word deriving from the Latin 'moneo, monere' (to remember), and closely related to 'monumentum', meaning 'reminder', or 'that put up as a remembrance' (Wiseman 1985, 4). In the Roman world, monuments were erected as reminders of triumphal or other glories. T.P. Wiseman writes that the preoccupation with personal achievement and credit for the greatest glory stands out as 'the most conspicuous characteristic of the Roman ruling class in the third century BC' (Wiseman 1985, 4).

In ancient Greece, grave monuments were designed to project the memory of a particular individual into the future (Humphreys 1993, 155-61). Sarah Humphreys's research into the burial and commemoration practices of the Greeks reveals the social and psychological impetus for giving the body and its burial spot special treatment:

In ancient Greece, what it was important to preserve was the memory of the deeds of the dead, embodied either in immortal words or in stone. The inscribed slab, relief sculpture or statue which stood over a Greek tomb was the product of the convergence of two different ideas: the *sema* or sign which indicated the burial place of a hero – which might be simply an earth mound [...] – and the *kolossos*, a stone substitute for the deceased, either aniconic or anthropomorphic, which symbolised the fixity of the dead (Humphreys 1993, 156).

Nevertheless, the Greeks themselves realised that the commemorated individual lasted only as long as he or she had relatives to do the remembering (Humphreys 1980, 98). The deceased's kin played a crucial role in maintaining remembrance and commemoration rites. As Humphreys observes, not only was it social expectation that kin perform burial rites and maintain the gravesite – it was legal obligation: 'The heirs or next-of-kin had a statutory obligation to bury the dead and could be called upon to pay the costs of burial by *deme* officials if they did not carry out this obligation with sufficient promptness' (Humphreys 1980, 98-101). Tombs were treated with

respect but the identity of those contained within them could become forgotten nevertheless. In Demosthenes's *Orationes* 55.14, for example, the speaker owns a plot of land with old tombs on it but has no idea to whom they belong. The proliferation of family tombs in the 4th century BC indicates a cultural preference for grouping burials according to kinship, a preference that included a social strategy for remembering who was buried where.

The practice of lending the memorial a voice, with an inscription (in the case of ancient Greece, often in verse and in the first person), seems to have been another strategy for attaining some permanence for the individual (Foxhall 1995, 138). Before the fourth century BC, the Greeks did not often individualise people visually. Freestanding *kouroi* and *korai*, and the images carved onto *stelai*, were not rendered with personalised, recognisable facial or physical features; they were not portraits in the modern sense of the word. What you looked like was not going to be remembered and did not matter, because what you did (and the words your deeds inspired) was important for posterity. Moreover, sometimes the representation of an act made for a better monument than did realistic, true-to-life depiction of a person or event.

Though monuments work on a continuum of memory (Foxhall 1995, 144), they are intended as timeless reminders of persons and happenings. Where individuals' funerary monuments are concerned, the image and the epitaph work together to create a timeless reminder. Monuments with generalised figural images and formulaic epitaphs with descriptive adjectives and names but no mention of precise dates or events – monuments such as those recovered from throughout the Greek world – were designed so that an individual was forever remembered but the details of his life were not. Francis Yates describes the origins of the classical 'art of memory' as probably lying in bardic oral culture, although in classical antiquity memorising a speech or a sequence of events was related to the use of a text as a mnemonic device (Rowlands 1993, 143; Yates 1966). Quintilian, in his *Institutio Oratoria*, instructs a pupil how to train an artificial memory by attaching images and places to a speech or a list of things that are to be remembered. 'The best way, we are told, is to form a series of places in the memory, such as the distribution of objects in a room or buildings around a forum, and to attach parts of a speech to a sequence so that each can be remembered in the correct order' (Rowlands 1993, 143). Deeply rooted in the Western tradition of commemoration, then, is the link between linear concepts of time and socially integrative memory.

The Greeks and Romans preferred to include images and text together on funerary monuments, and from the 1st century BC onwards in Celtiberia the same preference is documented. The insistence on including figural compositions, and not restricting the visual components to geometric designs, strongly suggests that the figures were an important part of the

process of remembering and commemorating. The inclusion of figures along with text may seem superfluous or of secondary importance to the text, which more clearly spells out the name and family relations of the deceased. Whilst the figural images could serve as a form of text, communicating non-verbally with those unable to make sense of the words, the images are important in their own right as tools with which to remember. Images are a better means than epitaphs of gaining access to unconscious cultural values. Figural images allow viewers to engage with past experience in a way that the epitaphs, often limited to names and formulaic phrases (e.g., *Hic Situs Est, Dis Manibus*), do not. As material symbol rather than verbalised meaning, figural images provide a special form of access to both individual and group unconscious processes of valuation and veneration (Rowlands 1993, 144).

Repetition of images plays an important role in the funerary tradition. In any given culture there will be a set of images considered appropriate or acceptable for commemoration, depending on the deceased's age, sex, occupation, and means of death. In classical Greece, for example, respectable married women were often portrayed seated, modestly dressed, with a baby or child if she was a mother, and accompanied by a servant (Bergemann 1997, Tafeln 114.5, 115.3, 116.3). This set of images conveyed the social status and cultural identity of the woman. In imperial Rome, a man might be commemorated on his funerary monument in a bust portrait, along with bust portraits of his wife and children – a tribute to his power and authority as *pater familias*. In Celtiberia during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, many women were commemorated with tombstones carved with a relief image of a female figure seated at a table, partaking of a feast. This motif communicated the rank and relative 'Romanness' of the women and their families. Each of these societies – classical Greece, imperial Rome, Flavian Celtiberia – allowed for variations on the funerary figural themes, but the range of options was restricted by what was considered culturally and socially acceptable. Repeating certain images and themes was a way not only of placing the deceased (and his family) in a position of cultural acceptability, but also of continuing the social values and cultural identity of the community as a whole.

The Celtiberians did not need the Greeks or Romans to teach them how to commemorate their deceased or create funerary ritual. But as it is clear from the material record that it was not until the Roman period that Celtiberians commemorated their dead with upright stone slabs carved with figural images and words, Roman culture must have provided the impetus for Celtiberian adoption of this practice. In the Roman world, 'portraits and inscriptions were a fundamental means by which individuals could be honoured in the life-time and their memory preserved after death' (Eck 1984, 131). The leading members of Roman society attached enormous value on inscriptions, and a classic means of humiliating a disgraced personage was to

scratch off his name from an inscription and replace it with somebody else's, or simply to leave it blank. Inscriptions were not only a means of documentation but at the same time a way to influence public opinion by presenting an individual a certain way. 'Inscriptions were not conceived in a vacuum,' Werner Eck writes, 'but were associated with some kind of monument, set up to an individual to preserve his *memoria*. [...] Monument and inscription formed, for a Roman, a self-evident unity' (Eck 1984, 132). Senatorial competition for power and influence was played out in the monument realm, with receipt or refusal of an honorary statue and inscription taken very seriously. That the overwhelming majority of inscriptions from the city of Rome set up by senators and their families were of a funerary nature, underscores for this segment of society the importance of commemoration and eternal remembrance (Eck 1984).

So it was that a version of this preoccupation was the impetus for the erection of funerary monuments in 2nd century BC Celtiberia, where Roman *mores* and cultural practices led to new forms of commemoration and new values governing those commemorations. Whereas anonymous ceramic urns were acceptable for funerary practice in the pre-Roman period, they did not suit the cultural needs and social expectations of the early empire. It is striking that in pre-Roman Celtiberia, elite graves were distinguished invisibly (that is, rich goods were deposited with the deceased's remains and then covered by earth), but that in Roman Celtiberia, elite graves were distinguished visibly (elaborately carved stone monuments placed above the burial and visible to all passers-by). This change indicates that social competition was played out differently in Roman Celtiberia, with family names (included in the epitaphs) and access to fine ateliers becoming important markers of rank and acculturation. Little is known of the grave deposits that may have been included with the remains of those commemorated by Roman-style *stelae*, and it should not be ruled out that grave deposits continued as a funeral rite (in fact, the record is clear that goods deposition did continue). But the preference for Roman-style *stelae* suggests that commemoration in Celtiberia became more public. No longer was it the job simply of kin to remember which unremarkable urn belonged to the deceased's burial. With the adoption of *stelae*, everyone could participate in the remembering by means of figural images and epitaphs.

Funerary monuments transform space and time, through what makes them 'monumental', their permanence and scale, and their constant visibility (Criado 1995). The images on the monuments transform cultural identity and social values.

II. Appearance and iconography

Provenience, Distribution, and Dates

Men's tombstones with equestrian, hunting, or war scenes were set up throughout northern Tarraconensis, with the equestrian *stelai* concentrated in the centre of the Roman province – more specifically, in the ancient *conventus Cluniensis* and *Caesaraugustus*. Whereas the women's so-called 'banquet' tombstones were an iconographic phenomenon primarily limited to Lara de los Infantes (Burgos) (chapter 6) – twenty-five of thirty-four surviving examples (73.5%) come from that town – men's tombstones with scenes of hunting and war were used more widely around Celtiberia. In this chapter, reference is sometimes made to the *stelai* dedicated to men and bearing images of a horseman icon as 'equestrian *stelai*'. This tag should be understood as shorthand for the figural image of male figure on horseback. It is not meant to refer to a social group of *equites* or 'warrior élite' that may have used the *stelai*. The question of cultural and social identity as bound up with the *stelai* images, is discussed in a later section.

Of fifty-seven recovered examples of *stelai* dedicated to men, twenty-four were found at Lara de los Infantes (42%) and the other thirty-three were scattered among the modern provinces of Cantabria, Soria, Logroño, Segovia, Alava, Navarra, Teruel, and Zaragoza. This represents a geographic spread of approximately 300km north to south, and 400km east to west. Bearing in mind the mountainous and rocky terrain of this part of the province, this area would have seemed significantly large in ancient times, difficult to traverse even after the construction of the Caesaraugusta-Asturica Augusta road under the emperor Augustus. No region produced as large a number of equestrian *stelai* as did Lara de los Infantes. In the city of Clunia, four equestrian *stelai* were found; from Segontia, five have been recovered. This may be due more to the vicissitudes of archaeological fortune than to deliberate patterns of distribution in antiquity. Few of the *stelai* were found *in situ*, and there is evidence that tombstones were moved among towns, as they were incorporated into construction or paving projects (Abásolo 1977).

The *stelai* should generally be dated from the mid-1st century AD to the early 3rd century. Three giant *stelai* from Clunia were probably created during the late 2nd – early 1st century BC judging by the format (entirely circular), ornamentation (non-Roman armaments and geometric designs), and the lack of Latin (figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3). None of the pieces can be precisely dated, although clues are found in inscriptions and armaments. Two problems in using inscriptions to date the monuments should be stated at the outset. First, traditional studies of Latin inscriptions use the city of Rome, or other important metropoleis, as the reference point for dates. In the provinces, however, a lag time must be factored in, since changes and innovations emanating from metropolitan areas would have been slow to reach the outlying areas. Second, ornamentation including ivy leaves and *tabula ansata* could have been added after the chiselling

of the text and therefore do not necessarily reflect the original production date (Di Stefano Manzella 1987, 203).

The epigraphic evidence from Celtiberia indicates a steady decline in the use of indigenous letters from the mid-1st century BC onwards (Marco Simón 1978, 90-1). Of the fifty-seven monuments considered for this study, thirty have Latin inscriptions, fully or partially preserved. At least twelve *stelae* employ the formula AN XXX (*annorum* + numerals) to express the age of the deceased (including figures 5.5, 5.9, 5.11, 5.15, and 5.34) – a formula used at Rome up until the 2nd century (though its use probably lasted longer in the provinces) (Keppie 1991, 106-7).¹ D M or *dis manibus* – ‘to the spirits of the dead’ – occurs on eight monuments with intact Latin inscriptions, among them three (figures 5.29, 5.30, 5.31) from Monte Cildá.² This formula is found very rarely in inscriptions of Republican date or the early Empire, but became and remained popular in the 2nd through 4th centuries AD (Gordon 1983, 40-1). H S E or *hic situs est* – ‘he lies here’ – occurs on three monuments, each from a different town.³ This abbreviation was usually used before the end of the 1st century AD. However, in the example from Lara de los Infantes (figure 5.17) the brushed appearance of the letters is more in line with the Late Imperial inscription style (3rd and 4th centuries). Since it is highly unlikely that monuments continued to be erected this late in Celtiberia, so long after the wane of Roman power in the region, the date of this object is debatable. F D S (*fecit de suo (pecunia)*) appears on figure 5.28, and AED (*aedile*) occurs on figure 5.18. Both formulae were used from the 1st century AD onwards, probably beginning in the middle of that century in central northern Tarraconensis. Nomenclature will be discussed in detail in a later section, but naming practices can give a *terminus post quem*. For example, a *stela* from Lara de los Infantes honours ELAES(us) FLAVI(us), who probably received citizenship under the provincial reforms of Vespasian or his sons and subsequently adopted their *cognomen*. Similarly, a piece from Iglesia Pinta names the deceased as T SEMPRONIVS with the first letter probably standing for Titus.⁴

It is salutary to keep in mind that the above dates for the use of inscribed formulae pertain to the evidence from Rome and a few metropoleis of the Empire. Because metropolitan innovations took time to reach the provincial areas, the dates of use should be pushed back for Celtiberia. Military equipment in the figural reliefs also gives clues to the date of the monuments.

¹ After the 2nd century, more elaborate formulae were used to express age – such as *vixit annis XXX* or *vixit plus minus annis XXX*.

² Monte Cildá is approximately 20km from modern Palencia, the site of ancient Pallantia, a city occupied by the Vaccei. Pallantia was attacked by Roman forces in 138 BC and re-founded by them after the end of the Celtiberian wars.

³ Marco Simón 1978, catalogue nos. B.130, L.3, N.39.

⁴ Marco Simón 1978, cat. nos. B.131 (E. Flavinus), B.28 (T. Sempronius).

Celtiberian fighters were first introduced to Roman weaponry in the 3rd century BC, when they served as *auxilia* for both the Carthaginian and Roman forces (depending on which side paid more). Several examples show round (*caetrae*) or oblong rectangular shields (*scuta*). The archaeological evidence indicates that both were used in the 1st century BC, and Caesar writes that in 49 BC, the indigenous *auxilia* from Hispania Ulterior were armed with the *caetra* (short round shield particular to the Iberian peninsula) whereas those from Hispania Citerior used the *scutum*.⁵ But the tombstone reliefs do not present a straightforward picture. Round shields appear in seven *stelai* (figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.11, 5.12, and 5.33) and it is clear that they were produced in different periods since figures 5.2 and 5.3 carry Celtiberian inscriptions and the following four carry Latin inscriptions. The shield in figure 5.11 is significantly smaller than the rest and may be for hunting. All of the shields are bossed, but this fact does not greatly assist in dating the objects since round bossed shields were used in La Tène period burial sites and continued to be used through the Hadrianic age.⁶ *Scuta* appear in seven *stelai* reliefs, including the curved rectangular shield (figure 5.20) that came into use around 10 BC. The appearance of the curved rectangular shield in this instance is curious, since it was exclusive to Praetorians and legionaries: to date, no representation shows an auxiliary equipped with one. Because the relief fragment does not carry an inscription, it is difficult to ascribe the shield to misleading artistry or fanciful narrative (after all, the inclusion of the griffin points to a rather more fantastical event than was possible). Whether the deceased actually used a curved rectangular shield is not, however, important to dating the relief; its portrayal is what dates this to the early 1st century AD.

Auxiliaries, both marching and mounted, used flat shields that might be rectangular, oval or hexagonal; even the specialist *aquilifer* (figure 5.22) bears one as he holds the legionary standard. Owing to the deterioration of many of the reliefs, it is not possible to scrutinise the shields for emblematic bosses or other individualising details, nor are the daggers and swords clear enough to make a convincing argument for a particular date. However, the presence of the *scuta* does provide a *terminus post quem* of 49 BC.

Aside from a few pre-Roman and early Augustan reliefs, the majority of the monuments belong to the middle Roman imperial period, mostly from the end of the 1st to the beginning of the 3rd centuries AD – dates suggested by the inscriptions and military equipment.

⁵ 'Erant, ut supra demonstratum est, legiones Afrani III, Petrei due, praeterea scutatae citeroris prouinciae et caetratae ulterioris Hispaniae cohortes circiter LXXX. ...' Caesar, *B.C.* 39.1.

⁶ Evidence of bossed round shields from La Tène period and other pre-Roman Celtiberian burial sites: Burillo Mozota 1988a, 117-20.

Materials and format

Thirty *stelai* are made of limestone, eighteen of sandstone, and one from granite, with eight now lost and the type of stone used unknown. The choice of material seems to have been dictated by what was available in the vicinity, since there is a clear relationship between location and medium. For example, eighteen of the twenty-two monuments from Burgos are made of limestone (the remaining four lost and the building material unknown). On the other hand, sandstone is employed in seven of nine monuments from Cantabria, with one example of limestone and one lost (unknown). This is consistent with the evidence of the women's 'banquet' *stelai*, of which twenty-two are rendered in limestone and three in sandstone. These were the primary materials for northern Spanish stonecutters, and although marble was used in public sculptural and architectural projects in the *conventus* capitals in Tarraconensis, it was not used for the majority of funerary monuments in this region.

Several of the objects contained in Marco Simón's catalogue are preserved in fragments, and their original shape can be restored only through conjecture. Of those monuments that have survived intact, most take the form of a roundel atop a short rectangular base (figures 5.11 and 5.27). Earlier monuments appear entirely circular with a narrow base (5.1). The roundel could measure up to 0.70 metres in diameter (5.2), with 0.44 to 0.46 metres being the average measurement across (figures 5.11, 5.14, 5.15). Typically, the roundel is divided into two registers: a figural composition above and an inscription below. In the case of rectangular *stelai* three registers are used: an inscription is at bottom, a figural composition in the middle, and a geometric design at the top (often a round floral emblem) (figures 5.5, 5.30, and 5.31). In all but a few cases the roundels are framed by decorative borders: 'X', 'V', and herringbone patterns are common, and may be individualising marks of ateliers.

The typical format of the men's *stelai* is strikingly different from those dedicated to women of the same region. The women's *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes, to which the next chapter is devoted, are often of a narrow rectangular shape with only the top rounded. In only a few of the men's monuments do we see the rectangle-rounded top format adopted (5.5, 5.30, and 5.31). However, none of these examples comes from Lara de los Infantes; clearly, the Celtiberians were in the habit of differentiating between the sexes when it came to choosing formats and styles for the funerary monuments.

There was a wide range of choices available for men's commemorative art during the period 2nd century BC – 3rd century AD in Celtiberia. Marco Simón's catalogue of the funerary tombstones from this region includes 135 that commemorate men with a figural composition. Of this number, fifty-seven depict a scene of war, a hunting episode, or a man on horseback. Of the

remaining seventy-five, five can be classified as 'daily life' scenes, including men leading farm animals, operating a wine press, or harvesting fruit.⁷ The remaining seventy feature a human figure of some form. This can be as simple as a human hand, an idealised face, or a bust of the deceased.⁸ In other cases there is more than one person present: in northeast Tarraconensis (modern-day Navarra), funerary monuments depict two or even three people facing front, standing or reduced to bust size, parallel to each other. Conversely, in northwest Tarraconensis it was rare to use figural motifs: astral and vegetal designs are predominant on *stelai* associated with the Astures and Cantabri tribes (modern Asturias, Cantabria, León, and Palencia). Among the Vaccei (Valladolid), the preference was for tombstones decorated with architectonic elements.

This chapter is limited to *stelai* depicting male figures on horseback, hunting, or holding weapons because they constitute the largest group within the total number of men's tombstones from Celtiberia. In addition to these scene types are a few examples of male figures ploughing or seated, alone, in a chair. Restricting the study to the most popular commemorative motifs will help us to understand the social values and cultural identities that led to the diffusion of those motifs. Marco Simón divides the *stelai* into three major categories. According to his count, the horseman appears alone on twenty-nine men's *stelai*, hunting scenes are attested in thirteen examples, and war scenes account for fifteen of the monuments. In reality, the divisions are not so straightforward. It was common to mix these motifs, such that in addition to the twenty-nine cases of the equestrian featured alone on a *stela*, there are seventeen examples of a man riding a horse and involved in hunting or warring – for a total of forty-six 'representaciones ecuestres' in Celtiberia. Moreover, some of Marco Simón's interpretations are questionable, since the 'clear examples' he gives of war or the hunt are not always so clear.

A case in point is a rectangular *stela* with a rounded head from Lara de los Infantes (figure 5.5). The central zone shows a standing male figure wearing protective armour over his torso, and holding a lance in his right hand, a round shield in his left. In front of him, beneath the shield, stands a four-legged animal facing away from him. Marco Simón classifies this as a hunt scene. But the animal is equine: it has the long tail, slender neck, and pointy ears of a horse or mule. It is unlikely that he is prey, since horses were considered prestigious animals. Moreover, the male figure rests his lance with one end planted in the ground – not the striking position that would be expected in a hunt scene. Finally, he is equipped for battle rather than a hunt: the boxy garment over his torso is probably protective armour, and he holds a *caetra* (small round shield

⁷ For illustrations see Abásolo 1974: men leading farm animals (n. 37 lám. 8; n. 98 lám. 58,1), operating a wine-press (lám. 70,1), and harvesting fruit (n. 108 lám. 68).

⁸ Illustrations: human hand (Abásolo 1974, n. 132 lám. 87,2; n. 126 lám. 81,1), idealised face (Taracena 1947, 137, lám. 15,2), and a bust of the deceased (Abásolo 1974, n. 66, lám. 11,2).

typical of the Spanish panoply) in addition to the spear. Although the animal is smaller than the soldier, scale differentiation occurs in many figural scenes from Celtiberia. This could be an attempt to emphasise the authority of the man rather than to diminish the horse. Therefore, the scene might represent a soldier preparing to mount his steed.

Moreover, Marco Simón's catalogue, as well as those of his predecessors, is more concerned with typology than with content. Content works together with typology as part of the system by which meaning is produced and communicated to viewers. Although detailed typological studies are useful to some extent, they do not help us understand the cultural processes reflected by the reliefs. A fresh approach will bring us closer to that understanding.

III. Iconography

Equestrian

The horseman motif is usually of the following type: a male figure rides a horse to the right, grasping in his right hand a long spear pointed downwards, and sometimes holding a round shield on the left arm. Often, the horse is in profile view and the rider is profiled in the legs and face, but the upper body is turned to the viewer. The horse may be controlled with reins and in some examples it is possible to discern saddle, bit, and a braided tail. Evidently, it was important that the horses be presented accurately – if not artistically accurate in terms of perspective, then factually accurate with respect to equestrian equipment.

In sixteen cases, the horse travels to the right; in the other eleven, the direction is reversed. There is a relationship between locale and direction of movement: for example, all of the equestrian *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes show the horse headed to the right while all of those from Soria have the horse travelling left. It is possible that patrons made visual decisions based on what they saw in their local burial grounds, but it is more likely that workshops produced series of *stelai* with an equestrian figure according to regional practice, and that these *stelai* were later individualised with an epitaph. For example, a double *stèle* from Monte Cildá (Palencia) is divided into four zones with two upper zones carrying one standing male figure each, and the lower left zone containing an inscription. The lower right zone is blank, but is smoothed as if ready to be chiselled with an epitaph. The inscription on the left honours one deceased man (IANVARIVS), but the *stèle* features two male figures above. These figures can be

considered stock motifs that would have been carved first, with one or two inscriptions to be entered later (figure 5.30).

Where men's clothing is discernible, a simple tunic ends just above the knees (figures 5.4, 5.18, and 5.21). Sometimes the tunic is short, ending below the hips and cinched with a belt (figures 5.19, 5.20, and 5.25). A few of the tunics are longer and extend past the knee (figures 5.4, 5.21). Several scenes depict soldiers wearing no clothing at all, perhaps in an attempt to portray the protagonist as heroically nude, or because fine details such as hem's lines, belts, and garment folds have faded. Because of the poor state of preservation of many of the *stelai*, it is not possible to make detailed comments on differences or similarities in clothing styles or regional tastes.

Weaponry has already been briefly considered in its capacity as a clue to production dates. In most cases, the rider grasps a long lance and holds a round shield (*caetra*), the traditional armaments of Celtiberian fighters, which are attested archaeologically and were depicted on coins (Lorrio 1997, 195). In a *stela* from Clunia, the rider wields a special curved lance but does not hold a shield (Marco Simón 1978, cat. No. B11). This *stela* is noteworthy for the inclusion of round objects – perhaps shields, as some of them seem to have a handle or arm strap – floating in the space in front of the horse and behind the rider. These objects were interpreted by earlier scholars on Iberian iconography as representations of the number of enemies killed in battle by the deceased.⁹ They appear again on a limestone *stela* from Clunia, now fragmented but originally 0.70 metres in diameter (figure 5.2). On this *stela* fragment, a figure on horseback faces right and holds a lance in his right hand, a round shield in his left. In front of the horse are three circular objects hovering in free space. Underneath the horse's body and between the haunches is an inscription in Celtiberian lettering, translated by E. Frankowski as 'Ca.a.ba.a.r.i.m.o.s' – an indigenous masculine name (Frankowski 1920, 37). The inscription suggests that this *stela* is datable to before widespread use of Latin among the Arevaci, no later than the late 1st century BC.

Other *stelai* present Roman armaments in place of Celtiberian lances and round shields. As discussed, the use of the oblong Roman *scutum* is evidenced in seven monuments. *Scuta* are in most cases carried by foot soldiers, as their weight and construction (two joined boards covered by linen and hide and edged with iron) would have been well suited to heavy battlefield combat.

Although the riders are not always armed, where they are, it is always with the lance – never with any other offensive weapon. The precise typology of these lances is unclear; the applicability of ancient terms like *hasta*, *lancea*, *verutum* and *spiculum*, let alone the more general *telum* (a weapon used for fighting at a distance) or *missilis* ('that may be hurled or cast') was difficult for even the Roman writers to untangle. The long shaft on the lances that appear in the

Celtiberian tombstone reliefs suggests that these were meant to be launched or hurled, since the shaft would have carried them far and resulted in a powerful penetration (Bishop and Coulston 1993, 69). The spearheads are leaf-shaped with tapered sides (figures 5.1, 5.11, 5.17, and 5.25) or triangular with a sharper angle above the shaft (figures 5.14 and 5.15). Equestrians' lances have spearheads with a longer blade, designed to maximise length of entry when thrown from a horse. On the other hand, the man on foot in figure 5.25 carries a lance with a shorter spearhead. His weapon was probably for thrusting rather than throwing.

In at least three examples (including figure 5.16) the equestrian is accompanied by a foot soldier, or *calo* in Latin. A sandstone *stela* from ancient Segontia (modern Borobia, Soria), measuring 1.15 x 0.56 x 0.10 metres, depicts the rider wearing a helmet and possibly bearded, atop a horse fitted with reins and a saddle with stirrups, and accompanied by a soldier walking behind him. The addition of the *calo* is a pointed reminder of the status of the rider, who was able to pay an infantryman to assist him on the battlefield with equipment and weaponry. In the case of figure 5.16, the *calo* carries a bundle of javelins that will be used by the mounted soldier as missiles in battle. Even if the scene is not factually accurate – that is, even if the deceased did not really serve in the cavalry with a *calo* at his side – the composition carries connotations of high rank. The Latin epitaph etched onto this particular example stands out from other local *stelae* for its grammatical accuracy and clear lettering, reflecting the maker's (and perhaps the patron's) familiarity with high-quality epitaphs. The epitaph and figural composition make for a prestigious monument and suggest that the horseman motif was associated with relatively high social status (Marco Simón 1978, cat. no. S.5).

The consistency of the equestrian's orientation is one of the most striking features of these reliefs. Identical iconography is found on coins issued throughout Tarraconensis: in the vast majority of coins the equestrian rides from left to right (Chapter 4; Burillo Mozota 1998: 241, 299, 325, 337). It is not clear who controlled the design of the coins. It has been suggested that the emperor's explicit consent was required before coins could be issued, based on legends that indicate that they were minted with the permission of Augustus (Richardson 1996, 145-6). The armed horseman was the most popular icon for the reverse during the late Republican era. Its use continued in the mints at Segobriga and Segovia even after the emperor's head replaced local chieftains' heads on the obverse and Latin replaced Celtiberian. At the Bilbilis mint from 2 BC, the horseman was dropped from the reverse and replaced with the wreath (*Victoria Augusti*), and IIVIRI signed the issues. For the first time, the legal status of the city was recorded (*RPC* I.127). This is the exception that proves the rule: the horseman was linked so closely with indigenous

⁹ García y Bellido 1949, 367 & 371; Blázquez 1962, 414.

Celtiberian iconography that when Bilbilis wanted to promote its legal status as an Augustan *municipium*, it chose to abandon the horseman in favour of a new emblem more fitting to Roman iconography. The other mints in the region that held onto the horseman did not make significant changes to the icon: the obverse might feature Augustus and the legend might be Latin, but the equestrian images on the reverse remain consistent (Burillo Mozota 1998, 325).

Battle

War is not a favourite theme for portrayal among the tombstones in Spain. Its use appears to have been limited to northern-central Tarraconensis, and even within that area it was not a dominant motif. Out of the total 135 men's *stelai* featuring figural compositions, only fifteen (11%) show a scene of war, and the diffusion is limited to Cantabria, Burgos, Logroño, and Teruel.

These war episodes can take one of several forms, including cavalry fights, face-to-face combat, and soldiers felled on the battlefield. Weapons are varied, with thrusting spears and swords most common. A sword appears in four episodes (figures 5.11, 5.19, 5.20, and 5.34), and in each of these scenes, the fighter is on foot. Swords were used widely among Celts in both Gaul and Iberia, although the Celtiberians used a shorter version of those found north of the Pyrenees. Their effectiveness was reported by Diodorus: 'The iron of their two-edged swords, shorter than the Celtic great sword, is capable of cutting anything' (*Hist.* 5,33). Excavations of Celtiberian graves have revealed short swords and daggers; crafted of iron or bronze, these were sometimes elaborately decorated with *niello* inlay and probably stood as emblems of status because they reflected sophisticated and costly technology (Cunliffe 1997, 139-40). There are two examples of a dagger tucked into a belt (5.19, 5.25), and one sling for arrows (figure 5.21 – not a sword, as Marco Simón claims).

Some of the *stelai* classified by Marco Simón as bearing *escenas bélicas* ('war scenes') should be scrutinised closely and possibly re-classified. For example, a sandstone double-headed *stele* from Monte Cildá (figure 5.29) is divided down the middle with four horizontal registers of decoration. It stands 1.36 metres high, measures 0.51 metres across and is 0.16 metres thick. The top register features two round six-petal emblems. The lowest register shows two arching gateways, one on each side of the *stele* – commonly interpreted as 'portals to the afterlife.' The two middle registers show a Latin inscription on bottom and two human figures directly above. These figures are roughly carved and there is no indication of facial features, clothing, or such additions as hands and helmet. Marco Simón reads the figure on the left as a prisoner with his arms tied behind his head. Facing him on the right is a figure holding a lance in the left hand and perhaps a small dagger in his right.

Marco Simón describes the two figures as participants in a single episode from war, in which the soldier on the right captures the soldier on the left (Marco Simón 1978, cat. no. C.12). His interpretation follows closely the explanation offered by the original excavators in a 1966 publication (García Guinea, González Echegaray and San Miguel Ruíz 1966, 31-2). None of the scholars explains the lance that appears to pass from the right frame to the left: the lance held by the figure on the right seems to pierce the torso of the captive. Double-headed *stelai* were ordinarily used to commemorate two individuals (Abásolo 1977, 73), and in the case of the piece from Monte Cildá there is, indeed, an epitaph invoking the names of two men:

D	M
ACIDA	ALLA
ARAV	PRIA
OMA	CIPI
RITO	NO
ME	MR

Dis Manibus

Acida Aravo Marito Merenti

Allapria Cipino Merenti.

To the spirits of the dead.

Acida to her deserving husband Aravus.

Allapria to the deserving Cipinus.

Although the inscription gives the names of two commemorated men (Aravus and Cipinus), it is unlikely that the two figures are representations of them. Neither the Celtiberians nor the Romans honoured a fallen warrior by immortalising him as a prisoner of war. Therefore, we should not interpret the figures as Aravus and Cipinus. Rather, the portrayal of prisoners of war may have been a stock motif used to illustrate the honours earned by the deceased men through their battle prowess. Perhaps, in real life, they had success in capturing prisoners. This is a constructed representation that is not a window onto historical reality, but a symbol or message that was a product of collective Celtiberian society's esteem for war heroics.

Another war scene appears on a giant circular *stela* from Zurita (Cantabria), measuring 2m across (figure 5.33). The reverse carries a relief of a solar symbol. The obverse is divided into two registers. In the upper part, a man on horseback and two standing soldiers (each with a lance and a large circular shield) completely fill the field of the piece. Below them is the body of a soldier on the ground, being eaten by a bird of prey, probably a vulture or a crow.

This last scene corroborates the reports of ancient authors that the Celtiberians abandoned the bodies of those felled in fighting, so that they could be consumed by flesh-eating birds and transported to heaven.¹⁰ Ritualised excarnation, reserved exclusively for soldiers, is difficult to detect archaeologically, except through the negative criterion of a lack of male burials where these might be expected. This argument was used to explain the absence of cemeteries at Numancia (Schulten 1914, 199) but the recent discovery of a necropolis just outside the city wall reveals numerous male burials and thus prompts reconsideration of the original assumptions (Morales 1993, 60-62). On the other hand, analysis of the human remains from the Celtiberian cemetery at La Yunta, Guadalajara, reveals that, of 244 individuals of determinable age, there was not a single male between the ages of ten and thirty. This might mean that the bodies of the young men were exposed on the battlefield (Curchin 1997, 9; García Huerta and Antona de Val 1992, 161-3). The *stèle* from Zurita does not prove that the body of the deceased was left for excarnation, but it does indicate that familiarity with this particular Celtiberian rite persisted.

The value of the Celtiberians as mercenary troops was well appreciated by successive occupying armies on the Iberia peninsula. Celtiberians enrolled in the Carthaginian army (Livy 21.43), the Turdetanian army (Livy 34.19), and were also among the ranks of the Roman forces (Livy 25.33). Livy comments dryly on their capricious loyalties: in joining up as mercenaries with various forces, the Celtiberian fighters were motivated more by economic need than by ideology (Blázquez 1983, 218). After seventy years of war during the 2nd century BC, Romans had come to regard the Celtiberians as fearless, ferocious warriors who fought with a total disregard for their own safety: their cavalry was awe-inspiring and they were capable of producing charismatic war leaders. In stressing the valour of the Celtiberians, the Roman writers provide a familiar caricature of the Noble Savage – a reasonable caricature, given the long and bitter Cantabrian Wars, the siege at Numancia, and Celtiberian attacks on Roman military camps.

Two fragments offer insight to battle. A limestone relief from Lara de los Infantes (figure 5.21) shows two opposing sides separated by a band decorated with incised Xs. This band might be a schematic representation of a wall, such that the scene depicts the siege of a city. To the left of the wall are three trumpeters, one playing a round horn and the other two a long one. The bells of the straight horns (*cornua*) are directed towards the opponents and reach past the wall. The man on the round horn (*bucina*) walks away from the wall. Two more *cornu* bells can be seen above his head. All three men wear long tunics that reach past the knee. Long tunics are worn by men on other funerary monuments from the region (Marco Simón [1978] cat. no. B.78): the garment helps to identify the male figures left of the wall in figure 5.21 as Celtiberians.

¹⁰ Silius Italicus, *Pun.*, 3.341-343; Aelian, *De nat. anim.* 10.22.

Only one man on the right side of the wall is still visible: he wears a short tunic and carries a weapon in his right hand that has a straight edge connected to a curved band – probably a bow for an archery attack. Abásolo interprets this as a *falx*, but this is doubtful: the scythe was used in remote regions of northeast Tarraconensis by indigenous warriors but was not used by Roman soldiers. And a Roman soldier this is: he wears the distinctive military dress that betokens the wearer by the way it is worn – shorter than the everyday tunics of ordinary citizens (Bishop and Coulston 1993, 99). A long shaft with an inverted V at the top is planted in the ground between the soldier and the wall. Marco Simón calls this a lance but it is more likely to be an *aquila*, since the top of it is too long to be a spear point and resembles the standard in a relief from Iglesia Pinta (figure 5.4). Underneath the soldier's feet is the head of a spear pointed towards the wall. The last figural element on the right side of the wall is a bird, pointing downwards with only the rear half still visible (wings, tail and feet). Its actions are not clear, but Marco Simón interprets this as a bird of prey consuming the flesh of fallen soldiers. We have already seen that there was an old Celtiberian practice of excarnation, observed in the hope that felled warriors would be transported to heaven in the bodies of the birds that had eaten them. Marco Simón's interpretation can be neither confirmed nor disputed since the lower part of the relief is missing, but it should be pointed out that Celtiberian viewers would scarcely have been concerned with where the spirits of felled Roman soldiers spent their afterlife.

The second battle relief is similarly arranged, with a similar X band running vertically through the scene, suggesting that the same atelier produced this *stèle* and the first.¹¹ To the left of the wall are four trumpeters: two above playing the curved *bucina* and two below on straight *cornua*. All bells of the trumpets are pointed towards the wall. The clothing worn by the men is difficult to discern; their legs appear to be uncovered and they are without helmets. Opposite them, on the other side of the wall, are two large male figures in Roman military tunics (both belted) and brandishing Roman military equipment. The soldier at centre is an *aquilifer*, and the *aquila* that he supports runs the length of the relief and occupies a prominent place in the scene. In his left hand he holds a *scutum*. Above him is a mounted Roman soldier, his horse travelling toward the wall. With his right hand he seems to hold a shield, although the object is significantly obscured by the horse's neck.

The two scenes present Romans and Celtiberians battling with each other. The armaments and clothing are different. More specifically, both scenes present the beginning of a battle, where the trumpeters inside the wall have sounded the call to arms (the *cornu* having been

¹¹ For comparison of the band typology and the suggestion that they come from the same workshop: Abásolo (1977), 77-8.

used to alert the soldiers). The *aquilae* symbolise the Roman forces even if only one or two soldiers are included (though it is possible that figures have been lost in the missing fragments). Without an inscription it is hard to determine with certainty the event or its date. One clue to the date and provenience is the decorative band ('wall') of the *aspas a bisel* type. Abásolo's careful study of the border patterns concludes that this particular type was a specialty of a workshop in Lara de los Infantes called La Escuela Noble de Lara. He dates the objects to the second quarter of the 2nd century AD. The historical record indicates that local conflicts between Celtiberians and Roman soldiers were still breaking out during this time, but for the most part the region was peaceful. The reliefs should not necessarily be taken as a contemporary record of battles, but they do commemorate what we know to have taken place: siege warfare at several Celtiberian walled cities during which Roman and local forces engaged in violent battle with each other.

The hunt

Hunting scenes are attested in thirteen *stelai* from northern-central Tarraconensis, nine of them from Lara de los Infantes. A limestone *stela* from Lara de los Infantes measuring 0.62 metres high and 0.31 metres across commemorates a man called Calferus Cosegius (figure 5.9). The *nomen* and *cognomen* are both indigenous, and 'Calferus' also occurs on a *stela* from Segovia (M.S. no. SO.7). The epitaph reads:

CALFERO COSE
GIO COSEGI
F AN L
Calferus Cose
gius Cosegi
Filius Annorum 50
 Calferus Cosegius,
 son of Cosegius,
 of (died at age) 50 years

This inscription and its accompanying figural composition are enclosed in a circular field framed by a herringbone pattern. The scene shows a rider travelling to the right, holding a lance in his right hand as he chases a four-legged animal (perhaps a wild boar). The horse rears slightly and the rider's right arm is bent – positions repeated on many of the equestrian *stelai* and coins –

creating the effect of breathless pursuit and excitement in the moment just before the lance is hurled. The inscription makes no explicit reference to the qualities of Calferus (whether he was a keen hunter or equestrian) and the scene should be considered more emblematic than realistic.

More often, the hunter is shown on horseback, adding an element of prestige and dynamism to the scene. Another limestone *stele* from Lara de los Infantes (measuring 0.53 metres high and 0.29 metres across) commemorates one Sempronius Festus with an inscription and a hunting scene (figure 5.11). The *stele* comprises a circular head and a short rectangular base. The circular register is circumscribed by a herringbone pattern, fixed with two horses' heads at the bottom. Immediately above the equine heads, two palm leaves grow diagonally away from each other with an altar between the palms. The Latin inscription reads:

SEMPRONIO
FESTO LOVGEI
F AN LXV
Sempronius
Festus Lougei
Filius Annorum 65
To Sempronius Festus,
son of Lougeus
of (died at age) 65 years

Above this inscription, occupying most of the face of the *stele* is a figural decoration showing a man on a horse holding a lance in his right hand. He travels from left to right in pursuit of a four-legged animal that may be a wild boar (note the distinctly round body and short tail). Assisting the rider is a man on foot who holds up a dagger or short sword in his right hand, as if about to strike. Although there is no noticeable difference in the size of the figures, the equestrian is centred and therefore more prominent. Perhaps we are meant to understand the standing hunter as an assistant to, or servant of, the equestrian, similar to the *calo* in figure 5.16.

In the pre-Roman period, before the Celtiberians settled (or were settled, sometimes against their own will) in urban enclaves, hunting was necessary as a means of securing food. But from the middle of the 1st century AD and especially at the beginning of the 2nd century, Celtiberians increasingly lived in towns, and fewer people lived in outlying villages where hunting was a part of daily life. Hunting was a favourite pastime of the Hispano-Roman élite, and one's success was a marker of prestige and social standing (Keay 1988, 150). As more

Celtiberians became familiar with Roman tastes, they continued to use the hunting motif on their tombstones because they associated the motif with high-class leisure, not quotidian tasks.

Some of the *stelae* classified by Marco Simón as *escenas cinegéticas* should be reconsidered. One example is a fragment of a *stela* from Clunia (figure 5.13), with a diameter of approximately 0.50 metres. In the upper field of the disc, Celtiberian letters spell *Nubucaiau*, probably a family name and certainly of non-Latin root (Hübner 1893, 173). Only the upper half of the figural composition has survived, and depicts a bull marching from left to right, faced by a man on the right side. He holds a large round shield (which blocks his entire torso) and from behind it peeks the tip of a sword or dagger. Although his legs are not visible, neither of his arms is raised and the shoulders are slack. The posture suggests a prosaic scene more akin to preparation for a sacrifice than a hunt through the wild. Bulls were traditionally sacrificed in a religious setting, and excavated graves in Celtiberia containing animal bones as well as a sword and shield may indicate that the shield was part of the ceremonial sacrifice (Curchin 1997, 15-7).

IV. Inscriptions as evidence of cultural identity and social change

What can the inscriptions on the men's funerary monuments tell us about the people who paid for and were honoured by them? An important starting point is recognition of the grammatical quality of the epitaphs. Somebody – craftsman, patron, viewer, or all three – had familiarity with formulae that would have been found in any Roman-influenced necropolis in the Western Empire. Thus we see DM, HSE, AN XXX, and more complicated formulae such as H EX T F C (*hederes ex testamento faciendum curaverunt*) and SIT T T L (*sit tibi terra levis*). The inscriptions also document the Latin practice of naming a person with father's name + *filius*. The actual letters are not always neat or evenly spaced, and it seems likely that local rather than metropolitan craftsmen were responsible for producing them. These craftsmen would have lacked formal training in Roman-style relief sculpture and epitaphs, but they were aware of the literary formulae being used, and therefore they copied what they saw. The letters produced by local makers may not have been suitable for official marble statue bases but were adequate to the task of communicating ideas to the audiences envisaged by the patrons.

The various epitaphs inscribed indigenous names in Celtiberian letters, Latinised indigenous names spelled in Latin letters, and Latin names in Latin letters. Two examples fall into the first category (figures 5.2 and 5.3). A tombstone from Clunia has Celtiberian letters

spelling Ca.a.ba.a.r.i.m.o.s. This indigenous name is derived from the root *cabar-* and is found in many variations throughout northern Tarraconensis, sometimes using the forms *cabr-* or *cabur-*.

A Latinised indigenous name occurs on a tombstone from Lara de los Infantes:

MADICENVVS

CALAETVS

AMBATI F

AN LV

Madicenus

Calaetus

Ambatus filius

Annorum 55

Madicenus

Calaetus

son of Ambatus

of (died at age) 55 years

The name *Madicenus* has been found in other Latin inscriptions in Tarraconensis, including one from the city of Uxama, and appears to derive from the Celtiberian root *mati-* + *genus*. *Calaetus* is a common Iberian name and comes from the root *kal-* (which also was a common prefix for toponyms). Other versions of the name show up as *Caleti* and *Caleus*, which are similar to the Gallic version of the root, *Caletō*. *Ambatus* and its feminine variation *Ambata* occur frequently in the inscriptions of Celtiberia – to such an extent that M.L. Albertos Firmat calls them the most typical of all Iberian names. It has roots in the Celtic form *ambi-* + *actos* and appeared in different varieties in Gaul and southern Spain.¹² This inscription illustrates the altering of indigenous names to follow Roman nomenclature patterns, and the fitting of the altered names into a classic Latin epitaph format.

Sometimes there is a mix of Latinised indigenous and purely Latin names, as in this inscription on a *stela* from Lara de los Infantes:

[E]LAES FLAVIN

¹² Albertos Firmat 1966: *Madicenus* p. 142; *Calaetus* p. 72; *Ambatus* p. 21. On the significance of *Ambatus*: 'Bajo todas estas formas se presenta este nombre típicamente hispánico en la Péninsula.'

ELAVI
F ANN XXIV ¹³

Elaesus Flavinus
Elavus
filius annorum 24

Elaesus Flavinus
son of Elavus
of (died at age) 24 years

This example was cited earlier because the inclusion of *Flavinus* helps to date the monument to the Flavian dynasty or slightly thereafter: the deceased probably adopted this *cognomen* after receiving citizenship under Vespasian. The name *Elaesus* was shared between the deceased and his father. The name is indigenous to northern Spain and is attested in inscriptions from Asturica (Celtiberian area where the colony Asturica Augusta was founded by Augustus). It comes from the root *el-* and can occur as *Elaisicum* in the *gentilicium* form, denoting tribal membership (Albertos Firmat 1966, 112).

There are two cases in which information on the military service of the deceased is given. One inscription on a tombstone from Lara de los Infantes (fig. 5.27) reads:

[M]ADIGENO LAT
VRO MILITI
COVERTI COVL...
REAE CARORV

...

The epitaph honours Madigenus Laturus, 'of high achievements.' He had a military career, as evidenced by *militum*. The rest of the word beginning COVI- is lost, but may have read *covinarius*, the driver of a Celtic war chariot. The first name is Latinised indigenous, as discussed earlier. The second name, LATVRO, is the dative form of *Laturus*, which occurs in four other

inscriptions from the region (Albertos Firmat 1966, 129). It is a corrupted form of *Latius*, with the root *lat-*. The earliest forms of this name are found in Italy. This inscription accompanies a figural composition in which three men march to the right. The figure in the centre is larger than the other two and carries a spear in his right hand, an oblong shield in his left.

Another soldier is honoured with an equestrian tombstone accompanied by the following:

IVLIVS LON
GINVS DOLES
BETICENTI F BES
SVS EQVES ALA
TAVTOR VIC C R E
AN XL AER XXII H S E
SVLPICIVS SVSVLLA
FVSCVS BITIVS
H EX T F C¹⁴

Iulius Longinus Doles, Beticenti filius, Bessus, eques ala Tautor(um) vic(trice) civium Romanorum equitum, annorum XL aer(um) XXII, h(ic) s(itus) e(st). Sulpicius Susulla et Fuscus Bitius h(ederes) ex t(estamento) faciendum curaverunt.

‘Julius Longinus Doles Bessus, son of Beticentus, for victories (in the) cavalry division of Tautus, cavalry soldier of the city of Rome; lived forty years, military service twenty-two years – he lies here. Sulpicius Susulla and Fuscus Bitius, heirs according to the will, saw to it being done.’

‘Doles’ is the *nomen patrum*, although that name was not indigenous to Celtiberia (at least, there are no further instances of it in the region). ‘Beticentus’ is based on a common Celtiberian root (*bet-*) and it is found in several sites throughout Tarraconensis. This tombstone and its inscription offer an example of a career cavalry soldier honoured by two friends or colleagues for his military

¹³ Marco Simón (1978), cat. no. B.131; *CIL* II, 2.868.

¹⁴ Marco Simón 1978, L.3; *CIL* II, 2.984.

service. His *praenomen* and *nomen* are Latin but the *cognomen* and patronym are indigenous. The name 'Julius' was probably adopted in honour of Caesar or Augustus, and indeed the formulaic patterns in the text (HSE; no DM) help to date the monument to the late 1st century BC – early 1st century AD.

A *stele* from Covarrubias (Burgos) carries a relief of a Roman official with several soldiers, and an inscription underneath:

D M
N POPIDII CELSINI DECV
RIONI BENE MERENTI
Q CECILIVS F FECIT ¹⁵

Dis Manibus
Numero Popidii Celsini Decurioni
bene merenti.
Quintus Cecilius filius fecit.
To the spirits of the departed
For the reckoning of Popidius
Celsinus, deserving *decurio*,
his son Q. Cecilius made it.

Popidius and *Celsinus* are pure Latin names, as are the names of his son. This is a case of a member of the municipal senate being honoured with a Roman style military relief on a tombstone. The piece is now lost, and we do not know the size or materials used. The original excavator described it as 'un relieve con composición figurada de tipo militar [...] un oficial romano y varios *milites*, uno de ellos con lábaro' (a relief with military-type figural composition [including] a Roman military officer and various soldiers, one of these with round shield). It was found a few kilometres from Lara de los Infantes. This *stele* demonstrates that local officials bearing pure Latin names were memorialised in northern central Tarraconensis with tombstones featuring classic epitaphs and figural scenes of *tipo militar*.

In one sense it is difficult to argue that the monument to Popidius Celsinus is a reflection of indigenous Celtiberian cultural identity because the man bears no trace of pre-Roman nomenclature. But the primary interest of this study is to understand how Celtiberian cultural

identities and local social practices changed, and to do this we need to consider the new influences that were emanating from metropolitan centres to the *meseta*. From the early Imperial period, Tarraconensis took in waves of soldiers, merchants, and colonists from Rome, and those who settled permanently added to the cultural and social changes in the region. It is inevitable that an exchange of ideas between locals and outsiders would have taken place.

The names and titles reveal that a mix of people would have chosen the equestrian tombstones and the more generalised martial scenes of war and the hunt. In general, the evidence suggests that the horseback rider was a particular favourite of those with indigenous or Latinised indigenous names, since of the eleven remaining examples of an equestrian relief with an epitaph, ten have indigenous onomastic elements and only one has Latin names alone. This exception is a rectangular *stele* from Segovia with a male figure on horseback travelling to the right in relief at the centre, with the following inscription underneath it and framed in a *tabula ansata*:

**G POMPEIO MV
CRONI VXAME
SI AN XC SODALES
FC¹⁶**

*Gneo Pompeio Mucroni
Uxamensi
annorum XC sodales
fecerunt*

To Gnaeus Pompeius Mucronus
of Uxama,
90 years old. His friends
saw to it being done

This inscription gives an example of a man with a completely Latin name who came from Uxama and was buried at Segovia, both old cities with pre-Roman roots that were in the ambit of the Arevaci tribe. His commemoration was seen to by his friends or perhaps by a burial society, since *sodales* can be a substantive referring to an association. The relief presents a male figure on

¹⁵ Marco Simón 1978, p. 122 cat. no. B.16; Abásolo 1974, 35.

¹⁶ Marco Simón 1978, p. 174 cat. no. Seg.6; *CIL* II, 2.731.

horseback in the classic style: riding to the right, holding a lance in the right hand with the arm bent at the elbow, reins held in the left hand. His name betrays no local heritage but his life is eternalised by a local motif.

It is especially interesting to see the horse riding male figure on a tombstone dedicated to Julius Longinus (described above). Longinus was honoured with an elaborate epitaph, with emphasis on his career in the cavalry and on his Roman citizenship. His name is a mix of pure Latin and indigenous elements, whilst his father's name is purely indigenous. The city of Bilbilis dropped the horseman icon from its coin reverses when it wanted to advertise its Roman status, but Julius Longinus chose (H EX T F C) to have himself commemorated with the traditional icon whilst boasting of his services to Roman and his citizen status. He and the other men who were commemorated with equestrian figures and Latin epitaphs were using an old motif with (relatively) modern inscription techniques.

Onomastics inform us of the ethnic mix of patrons and honorands, and of the social status of some of them. Military titles, citizenship tags, and even the public office title of *aedilis* occur frequently (figure 5.18). The first equestrian *stelai* from Clunia were succeeded by tombstones carved with images of horsemen, battle, and the hunt. Men who had adjusted (or were still adjusting) to the Roman social hierarchy used the new tombstones. It is easy to think of the *stelai* as poor-quality because of the style of the figural compositions, but the inscriptions indicate that the honorands were men of a certain status – however modest this status in the eyes of the élite, it mattered in the local context. Inscriptions can thus be used to indicate two important social processes in Romano-Celtiberia: the changing of names to reflect Latin nomenclature and the assumption of titles and formulae that would have identified the commemorands within the hierarchy of Roman society.

V. Style as a marker of cultural change

Stylistic treatment of the men's funerary monuments from northern Tarraconensis has been neglected in 20th century studies, with the bulk of publications focusing solely on typology. Typology and content do not work alone to communicate messages to the viewer, but are inextricably linked to style. As Natalie Boymel Kampen writes, 'Style helps generate emotional reactions to content, but it can also allow viewers to recognize themselves as particularized groups or as individuals' (Kampen 1999). Augustus and Hadrian chose classical Greek elements as part of their visual vocabulary, so as to invoke the mythological power and physical beauty

associated with the art of Greece in the 5th and 4th centuries BC. Similarly, the Tetrachs used a visual style that emphasised uniformity, simplicity of organisation, and played down individual features in favour of public artistic works, reinforcing their message that imperial authority was more important than individual personality. Style makes a difference, and the changing styles in Celtiberian funerary monuments say as much about the growing awareness of Roman visual vocabulary as they do about the development of artistic techniques.

The left fragment of a limestone discoid *stele* from Lara de los Infantes (figure 5.18) is surrounded by a herringbone border. This border was evidently a local specialty, as it appears on many other tombstones from this region. The roundel is divided into two zones, an upper zone with a figural scene and a lower zone with an inscription. The scene shows three men marching to the right, in a procession that may have continued with more figures on the other half of the now-missing roundel. Each figure holds up his left hand and wields a short sword or dagger. The figures are tall with elongated torsos and legs that are unrealistically short. The torsos are boxy and flat, and the feet are all aligned in profile view. Beneath the men is an inscription to Lucius Antonius, AED II. The inscription is framed in a *tabula ansata*. This tombstone involves local style with respect to the herringbone border and the overall format, and Roman style in the *tabula ansata*, which was used on soldiers' commemorative monuments and tombstones all over the Empire. The figures take poses that echo metropolitan types: 'soldiers in a procession' is an oft-repeated motif from Roman visual vocabulary but is not attested in indigenous art. However, the proportions and the modelling are non-metropolitan. The craftsman has adopted a Roman figural idea that would have been intended for a square or rectangular decorative field, and has adapted it to a local format: the bodies are elongated to fit the dimensions of the roundel. The mix of styles in this monument illustrates the changes in artistic practices in Celtiberia that were then current.

The horseman icon was adjusted over the years. What is thought to be the earliest example of it in this collection (figure 5.1, from Clunia) shows a horse and its rider occupying the entire surface of the roundel with even the horse's ears, tail, and the spear point overlapping the border. The curvature of the horse's neck and the soft bend in his front and hind legs give the impression that the animal has been moulded especially for a rounded space. There are no sharp angles in this scene, with the rider's elbow curved, instead of bent, at a ninety-degree angle (as in later images). The large round shield adds to the sense of circularity. No incisions mark facial features, clothing, or riding equipment. The second early example from Clunia (figure 5.2) shows a different pose (the horse is at rest instead of galloping) but a similar style, with circles and rounded angles dominating and the figural icon so large that it fills almost the entirety of the field.

The rider's shoulders and rear end, as well as the horse's rump and neck, are all gently shaped with, again, few sharp angles or lines.

This style changes when Latin inscriptions come into use. A piece that may be considered stylistically transitional because of its inclusion of Latin but its lack of geometric border, is a limestone *stèle* fragment from Lara de los Infantes (figure 5.12). The beginning of an inscription (AIVS...) is discernible at the bottom. The figural zone features an equestrian riding to the right, who holds a round shield in his left hand and a lance in his right. The horse's tail flies out behind him as indication of the speed of the charge. There is now considerable space between the body of the horse and the border of the roundel, especially as compared to figure 5.1. The craftsman has reduced the size of the figural icon to make way for the Latin inscription.

More and more space was given to Latin epitaphs in later pieces, as demonstrated by two discoid limestone *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes (figures 5.14 and 5.15). The roundel of each *stèle* is surrounded by a herringbone-pattern border and divided into two registers. The top registers are almost mirror images of each other: the horse leans back with all four legs planted in the ground and the tail hanging slack. The rider leans forward slightly and holds with his outside arm (the arm nearest the viewer) a lance pointed down and out past the horse's nose. Elbows are bent at ninety degrees and held high. The horse's outside eye is indicated as a small dot. The lower register in each monument contains a Latin inscription – now occupying half the space of the face of the roundel. These stylistic changes reflect a taste for geometric borders, plus more emphasis on the nomenclature and the Latin formulaic epitaph, less on the actual figural motif.

Another change in style is manifested in perspective and setting. The pre-Roman reliefs from Celtiberia often depict just one figure in an otherwise empty space, giving no hint of size or context. But by the Roman period craftsman have added figures to show glimpses of narrative scenes (figure 5.16), and adjusted scale to suggest perspective and distance (figure 5.11). Along with these new representational styles come variations in pose, with frontal positioning in addition to profile views. Decorative elements such as palm fronds, ivy leaves, and *tabulae ansata* are used with increased frequency to fill spaces between zones or the inscribed words. Whether these fronds and leaves have a symbolic value is a point that was hotly debated by Spanish archaeologists in earlier publications. But since we see them come into use when Latin inscriptions are adopted, it is likely that they were picked up from the Roman visual vocabulary (they are attested on monuments from elsewhere in the Empire [Di Stefano Manzella 1987, 203]).

The Celtiberian *stelai* may at first glance seem crude to viewers familiar with sculpture of the metropolitan élite, but these pieces were clearly thoroughly adequate for local audiences and patrons. Perhaps figural elements best summed up the ideal virtues of a man from Romano-

Celtiberia: courage, strength, and battle prowess. It is possible that Celtiberian makers and patrons rejected certain postures or perspectives typical to metropolitan pieces, because such details did not fit local tastes. Celtiberians would have been exposed to sculpted figures rendered in classical style on tombstones at Clunia, Caesaraugusta, Bilbilis, Pallantia, Segontia, and Segovia, so there was familiarity with Roman élite styles; nonetheless they seem to have taken on Roman styles of inscription whilst retaining locally styled format (roundel), borders, and motifs. The lack of ornate vegetal elements and hexapetal emblems – found in abundance on the women’s *stelai* from Celtiberia – also says something about the ‘manly’ and martial style that was used for the commemoration of Romano-Celtiberian men.

Thus, stylistic elements in the men’s funerary monuments demonstrate a shift in emphasis from figural iconography to inscriptions – which reflects a social change in emphasising individual identity over the generalised icon, where a single name was scratched in almost as an afterthought. It was a specific identity that was being carved out in the new style: a Roman identity, with names given as Latinised and in Latin epitaph formulae. At the same time, there was adherence to traditional styles that points to continued identification with local heritage.

VI. Interpretations and symbolism

Since we lack testimonials of Celtiberians about their use of the equestrian motif, it is difficult to know whether the icon carried religious or other connotations. Nevertheless, by virtue of the frequency and primacy of the icon on *stelai*, it is a safe assumption that the equestrian figure started out as more than just an expression of interest in horseback riding. Scholars have tried to define the armed horseman as emblematic of the heroisation of the deceased, and this theory will be examined closely because it has influenced generations of research on the *stelai* and has imbued them with a mysticism that is unverifiable and misleading.

Blázquez is unequivocal in his interpretation of the equestrian *stelai* from Clunia:

Ces stèles de Clunia sont d’une importance extraordinaire puisqu’elles prouvent que toutes ces représentations de cavaliers possédaient pour les indigènes un sens funéraire très net, c’est-à-dire l’héroïsation du défunt, étant donné qu’il est entouré de symboles à sens très clairement chtonique (Blázquez 1962, 414).

These *stelai* from Clunia are of extraordinary importance because they prove that all of these representations of horsemen had a very clear funerary ideology for the indigenes, that is to say, the heroisation of the deceased, given that it is surrounded by symbols that have a clearly chthonic sense. (My translation.)

Blázquez's words are echoed by François Cumont as well as by more recent scholars, including Miranda Green and Marco Simón (Cumont 1966 on 'le caractère d'héroisation du cheval', 239). Green argues that the horseman was associated with the Celtic war-god and that its inclusion in the funerary realm was meant to suggest heroisation of the dead (Green 1989, 113-4). Marco Simón is adamant about the accuracy of his interpretation of the equine figure as otherworldly symbol and representative of heroism:

Como ya se ha aludido al caballo y a su significación de animal psicopompo, ideograma del difunto y símbolo de su heroización, no vamos a insistir más en este punto (Marco Simón 1978, 46).

As has already been mentioned with respect to the horse and to its significance as an otherworldly animal, ideogram of the dead and symbol of his heroisation, we do not need to insist any further on this point. (My translation.)

In understanding the equestrian figure as a symbol of heroisation, Blázquez, Marco Simón, and Green were adopting the views stated in earlier works of François Benoît. Benoît argued that the horse, when part of a funerary context in the ancient Mediterranean world, symbolised a 'dieu-cavalier' and assured the protection of the deceased, associating him with a god (or hero). He wanted to attach a single, universal significance to the equestrian figure:

L'image du héros-cavalier est donc le témoin de croyances ou de superstitions appartenant à un fonds commun de l'humanité, que révèlent l'unité et l'identité d'une religion populaire de la mort... le mythe ne saurait être limité à un peuplement, à une religion, à une époque (Benoît 1954, 135-6).

The image of the hero-horseman is therefore the witness of beliefs or of superstitions appearing in a common foundation of humanity, which reveals the unity and the identity of a popular religion of death. ... The myth could not be limited to one people, one religion, or one time. (My translation.)

Benoît's study is focused on the diffusion and significance of the equestrian figure in the Celtic world. He looked to eastern precursors, especially those from Macedonia and Greece, for evidence of hero cults, pointing out that heroes were often invoked on *stelai* in Greece and that the deification of the dead is attested throughout the Greek world from the 4th century BC through the 1st century BC (Benoît 1954, 16). He moves further to associate the equestrian emblem with deification among the Celts in Gaul, Britannia, and Tarraconensis. Benoît based his conclusions on research into Celtic folklore and chthonic mythology. In sum, he believed that the indigenous Celtic horse goddess, Epona, was married with imported Greco-Roman mythology and evolved into an important symbol of heroisation and other-worldliness. He did not believe that there was a significant difference between the Celts of Gaul and the Celts of Iberia in their use of the equestrian motif on funerary monuments. Rather, he postulated that in both regions, the various contexts of the motif (funerary, religious, numismatics) indicated cultural continuity that established a community 'non de races mais de croyances ... qui appartient à un folklore général de la Méditerranée...' (Benoît 1954, 70).

These comments involve two major issues that need critical commentary. One is the question of who the Celtiberians were. In assuming that the Gallo-Roman goddess Epona, the divinity of horses and of the cavalry, was revered among the Celtiberians, Benoît displayed an outmoded view of the Celts in Iberia as cultural carbon copies of the Celts of Gaul and Britannia. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that Epona was worshipped widely in the Iberia peninsula, either in pre-Roman or in Roman times, and the archaeological record does not indicate shrines or cults devoted to her. The classical historians attest to the existence of Celts in Iberia, but Diodorus Siculus (*Histories* 5.33) explains a people he calls the *Celtiberes* as 'a fusion of two peoples and the combination of Celts and Iberes [that] took place after long and bloody wars.' In other words, the peoples of northern-central Tarraconensis were not merely Gallic or British Celts living on the Iberia peninsula; they were a mix of cultures whose 'Celticness' had, by the early Roman Empire, largely disappeared. Although some Celtic gods did survive, unchallenged, into the imperial period in northwest Tarraconensis, Epona was not one of them (Keay 1988, 161). Therefore it is

difficult to accept Benoît's argument that the supposed *héroïsation* of the equestrian in Celtiberian iconography was rooted in widespread adoration of the Gallo-Roman horse goddess.

Another issue is Benoît's use of the term *héroïsation*. What exactly do modern writers mean when they mention heroisation, *heroización*, or *héroïsation*? Blázquez freely interchanges *heroización* and 'deification.' Benoît saw *héroïsation* as the conferral upon the dead of a preternatural strength similar to that of a divinity (Benoît 1954, 13). For Marco Simón, *heroización* is the idea that death imbued the deceased with a 'pujanza sobrenatural' (supernatural vigour), which puts one in contact with godly ancestors in the world beyond (Marco Simón 1978, 35). The discussion is further confused by the suggestion that the horseman is not meant to represent the deceased at all – rather, an actual god (Caro Baroja 1946, 179-80; Green 1992b, 122-3). Archaeologists who have studied the material evidence of Celtiberian religion explain the equestrian motif as one of many options for self-representation on funerary monuments. This does not necessarily mean that the equestrian figure was of universal importance to the tribes of northern-central Tarraconensis (Burillo Mozota 1998, 134; Galán Domingo 1994, 104). This is not to say that the equestrian did not have a religious or other-worldly symbolism for the people who used it on tombstones; but in no way was it of equal status among all Celtiberians. Indeed, if it had been the case that the equestrian had denoted heroisation to all, we would expect to find it distributed throughout the region and not limited to a few central necropoleis. So although we should not rule out completely a supernatural symbolism associated with the equestrian, it is misleading to attribute to the icon an ecumenical veneration.

It is important to separate facts from hypotheses. It is clear that the horse was a leitmotif among tribes of northern-central Tarraconensis. Horses were sometimes ritually sacrificed in honour of their owners' death, and their bones were included in 5th and 4th century BC burials in Celtiberian necropoleis. They were especially valued as warriors' beasts, and the Celtiberians were good cavalry fighters.¹⁷ Pre-Roman silver and gold horsemen fibulae – structurally similar to brooches from Gaul but stylistically distinctive – have been found throughout Celtiberia (chapter 2; cf. Cunliffe 1997, 142). According to analyses of animal bones found in central Spanish settlements, the horse played a significant role in the agricultural production of Celtiberian tribes (Blázquez 1968, 215). A water jug from Numancia shows the taming of a horse at the hands of a man dressed in a belted tunic and holding a rod and whip (Burillo Mozota 1988, 140-2). This illustrates the importance of the horse to the Celtiberians, being both a prestigious animal associated with nobility, and a helpmate in war, travel, and agriculture.

¹⁷ Strabo (3.4.15) praises the Celtiberians for their horsemanship and calls their horses 'smoother runners than the other horses [of the peninsula].'

But what did the horse signify to the Celtiberians once Roman iconography had been introduced to them? Equestrian statues were set up throughout the Empire, and if the Celtiberians had travelled to the coastal cities of Tarraco and Emporiae or the southern cities of Corduba and Italica, they could have seen some fine examples on display there. In other words, the Roman esteem for equestrian figures was displayed prominently in the *Hispaniae*. The ancient writers point out the valour and skill of Celtiberian horsemen, and the rider motif was an ideal means of conveying the traditional masculine virtues of power and courage – virtues that held true as much for the Celtiberians as for the Romans. Rather than concerning ourselves with tail-chasing around the Empire for far-flung connections to horsemen motifs in other cultures and eras, it is useful to study the equestrian *stelai* in the context of other media from the same locality or general geographic area. In so doing, we can conclude that horseback warriors were traditionally revered in Celtiberia; that the equestrian icon was popular on coins and tombstones before the Imperial period; and that it continued in use after Roman styles and customs were introduced to the region. Whether the horseman motif had connotations of heroism is not so important; more important is its role as a visual anchor of cultural identity even as social practices concerning nomenclature, artistic styles, military service, and politics changed.

Conclusions

The funerary monuments dedicated to men from Celtiberia reflect the region's cultural changes that resulted from the introduction of Roman styles and social practices to those of local peoples. Men were most often represented in martial scenes in which an equestrian, war, or hunt scene is depicted. Ornamentation is at a minimum in relation to other *stelai* formats from the area, most of which are dedicated to women or have a more pacific figural scene. The horseman motif persisted in use from pre-Roman to middle Imperial times on tombstones, although its size and contours changed as part of a stylistic shift that reflected changes in social priorities: individual identity within the Roman hierarchy became more important and the figural iconography shrunk to make way for Latin inscriptions. Nomenclature indicates that local people Latinised their indigenous names or adopted Latin names alone, perhaps to honour the emperor under whose administration they received the *ius Latii*. None of the inscriptions contains 'l' for *libertus*, though some of them do contain military rank or public office. Thus, the people who bought and were honoured by these tombstones were neither senators nor slaves, but somewhere in between.

No single culture reigned supreme in northern central Tarraconensis. Previous scholars have sought to delineate how 'good' or 'bad' the men's funerary monuments are in comparison with Roman sculpture, but in so doing have used the criteria of the metropolitan élite. Moreover, they have stuck to typological studies without moving into the areas of epigraphic and visual style to look at broader social questions. Since 'good' and 'bad' are not subjective terms, and since it is historically unhelpful to compare frontier *stelai* with Hellenised statuary from the cities, it is best to obviate this line of investigation and focus instead on the cultural changes that were going on in Celtiberia. Theories of memory and cultural transmission can help us to understand the role that the *stelai* played in creating timeless reminders of the individuals as well as of society's values. The preference for figural images as well as epitaphs was a practical means of communicating with a semi-literate audience, and a mnemonic strategy for associating individuals with images. But the repetition of certain images, particularly the male figure on horseback, indicates that these images had meaning. They were not intended to make viewers believe that the deceased really did ride a horse into battle; rather, they were intended to associate the deceased with a set of cultural values and social history. The men's funerary monuments document a growing awareness and adoption of Roman visual vocabulary and the Latin language and nomenclature, whilst holding onto iconography and format that viewers would have recognised as markers of local cultural identity.

CHAPTER 6: WOMEN'S FUNERARY MONUMENTS

There are four sources of information regarding Celtiberian women, and each source is problematic in some way. First, there are the Greek and Latin texts, which describe Celtiberian society from the 'civilised' Mediterranean perspective, and tell us more about the observer's value of women than about the attitudes of Celtiberian society towards its women. Second, there are material remains from burials, including personal adornments and pottery, which are problematic because 'contextually determined sex markers' are based on assumptions about normative associations between sex and objects (Gibbs 1987). Third, there are inscriptions from funerary monuments, which give useful insight to how women were configured in families vis-à-vis male relations, but which only represent a select segment of society. Fourth, there is the iconography from funerary monuments, close reading of which can reveal information about the status and social roles of the few women fortunate enough to have an individualised stone monument, though the precise meaning of the iconography to its ancient audience is lost on modern viewers. Although this thesis is concerned primarily with iconography, analysing the social value of ancient women is notoriously difficult and in discussing the cultural identity of Celtiberian women it will be important to use the other sources of information.

Male figures dominate the visual record of Celtiberia. Foregoing chapters have discussed examples of the male figure on fibulae, ceramic vessels, coins, and *stelai*. In most cases, the male figure is presented armed, on horseback, or both. The few exceptions among the *stelai* that present male figures ploughing or seated at a table, prove the rule: male figures were more likely to be depicted in martial and/or hunting scenes, actual men to be commemorated by them. There are no female figures on any of the fibulae, *tesserae hospitales*, or armaments from Celtiberia, there are a few (probably mythical) female portrait heads on coins, and there is one female figure on a painted vessel from Numancia (figure 3.5). The archaeological record indicates that it was not until the 1st century AD that female figures in Celtiberia were regularly the subjects of visual media. The relative paucity of female images should not, however, allow our view of Celtiberian society to be dominated by male experience. Approaching the social role and cultural identity of Celtiberian women requires making careful use of the four sources of information available. The best material resource, invaluable for its information on how women were commemorated, and on the presentation and configuration of the female figure in Celtiberia, is a group of funerary monuments from Lara de los Infantes.

Thirty-four *stelai* with relief scenes of a woman seated in front of a three-legged table (*mensa tripes*) have been found in the former Roman province of Tarraconensis. The objects were

concentrated in the *Conventus Cluniensis* and of the total, twenty-five come from one town alone, Lara de los Infantes, located in the modern province of Burgos. The tombstones are without parallel among surviving examples of Iberian art, but are unknown to most scholars, appearing sporadically in catalogues (Martínez Burgos 1935; García y Bellido 1949; Trillmich, Hauschild, Blech *et al.* 1993), and in a few long articles (Fernández Fuster 1954; Abásolo 1977; Marco Simón 1978). Although their precise ancient context is unknown, it is likely that the women's *stelai*, like those of the men, were set up in an extramural necropolis, a burial practice favoured by the Celtiberians in the Roman imperial period (Curchin 1997, 29).

It cannot be said with certainty whether the reliefs on the *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes present real women, deities, or mythical women, and so reference is made to the seated figures as 'female figures.' But the *stelai* themselves were set up to commemorate real women, named in the inscriptions. For this reason, it is fair to call the monuments 'women's *stelai*.'

The production period for the women's *stelai* can (on the basis of inscription style and associated grave goods) be put with certainty between the Claudian period and the end of the 1st century AD – the terminus point of this thesis. These monuments are of special importance for what they say about the changing roles of women as well as for the insight they give to the complexity of cultural evolution in the Celtiberian part of the Roman Empire. Despite their Latin epitaphs, classic images and Romanised names, the *stelai* are neither 'purely Roman' nor 'purely Celtiberian.' As our survey of material evidence from Celtiberia has demonstrated, the artistic and social culture that emerged during the 2nd and 1st centuries BC was a mix of practices and, as in so many provincial situations, this culture assumed its own character. As late as the Augustan era, some people in Celtiberia were still using distinctively Celtic figures on tombstones and trading in coins with Celtiberian legends, while most seem to have taken up Latinised names and moved to urban centres that had official municipal status with the Roman authorities (figures on tombstones: Marco Simón 1978, figs. 7-11; continued circulation of coins with Celtiberian legends: Delibes de Castro *et al.* 1993).

The cultural backdrop to the women's funerary monuments, then, is complicated. One aspect of the discussion in this chapter will be the state of Celtiberian culture(s) and society in the Flavian period – a period of great significance for its improvements to Celtiberia's towns and public infrastructure. Another aspect of the discussion is gender differences communicated by the women's funerary monuments. Why was the so-called banquet motif a popular choice for women's, but not for men's, commemorative images? If this particular scene and figure type was derived from Greek and Roman art, what can be concluded about Celtiberians' acceptance of outsiders' practices? Do the *stelai* reveal anything about cultural resistance and Romanisation?

With this chapter, I move beyond the limited iconographical description of the Lara de los Infantes *stelai*. I suggest that examination of the representations of female figures, coupled with a comparison between examples of other provinces and with male images, will give us deeper knowledge of the symbolism present in these *stelai*. A look at recent relevant theory and an examination of women's position in Celtiberian society and, moreover, of their position in Roman provincial situations, will provide a helpful background for an analysis of female images in Celtiberian funerary monuments.

By the time the women's *stelai* were made, their region of provenience was called Tarraconensis rather than Celtiberia, and this distinction reflects the fact that Roman practices were paramount and that indigenous ways of life were in decline. Tarraconensis was one of three provinces, along with Baetica and Lusitania, created by Augustus in his re-division of Roman Spain. The borders of Tarraconensis shifted in later eras, but throughout this chapter the Augustan arrangement is invoked. Augustan Tarraconensis consisted of six *conventus*, including the *Conventus Cluniensis* in which Lara de los Infantes was located (modern-day province of Burgos). A *conventus* was originally an area of land represented to the Roman administration by an assembly of local residents of Italian origin. By the time of Caesar, the *conventus* operated as administrative districts responsible for judicial oversight of the urban settlements within its ambit (Le Roux 1995, 87). The Roman-era name of Lara de los Infantes is not known. Recent publications associate the site with ancient Nova Augusta (Alföldy 1981; Burillo Mozota 1998, 188 and 342; Gimeno and Mayer 1993).

In the past twenty years, there have been many developments in feminist theory related to the question of interpreting the then cultural and social roles of women through various sources. Sherry Ortner, for example, suggests a 'universal subordination of women' that can be perceived through the following criteria:

Cultural ideology and actual statements within the society that explicitly devalue women, their products and roles; social structural arrangements that actively exclude women from the sphere in which the highest powers and influence of that society are felt to reside; and symbolic devices that are interpreted as implying inferior valuation (Ortner 1974, 68-9).

Ortner provides a starting point for analysing women's social roles and the estimation her (Ortner's) society puts on women, but her criteria must be used with caution. For a start, Ortner is

applying contemporary values to yesteryear's world. Further, 'statements within the society that explicitly devalue women' might have been made in response to the increasing power of women in that society. Symbolic devices that may have indicated inferior valuation of a group can also possess alternative meanings. The starting point for this chapter is that the iconography on the women's *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes has significance on several levels.

The first section of this chapter gives a brief history of Celtiberia in the Augustan and Flavian periods, discussing the social and political changes that were the context for the production of the Lara de los Infantes *stelai*. The second section examines the physical aspects of the *stelai*: size, material, visual vocabulary, and decoration. The iconography of the *stelai* is described in thorough detail. The third section interprets what is actually happening in the scene and considers the argument that these images present a 'funerary banquet'. The fourth section concentrates on nomenclature, using onomastics to study cultural identity in 1st century AD Celtiberia. The fifth section gathers the various strands of approach into a cohesive discussion of the objects, and places the *stelai* in a theoretical framework through which to understand their social significance. The concluding sections offers an overall look at the types of evidence used and the importance of iconography in studying cultural identity of Celtiberian women. In the course of the paper, reference is made to *stelai* that are not included in the thesis catalogue but are published in Marco Simón's 1978 publication, *Las estelas decoradas de los conventos Cesaraugustano*. The citations follow the formula used in Marco Simón's catalogue: for example, B.78 refers to Burgos, *stele* 78, and S.24 signifies Soria, *stele* 24.

I. The social and historical context

By the time the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* were made, Celtiberians had long-established relations with Romans, going back to the 2nd century BC and the Celtiberian wars. The *legio VII Gemina* was based at Legio (modern-day León), and had a camp at Numancia. Civilian points of contact with Roman culture existed as well. The nearest major towns were Clunia and Numancia, both about 20 km from Lara de los Infantes, and the colony of Caesaraugusta, populated by discharged veterans of the *legiones IIII Macedonia, VI Victrix*, and *X Gemina*, was 100 km away (Keay 1988, 55-6). Clunia was Galba's base of operations in AD 69, and it is there that he took the title *Caesar* (Suetonius, *Galba* 9.2). Clunia had many of the outward signs of Roman influence by the Flavian period, boasting a monumental *capitolium*, municipal buildings and a *macellum*, the requisite architectural elements of any self-respecting Roman town (Richardson 1996, 182-3).

The forum at Clunia, measuring 166 x 108 meters, was one of the largest in all of Spain (de Palol 1991). Numancia, which had been the site of a bitter two-year siege by the Roman army in 133 BC, had a second life from the Augustan period as an administrative centre featuring Roman-style civic structures (*curia*, basilica, and a huge aqueduct, which remains to this day). Termes and Uxama were also embellished with Roman buildings during the Flavian period, thanks to the euergetism of local élites. Residents of Lara de los Infantes did not have to go far to find sophisticated and monumental signs of Roman city life.

The Flavian period impacted on Tarraconensis in a number of ways. After the military struggles of 68/69, Roman legions were moved off the Peninsula and, for the first time since the landing of Cn. Scipio in 218 BC, there were no legions in the *Hispaniae* (Richardson 1996, 188). The implication of Vespasian's military policy is that the Iberian Peninsula was by now being seen from Rome as part of the central area of the empire, rather than a frontier. We can imagine that even the areas traditionally associated with armed resistance, such as the north and interior of Tarraconensis, were finally at peace and more or less fully incorporated into the Roman cultural fabric. The most significant change in Iberian societies during the Flavian period was the granting of the Latin right. Pliny the Elder writes that Vespasian granted the *ius Latii* to all of the *Hispaniae*, a move that would have given all men and women new roles in religious and political life (Pliny, *NH* 3.30: 'universae Hispaniae Vespasianus imperator Augustus iactatum procellis rei publicae Latium tribuit'). The rights given by the *ius Latii* were a collection of privileges that included permission for intermarriage with Romans (*conubium*), the right to buy and sell certain items which was otherwise restricted to Roman citizens (*commercium*) and transfer of citizenship from one state to another (*migratio*) (Richardson 1996, 195). The last of these privileges had been modified by the Flavian period so that one could acquire Roman citizenship by holding a magistracy in the Latin community to which the right was given. This would in turn have given Roman citizenship to the magistrate's children. The assumption of citizenship was often accompanied by a voluntary change of name to a more Latin-sounding name, and this may explain the increasing numbers of Latin and Latinised names attested on Celtiberian *stelae* in the 1st century (section IV). The impact of the *ius Latii* and the assumption of citizenship on self- and cultural-identity would have been significant, then, in several ways.

The increasing number of *municipia* during the Flavian era is another sign of the incorporation of Iberia into the Roman Empire. The transformation of an *oppidum* into a *municipium* meant the establishment of Roman juridical courts, political institutions, and religious organisations. The last of these would have included the imperial cult, membership of which was a widely recognised marker of social status in the Roman world. Similarly, the range

of public offices (*duoviri*, *aediles*, and *quaestores*) that were on offer in a *municipia* presented local men with a variety of positions for which and from which to compete for social status. Participating in public life in a Roman town brought an individual into the Roman value system of public competition and placement on the social hierarchy. Again, these issues have great bearing on how an individual will self-identify, and identify with culture groups.

Women would have been differently affected by these changes, chiefly because they were not allowed to take on public offices. But women could participate in certain Roman religious cults, and wealthy women were allowed to make benefactions and advertise their munificence publicly. In these ways women, too, were part of the social competition that was a feature of the Roman value system. We can imagine that the right to intermarry with Romans affected the many native women who had been married illicitly to Roman soldiers and veterans by giving them social and legal legitimacy. There was clearly some native impact on the Roman soldiers. In his treatise on the civil war, Caesar notes that the men of the Second Legion had served on the Iberian Peninsula for so long that they had become 'hispanised,' acquiring property on the Peninsula, maintaining families and quasi-marital relations with indigenous women, and altogether regarding themselves as Spaniards (Caesar, *Bell. Civ.* 1.44, 1.86). Moreover, Caesar observes that some of these Roman soldiers were so much like those soldiers born in the *Hispaniae* that it was as if none of the men in the legion were from outside Spain (Caesar, *Bell. Alex.* 53). Roman soldiers were most likely to make contact with native culture in the *canabae*, the settlement of civilian shops and homes which grew up around a legionary base. The native people living and working in the *canabae* provided soldiers with wine, foodstuffs, prostitutes, and commodities on which to spend his pay (Curchin 1991, 97-8). Accepting MacMullen's estimate that for every soldier there were two or three civilians, and Vittinghoff's calculation that the number of soldiers stationed permanently at a camp like León, in northwest Spain, was 2,500 to 3,000, we see that the *canabae* comprised a settlement of significant size and dynamic cultural interaction (Vittinghoff 1970, 342; MacMullen 1968, 338). The men and women of the *canabae*, living and working and serving soldiers, learnt Latin and adapted their inventory and skills to meet Roman demand. For native women in particular, the settlement around a legionary camp presented the possibility of meeting and 'marrying' a Roman man. The children of such unions added to the cultural vibrancy of Celtiberian society.

Finally, the very act of living in a *municipium* brought a Celtiberian woman into contact with such Roman institutions as roads, markets, and money. The widespread adoption of Latin is the classic marker of cultural immersion. All of these factors led to the women and men of

Celtiberia being integrated into Roman cultural practices in the 1st century AD. It is this historical situation that produced the women's *stelai* of Lara de los Infantes.

II. Format and physical characteristics of the *stelai*

Provenience

The women's *stelai* were discovered in modern-day Lara de los Infantes, where they had been re-used as building materials in walls, floors and foundations.¹ A few were found in a nearby field and are thought to have been erected in an extra-mural necropolis. Lara de los Infantes's Roman-era tombstones are important to scholars because they yield a nucleus of epigraphic evidence, but the town's infrastructure remains largely unexplored by archaeologists. Excavations at Lara de los Infantes have revealed the remains of an Iron Age settlement underneath the modern city. This Iron Age settlement was re-established during the Imperial period, evinced by Roman-era streets and wall foundations unearthed throughout the city. The material evidence makes clear that in antiquity, this town was situated in the ambit of the Arevaci, the Celtiberian tribe nearly obliterated after war and siege conflict with Roman forces in the 130s BC.² The town probably acquired the status of *municipium* during the Flavian period, when it produced four magistrates (Abásolo 1993). There was a significant increase in the construction of stone public buildings in northern central Spain during the Flavian period, as many towns were for the first time incorporated in the Roman Empire on formal administrative terms. Grave goods found in nearby necropoleis indicate a high standard of élite and middle class living, with access to gold and silver, and to sophisticated metallurgical technology.

Materials and iconography

Of the twenty-five *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes that present a woman seated at a table, three are carved in sandstone and twenty-two in limestone, some using a white limestone originating from three local quarries, others a pink stone suggesting provenance near Quintanilla de las Viñas, 20 km. southeast of Lara de los Infantes.³ The monuments generally measure one metre tall and 0.30 metre wide, though they range from 0.36m. to 1.19m. tall, and 0.20m. to 0.50m. wide. The standard format divides the *stela* into three registers. The middle register normally

¹ This information is from Dr. V. Castillo, director of the Museo Arqueológico, Burgos, Spain (interview in Burgos on 15/2/00).

² Tovar 1989: this is the region 'donde sitúa claramente la zona de los arevacos entre los celtíberos' (where the Arevaci clearly were situated).

³ Abásolo 1977, 68. The three principal quarries were at Hontora, Cubilla del Campo and Tornadijo.

represents a female figure seated in a high-backed chair, shown in one-quarter-profile view, before a three-legged table (*mensa tripes*), on which rests a vessel and a circular object turned on its side. The reliefs are plain and shallow, the only suggestion of background or environment being the *sella* (high-backed chair) and *mensa tripes*. Below this register is a Latin epitaph. The highest-quality carving is in the upper-most register with a discoid (sun, wheel, or six-petal flower) and geometric border patterns. The discoid, figural scene and epitaph are the typical visual ingredients in this group of *stelai*, although their placement and details vary in some cases.

A total of one hundred twelve full or fragmentary tombstones have been found at Lara de los Infantes, of which seventy-one feature human figures. Marco Simón (1978) identifies twenty-five 'funerary banquet' scenes from the town, plus a further six *stelai* depicting men or women seated in similar poses in front of a three-legged table, allowing for the possibility that these six were derived from the same models used for the 'banquet' *stelai*. None of the banquet scenes commemorates a man. Only in four cases are members of both sexes on the same *stela*, and in these examples the female figure is seated and being waited upon (or offered objects) by a male figure. Of the five *stelai* found in nearby Iglesia Pinta, two portray seated men and the other three are too poorly preserved for sex specification. However, in the case of the first two, the epitaphs commemorate women, suggesting that the seated figures are female (Marco Simón 1978, 125-7). Three more banquet *stelai* were found in towns in the vicinity, all within a 30 km. radius: one each from San Pedro de Arlanza, Alcubilla, Peñalcázar, and Tordesalás (modern town names). The examples from San Pedro de Arlanza and Tordesalás present female figures. The Peñalcázar *stela* is too poorly preserved to allow us to label the figure male or female. Finally, the Alcubilla example seems to depict a male figure on horseback in the background with a female figure seated at a *mensa tripes* in the foreground (Ortego 1960, 72, 75).

In other pieces there is a second seated female figure (B.84, S.24), male figures presenting (or receiving) objects (B.92), or smaller standing figures whose scaled status differentiation suggests they are servants (B.77, B.78, B.83, B.90). In at least one example the children of the deceased are depicted as well, and identified in the epitaph. Some of the *stelai* contain crescent moons over the *mensa tripes*, cows, trees, serpents with semi-circles around the composition, vine leaves and feathers (Blázquez 1977, 436). The religious or cult significance of these designs should not be overemphasised, since such designs are found on all types of media in the Celtic world, including pottery, jewellery, armour and reliefs. Although several scholars have interpreted crescent moons, cows, trees, and serpents as Celtic symbols of death, fertility and/or renewal, there is insufficient evidence to support the idea that patrons and viewers of early imperial *stelai* in Celtiberia considered such visual elements to be anything more than decorative.

It is important to stress that the *mensa tripes*, or 'banquet', motif was used mostly to commemorate women. At the same time, the most popular scene for women's funerary monuments is the *sella-mensa tripes*-seated figure arrangement. Women featured in other scenes, sometimes with children (B.94, B.97, B.101, and B.109) and in one before a loom (B.145). However, it is the 'banquet' motif that appears most frequently. It is clear that it was copied throughout the *Conventus Cluniensis* and in the town of Lara de los Infantes in particular, but that it was not so popular in other, nearby *conventus*. Allowing for some variations in the format and layout of the figures and furniture, the women's *stelai* scenes generally follow the pattern of one female figure shown in profile seated at a three-legged table.

Furniture, clothing and accessories

The chairs can be divided into four types. First is the *sella* without armrests, with a backrest contoured to the anatomy of the sitter (three examples from Lara de los Infantes). Second is a chair with a lower backrest and curved armrests (three examples). A third type has a low backrest, like the second group, but lacks armrests (eighteen examples). All of the *sellae* in the first three categories have legs that are curved in an upside down U shape. In the fourth type, of which there are but a few examples, the backrest is short and armrests are lacking, and the legs form an upside down V shape. These chairs were modelled neither on the Greek κλισμός, characterised by a curved back and convex legs, nor on the Roman *sella curulis*, with its crossed legs in the style of a folding stool (Richter 1926, 45-53 and 125-129). Both types were common in reliefs throughout the Greco-Roman world, but not in central Tarraconensis.

The tables are of the same general type in every relief, sporting a round top and three legs. A few *stelai* feature tables with straight legs, but the majority are curved. The curvature suggests derivation from Roman *mensae*, which sometimes had legs that were fashioned after animal legs, and would have been made of bronze and marble, elaborately adorned with scrolled braces and sphinxes. But more simple wooden models abounded, and an example parallel to the tables in the Lara de los Infantes reliefs occurs in a fresco from Herculaneum, showing a *mensa tripes* with slender, curved legs and a round top (Richter 1926, fig. 324). Some of the tables in the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* reliefs appear to have a round top of two layers, with a discernible line carved through the middle. The detail in the tables' top is mentioned neither by Abásolo nor Marco Simón but it may be important (Abásolo 1977; Marco Simón 1978). One reading of the double-decked top is that it is a local variation in furniture design; another is that it is a serving tray on the tabletop, as in the *stèle* of a woman called Aiae Caelaon (figure 6.1).

The female figures wear a long tunic, usually shapeless and reaching all the way to the feet. In three examples, the skirt does not cover the legs completely. Careful study of the monuments reveals four possible costumes. The most common costume is an ankle-length tunic with no contours of the body revealed, though sometimes decorated with incised lines. The second-most common is a long dress with folds marked by incised lines. There is one example of a long tunic with the shoulders uncovered (from San Pedro de Arlanza). Finally, the fourth type of costume, known in only two or three examples, is a short tunic. In most cases, the particulars of footwear are indistinguishable, though heels are sometimes visible. Where male figures appear, they wear a short tunic ending mid-thigh. The female figures do not wear the *stola* or *himation*, distinctive costumes with readily identifiable fold patterns. Strabo (3.2.15) mentions areas of northern Spain in which Romanised Celtiberians wore togas. Moreover, freestanding sculpture and sculptured friezes from around the Iberian Peninsula demonstrates that Roman dress was adopted in many parts (Trillmich, Hauschild, Blech *et al.* 1993: Tafeln 158, 159, 189).

One of the most striking aspects of the female figures is their hairstyle, or headgear. The ‘forma de sartén’ (Spanish for ‘frying-pan shape’) has been variously interpreted as schematic plaits, bound behind the neck. Here, Strabo’s description of a rod-and-veil combination worn by Celtiberian women:

In some places [Celtiberian women] wear round their necks iron collars with curved rods that bend overhead and project far in front of their foreheads. [...] In other places the women wear round their heads a tympanum, rounded to the back of the head and, as far as the ear lobes, binding the head tightly. Other women keep the hair stripped from the forepart of the head so closely that it glistens more than the forehead does. (Strabo 3.4.17, Loeb translation.)

Strabo’s description is difficult to corroborate. Because his information on Celtiberian customs came to him from an informer (that is, he did not see Celtiberian women himself), it is not possible to know exactly what he envisaged when he described the headgear (Gómez Espelós 1993). What Strabo reports is either a rod curved over in front of the forehead, or a kettle drum-like object (*tympanium*) rounded to the back of the head. The female figures in the *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes wear what looks like a backward baseball cap, and there is a clear physical break between the top of the head and the piece covering it. Whilst the overall low quality of the

carving raises the possibility that the ateliers purposely created a schematic image, it should not be assumed that what they have depicted as the female figures' hairstyle is simply an example of poorly rendered plaits (*pace* Fernández Fuster 1954, 251). In ritual or ceremonial scenes in the ancient Mediterranean world, women usually covered their heads. This was the preferred convention for respectable wives and matrons in Roman society (cp. examples in Cumont 1942; Bianchi 1974). Thus, the female figures on the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* might be wearing veils, pulled to the back of the head (and seen in profile view) so as not to obscure the face. The seated woman on the *stèle* dedicated to Optatila Festa supports this suggestion (B.72): her head is marked with a pattern of striations underneath the outer part of the headgear, making clear a hairline separate from the veil (figure 6.2). The same hairstyle appears on a figure on another *stèle* from Lara de los Infantes, this one showing her (Atta Altica) weaving at a loom (B.145).

The hair of male figures is short in every case. Where they do have what appears to be a 'sartén' – the frying-pan shaped object – it occurs in scenes of hunting or war, where the deceased is portrayed riding a horse in relief (Abásolo 1977, 81 fig. 4.2). In such cases the headgear is best understood as a helmet with a metal attachment on top, a style of helmet typical to Celtiberia and distinguishable from the female figure's headpiece (Lorrio 1997, 195 fig. 80.E; 362 fig. 139 B.4).

The prevailing approach to the accompanying elements is to explain them as accessories to a banquet: the vessel becomes a jug for wine, the circular object a loaf of bread, and the flat, rounded object a *patera*. But it is not always clear that the omnipresent circular object is a 'roscón' – Spanish for a round loaf of bread – as proposed by Fernández Fuster (1954) and accepted by Abásolo (1977). On two *stelai*, the female figure holds a round object that is attached to a handle, and the result looks more like a mirror, a fan or a *situla*, than an offertory 'bread on a stick' (Marco Simón 1978, 30). Indeed, mirrors were included in burials throughout the Celtic-speaking world, and recovered examples demonstrate the sophistication and expense with which they were made (cp. the bronze mirror from a 1st century woman's burial in Birdlip, Gloucestershire: Salway 1993, 33). Hand-held fans also played a part in women's funerary iconography. A fan held by a female figure presented on the *stèle* dedicated to Pompeia Flaccila (B.83) is similar to a *stèle* in Autun, France, which shows a woman holding a goblet in her right hand and a fan in her left (Nerzic 1989, 207).

Celtiberians prized high-quality metal goods (cf. chapter 2), and they made and acquired ceremonial accessories as well as mirrors. *Paterae* were used throughout the Roman world in religious ritual, and Roman Spain was no exception, as exemplified by two finds from Tivisa and Luristán, both lavishly decorated with mythological and ritual figures (Blázquez 1977, figs. 74 and 81). Several examples with variations, including a lion's head or a rounded boss in the centre

of the bowl, have been found at Perotito and Tivisa (Blázquez 1983, figs. 97, 118, 119). In the *stelai* in which the female figure holds a round object on a handle in addition to a round object on the table (such as those dedicated to Optatila Festa and Pompeia Flacilla [figure 6.3]), it is unlikely that two *paterae* are being represented. Rather, the object held in the first *stela* appears to be a *patera*, whereas that held by Pompeia Flacilla has striations radiating out from the centre, making the object resemble a fan. Identifying with certainty the round accessories on the *mensae tripes*, with their striations and hollow centres, is difficult.

The shapes of the drinking vessels are mostly of a generic globular design: short foot, rounded belly and wide lip. In some cases, handles are attached to the sides. In the Greco-Roman world, banqueters were portrayed on vases and in reliefs, drinking from cups or hoisting a *rhyton*. Wine was considered essential for the deceased's life in the next world, and burial caches have been found in northern Spain with amphorae that contained wine 'necessary for the ritual [of burial]' ('que contenían el vino necesario para el ritual': Blázquez 1983, 118). Cicero's *De Legibus* contains information on the food and sacrifices associated with the Roman *silicernium*, but no conclusive evidence exists of the foods that might have been prescribed for funerary feasts in Roman Spain (Lindsay 1998). Remains from sanctuaries throughout Spain prove that bread and raw grain were offered at the altar, but the remains do not indicate whether a round loaf was part of the commemorative banquet.

Interpretation of the accessories is thus far inconclusive. A closer examination of other elements in the scenes is necessary since the activities of the figures may shed light on what role the accessories play.

Figural combinations

The *stela* of Ambata Aionca (B.78), preserved only in a fragment, shows a female figure seated on a *sella* at the right side of the scene, facing left and holding a cup aloft (figure 6.4). On a *mensa tripes* in front of her are a vessel and two more cups. Across the *mensa* is a smaller standing figure, apparently male (to judge by the short tunic and closely-cropped hair), holding a circular object out to the female figure. Further to the left of the relief is a larger standing male figure, holding a rod or a sword and facing left. His pose and distance from the *mensa* group suggest that he should not be read as part of the action involving the seated woman and the standing man. Above the three figures are garlands and three running horses, probably meant to be understood as a part of the background rather than actually floating overhead. Beneath this scene are two cows, with a tall stalk of grain growing up between them. The iconography brings together indigenous symbols and Greco-Roman visual vocabulary, and the inability to interpret

this imagery precisely is exacerbated by the poor preservation of the *stèle*. But the vessels on the *mensa* and the assistance of a servant suggest the portrayal of a ritual meal.

Another auxiliary appears in the *stèle* to Pompeia Flaccila, this one female (figure 6.3). The fragment shows a female figure seated in a *sella* at the right, facing left and wearing the typical hairstyle. She holds an object with a long handle and a striated circle at the end, perhaps a fan or a mirror. The striations could be understood as decoration on the surface of the fan, but they may also be understood as rays of light reflected on the shiny surface of the mirror. In front of her is a *mensa tripes* with what appears to be a serving tray laid on the table top, on which serving tray are a vessel and a round, striated object propped on its side. Approaching the other side of the table is a female figure in a tunic with hair pulled back, holding a triangular object in her left hand (interpreted by Fernández Fuster as a cloth or napkin, though it could also be a small pouch). The servant is not on an equal plane with the seated woman and is smaller, perhaps a reflection of her lower social place. In this scene, the exact meaning of the action is not clear.

Two more *stelai* with auxiliary figures – one each from Lara de los Infantes and Iglesia Pinta – complicate the discussion. Each example features a large crescent moon looming over the figures, with an inscription beneath them and three narrow arches in the lowest register. The visual links suggest a common model or workshop. In the Iglesia Pinta *stèle* (B.30), a woman sits on a high-backed *sella* at the right of the scene, wearing a long tunic and facing left (figure 6.5). Whereas Fernández Fuster identifies the figure as masculine, the garment, hairstyle and inscription (to Ambata Caelica) are ‘feminine’. The figure hoists a cup in her right hand. There is a *mensa tripes* in front of her but nothing on it, though the double thickness of the round top may be understood as a tray. Across the table are two male figures, distinguished by bare legs and broad shoulders. One man is significantly smaller, and he holds a flat, round object in his left hand. The taller man behind him holds a longer object in his right hand, resembling a vessel or bottle. The inscription does not yield clues to the identity of these men. They might be servants or kinsmen (husband and son?) bringing offerings to the female figure. Her separation from the world of the living is symbolised by displacement behind the *mensa tripes*. The tabletop is empty and awaits the offerings being brought by the two male figures.

In the related *stèle* from Lara de los Infantes (B.84), a female figure sits on a chair on the right, facing left and hoisting a cup (figure 6.6). She wears a tunic of medium length (mid-calf) and the typical ‘sartén’ hairstyle. There is a *mensa tripes* in front of her, although the poor state of preservation makes difficult a close reading of the objects on it. They appear to be a vessel and possibly a *paterna*. Over the table is a large crescent moon. Across the table is a second woman, wearing a long tunic and holding a vessel in her right hand, reaching out with her left arm.

Discoïd elements

Whilst the figural scenes are shallow-cut and often rough in the physical details, the discoïd element typically is richly embellished and skilfully executed (figure 6.7). The contrast between sophisticated geometric symbol and primitive human figures is striking. Some Hispano-Roman stonecutters were able to render human forms harmoniously,⁴ but mastery of proportions, gesture and expression did not find its way into the workshops of Lara de los Infantes.

Marco Simón's study classifies eleven categories of elaborate rosettes, suns, and wheels that suggest specialisation. It is beyond the scope of this essay to describe every classification of discoïd object, but a few caveats about symbolism will be discussed. The lunar crescent was in use throughout the Celtic world, often associated with the visual vocabulary of death as a symbol of the Hereafter, and scholars generally attach astral symbols to Celtic religious custom.⁵ But, as mentioned above, information on Celtic religious beliefs is scant, and where the Greek and Roman ethnographers comment on such matters it is often to illustrate the primitive superstitions of non-Romans. Discoïd elements were used widely among the Celtic-speaking peoples of Western Europe, and were incorporated in the iconography of Celtiberia as a popular feature on *stelai*.

Chronology

Traditional methods of dating sculptural reliefs (dress, hairstyles, drillwork, and archaeological context) are not always helpful in the case of the Lara de los Infantes *stelai*. The figural scenes are highly schematic and do not comfortably fit into the chronology of metropolitan Roman representational art. The carving techniques reveal only that local workshops continued to produce shallow-relief works with geometric discoïd designs. Since the objects were found as recycled construction materials and cannot be identified with specific burial sites, there are no *in situ* objects that might inform the inquiry. This leaves the epitaphs as the most reliable key to dating. Based on the use of the formulae DM and FC, and on the appearance of certain Latin and Latinised names, it is safe to conclude that the objects were produced in the late 1st to late 2nd century, with an apogee in the mid-2nd century. This is a large period of time, but precise dates are ultimately irrelevant because the chief concern is to fit the objects into the broader framework of Hispano-Roman culture in north central Spain.

⁴ See examples in Trillmich, Hauschild, Blech *et al.* 1993.

III. Interpreting the iconography

The women's *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes present the female figure in a pacific, but not passive, role, seated in a high-backed chair and occupying much of the centre of the frieze. Veiled and heavily robed, the figures are sexually neutral and modestly dressed. They are always approached, never approaching; it is left to the viewer to decide whether the second or third figure is beckoned by the seated female figure or comes of his or her own accord. In scenes in which the standing figure is much smaller than the seated figure, and therefore probably a servant, we can conclude that the social level of the deceased was relatively high, since only the élite were in a position to keep servants. In many respects, the iconography follows the traditional Roman thinking about ideal feminine virtues: *pudicitia*, *castitas*, *modestia*. The Greek and Latin authors describe Celtiberian women as tough and unfeminine, contrasting them with the civilised lifestyles of the Romans. The classical authors have it that Celtiberian women perform menial tasks, give birth while working in the fields, and kill or even eat their children in time of war (Strabo 3.4.17). Against these characterisations we must weigh the evidence from the tombstones, which commemorate them in non-aggressive, civilised scenes of ritual dining or grooming.

There is no evidence of another figural theme that was used in as many instances for women as was the seated-at-table motif. Popular themes for men were war and hunting – typically showing a male figure on horseback with a short sword or spear. The men's funerary monuments feature energetic scenes that communicate courage and heroism. Although some scholars call the women's *stelai* 'heroising,' there is nothing in the actual reliefs to indicate this. Arguments supporting the interpretation of the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* as heroising or heroic tend to rest on the presence of the round object held by the female figure, which becomes a *corona* to suit the supposedly heroic setting. This interpretation is derived from funerary banquet scenes on commemorative monuments in Asia Minor and Greece, in which the deceased is presented crowned, seated on a draped chair or rock, next to a tree with a snake wound around the trunk (Pfuhl and Möbius 1977-79, Tafelband I, Tafeln 799, 809, 817). The difference is there is literary and archaeological evidence of heroising cults in the Greek world, whereas no such evidence exists for Celtiberia or the larger region of northern central Iberia.

Do the reliefs present a 'funerary banquet'? This question will be answered by way of a discussion of the history of the banquet iconography, and by way of comparisons with the so-

⁵For lunar symbols connoting death: Curchin 1991, 157; Marco Simón 1988, 171-177. For the sun and other astral elements as symbols of death and renewal: Blázquez 1983, 269-70; Green 1989.

called banquet motif in other periods and regions. Regardless of whether the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* present a 'funerary banquet' in its classic formulation, the association of female figures with drinking and dining has profound implications for how we understand the social position of women in Celtiberia.

The funerary banquet in the classical world

Jean-Marie Dentzer identifies a specific combination of furniture, crockery, and figural poses that comprise a recognisable funerary banquet motif (Dentzer 1982). This banquet motif was used on a range of objects in the ancient Mediterranean world, including ceramic vessels, terracotta figurines, votive plaques, architectural décor and commemorative reliefs. The motif took on diverse functions, and would have evoked episodes from the deceased's life or from myth, narrative scenes or motifs of a more decorative character, cult scenes or genre scenes. So myriad were the manifestations of the banquet motif, Dentzer argues, that the range of examples 'pourrait faire douter que l'on puisse lui attacher une signification constante' ('could lead one to doubt that one could attach a constant significance to it') (Dentzer 1982, 562).

Dentzer's work traces the development of funerary banquet iconography in 7th century BC Assyrian royal reliefs, a visual vocabulary that was, he says, eventually adopted by the Greeks. The Pythagoreans, who espoused the notion of life after death, perhaps helped to spread the idea that proper food and drink was necessary for the journey into the world of the dead. Dionysiac and other cult banquets may have influenced private citizens' choices when it came to funerary reliefs, though not all those commemorated were members of a cult. From Greece, Dentzer argues, the funerary banquet iconography moved into Sicily, then into the Etruscan and Roman worlds (Dentzer 1971).

In funerary monuments set up in Greece or Italy, reliefs with banquet scenes included a *kline*, small table, and offerings (drinking vessel or *rhyton*) (figures 6.8 and 6.9). Figures were often presented wearing classically styled drapery, with a reclining man propped up on his left elbow. The women's *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes include the *mensa tripes* and offerings, and the Latin epitaphs betray Roman influence. Yet the *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes deviate from the classical norm – that is, from Dentzer's formulaic funerary banquet motif – in several ways. First, the seated female figures do not wear Roman drapery but are depicted in regionally specific clothing and veils. The male figures, too, wear local garb; in their case, short tunics end above the knee. Second, the women sit alone, unaccompanied by husband or children. In the Greek and Roman world, the inclusion of children and male kin in a funerary relief presenting a seated woman enhanced the memory of the woman as a dutiful and respectable daughter, wife and

mother. Third, there is no attempt at individualisation of facial features or even the clear and accurate rendering of facial features (if they were painted on, no trace remains). Fourth, the prominent placement of discoids, animals, moons, and stars, reminds the viewer that local visual vocabulary was combined with Greek or Roman, non-Celtiberian images.

There was no artistic tradition among the Celtiberian tribes that included anything like the funerary banquet. Pre-Roman gravestones tended to be round at the top and decorated with astral elements and geometric designs. Much simpler blocks of worked limestone, without human figures, were the norm in Iron Age cemeteries (Argente Oliver *et al.* 1989, 533). In the early 1st century AD, small funerary urns in the form of a house were in use among the people who lived in the *Conventus Cluniensis* and the *Conventus Caesaraugustanus* (figure 6.10) (Abásolo, Albertos and Elorza 1975). Reliefs found in Galicia and northern Lusitania, where a form of Celtic culture remained firmly entrenched, parallel *stelai* from the *Conventus Cluniensis* with respect to the figural format (especially horsemen), symbols and discoid designs (Camón Aznar 1954, 763).

The archaeological record contains no *stelai* from north-central Spain that feature men and women reclining at a banquet – an important point, because the act of reclining was symbolically and politically charged in the Greco-Roman world. Eating and drinking whilst reclined distinguished respectable men from barbarians and slaves (Booth 1991, 106). Throughout the classical world, men were commemorated reclining on a *kline* at a feast, sometimes with a woman seated in a chair near their feet. The *stelai* reliefs from Lara de los Infantes are among the few known examples of women seated alone at a three-legged table, unaccompanied by children or husband. (Some reliefs in Dacia also carry this format, though unlike the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* they do not adhere to a standard model: *l.c.* Bianchi 1975.) Scenes that can be said to be of the funerary banquet motif type, with their characteristic *mensa tripes*, reclining figure, and drinking vessels, appeared on commemorative monuments and in tomb paintings further south in Roman Spain. For example, the Tumba del Banquete Funerario at Carmona (Seville) features a wall painting that shows reclining banqueters. The Tumba del Elefante, a large tomb with a *columbarium*, was fitted with stone *kline* (still *in situ*). Both tombs date to the early 1st century AD (Bendala Galán 1976, figs. 14 and 70). It is noteworthy that in these examples, the figures recline rather than sit, suggesting a different source of influence and a different message associated with the women's *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes (figure 6.11).

Something different is suggested by the fact that female figures in the Celtiberian region were not presented reclining. The image of seated, rather than reclined, dining should not, *contra* Strabo and Pliny, be understood as evidence of cultural impropriety or barbarism in local eating practices. Perhaps the residents of Lara de los Infantes came into contact with more traditional

reclined scenes from coastal Tarraconensis or southern Baetica, but rejected the pose because it did not represent actual local custom. Moreover, if Celtiberians were familiar only with scenes in which male figures recline and female figures sit upright, they may have extracted from the iconography what they considered an acceptable female representation.

The *stelai* reliefs illustrate a confluence of cultural practices, prompting questions about how the visual language of the banquet motif came to the *Conventus Cluniensis*. If Celtiberians did not have a pre-Roman tradition of commemorating themselves at funerary banquets, what led them to use the motif in Lara de los Infantes and its environs? Some scholars believe that artistic ideas moved with soldiers, and that members of various legions were responsible for the diffusion of the funerary banquet motif in Celtiberia. Research by Middleton demonstrates that Roman soldiers were often responsible for the transport and diffusion of cultural ideas and practices. He writes: 'The Roman army was not only the tool which created the empire, it was also an important agent in transmitting the Roman way of life to the provinces. This took place not simply by example, through building programmes, veteran colonies and so on, but also by the creation of networks of contact which resulted in the interplay of Roman and Native groups' (Middleton 1983, 75). Similarly, Fernández Fuster proposes that soldiers in the *legio VII Gemina*, stationed in northern Iberia, learnt the banquet iconography from the *legio XV Apollinaris*, with whom they had contact in Pannonia (Fernández Fuster 1954). Bianchi noted a parallel between funerary banquet reliefs found in Macedonia and those found in Pannonia, and argued that the *legio V Macedonica* first brought the iconography to Dacia, where it was in turn passed on to the *legio XV Apollinaris*. Bianchi writes:

Per quanto concerne la cronologia complessiva della serie, la predilezione per un maggior numero di banchettanti sembra qui un fenomeno non anteriore all'avanzato II secolo, e parallelo, forse, ad una maggiore popolarità conseguita nella zona dal banchetto stesso con l'arrivo a Potaissa della *Legio V Macedonica* (1974, 177-8).

As far as the complete chronology of the series is concerned, the predilection for a greater number of banqueters seems to be a phenomenon [that came about] not earlier than the beginning of the 2nd century [AD], and at the same time, perhaps, a greater popularity [of the banquet motif] came about in the same zone with

Food, feasting, and female figures

There is much about the iconography of the Lara de los Infantes reliefs that is unclear. Questions concerning the origins of the motif, the function of the objects on the table, and the role of the auxiliary figures, cannot be answered by the amount of information we possess. Regardless of the precise identification of the objects, the combination of chair and *mensa tripes* was a classic visual signifier of feast or banquet. It is not clear in every case that the figure is partaking of food and drink. In some of the examples – say, the *stèle* dedicated to Optatlia Festa (figure 6.2) – the inclusion of a mirror strongly suggests that the figure is seated at her toilette rather than at a banquet. Nor is it clear that Celtiberian viewers and patrons looked at the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* and saw a funerary banquet in the Greek or Etruscan sense, imbued with heroic and otherworldly properties. My argument is that Celtiberians were first introduced to this visual motif through funerary banquet iconography from the Greco-Roman world, that the original meaning of the motif in its Celtiberian setting was feasting, and that its meaning was probably changed over time and distance as variations on the theme were introduced. What *is* clear is that the motif was chosen, again and again, to commemorate women because it had social and symbolic importance. One aspect of the symbolic importance of this motif, rooted as it is in the iconography of banqueting, is food.

Food, due to its centrality in life and the obvious possibilities for differentiated allocation, is an important social medium of signification (Goody 1982; Lévi-Strauss 1970; Sørensen 2000). Food is a nutritional necessity and therefore an unavoidable issue, and it is also political and ideological, imbued with symbolic importance (Sørensen 2000, 107). Archaeology has mainly focused upon food as a resource, and on production practices and physiological requirements of food. In a study of cultural identity and social practices, it is more beneficial to concentrate on the social and ideological dimensions of food – an approach taken in recent works by C.A. Hastorf (1991; 1998) and Sørensen (2000). The social importance of food includes the power relations involved in the production and consumption of it.

The female figures on the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* are presented at a table with receptacles for food and drink. These tools and equipment are the necessary instruments for producing, serving, and eating food. By depicting the figures at a special table with specific culinary equipment, the makers of the *stelai* are communicating to viewers that these figures have access to differentiated meals – that is, a feast distinguished from meals consumed by ordinary individuals. In the case of the *stelai* reliefs, the meal is differentiated by its presentation, with the plate and liquid vessel recurring consistently. The meal is differentiated by its production, since it

is strongly implied that persons of lesser stature were responsible for the preparation; the difference in figures' size may be an important distinction between those serving and those being served. Finally, the *stela* meal is differentiated by its consumption, as the female figures adhere to a dress code, are seated alone, and are configured in the realm of funerary iconography.

These *stelai* are the first and only iconographic evidence we have of ritual meals in Celtiberia. That they are ritualised is made clear by the makers' and patrons' steadfast adherence to certain elements of the motif: the three-legged table, vessel for liquid, round, flat object, solitude of the figure, and costume. In those *stelai* where the table accessories deviate from the norm, enough of the other visual components are in place that we can confidently place the reliefs in the category of 'banquet *stelai*'. If makers and patrons wanted to break from the standard relief and present the female figure in a completely different context – for example, at her toilette – a different set of non-banquet furniture, accessories, and costume would have been used (as is the case with the female figure at the loom). In choosing food and wine utensils, the *mensa tripes*, and other components of Greco-Roman feast iconography, the makers and patrons advertise and certain lifestyle and social rank for the women commemorated by the Lara de los Infantes reliefs.

As Sørensen suggests, performance theory is relevant to an analysis of the social importance of food, since 'food is consumed both through daily enactments of difference, dependencies, and evaluation, and is also used conspicuously, and thus plays significant roles in highly ritualized activities in which membership and status are defined, initiated, confirmed or challenged (Sørensen 2000, 107).' In ancient Sparta, for example, the common mess-tables, comprising approximately fifteen members each, were recognised social institutions. The mess-tables facilitated friendship and cooperation (each member had to contribute to the meal), reinforced military loyalty, and clearly demarcated citizenship (those excluded from a mess-table, even if for financial reasons, were excluded from political and military life at Sparta) (Aristotle, *Politics* Book II, Section 9; Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 12.1 – 7). Closer to Celtiberia, the centrality of feasts to social and political life in Celtic-speaking societies has been amply researched. Dietler comments on the 'full politico-symbolic potential of food and drink':

Feasts are public rituals of commensal consumption that serve as arenas of politico-symbolic drama in which idealised representations of social relations are constructed and reproduced at the same time that individuals compete for power and the relative definition of their status within that perceived structure. [...] The power of feasts as a form of ritual activity derives from the fact that food and drink

serves as the medium of expression and commensal hospitality constitutes the syntax in the context of a ritual of consumption, which is a pre-eminently political activity (Dietler 1995, 97).

Similarly, Bernard Bouloumié, using evidence from 'princely tombs' in Germany and Gaul, argues that objects associated with storing and consuming wine 'se révèle l'apparition d'une classe sociale dominante, caractérisée par la richesse et par le contrôle de la vie économique' (Bouloumié 1988).

Therefore, food is important because the manner of its consumption has bearing on an individual's identity and membership. The Celtiberian evidence does not allow us to conclude with certainty that group feasting was an important part of public life, or that it occurred frequently, or at all. Archaeological signs of feasting, such as mounting quantities of amphorae and drinking cups, specialised table wares, and a corresponding gradual decline in other arenas of status representation and political competition (Dietler 1996), are not present in Celtiberia. We do know that Celtiberian society was stratified, that hospitality was a key feature of Celtiberian societies, and that communal drinking played a central role in the expression and experience of hospitality. We also know that wine was consumed in Celtiberian settlements as early as the last quarter of the 2nd century BC (Cerdeño, Sanmartí, and García Huerta 1999, 289), and that it probably came to the region even earlier than that, since wine was a standard part of Roman soldiers' rations (Appian, *Spanish Wars* 54; Pliny, *NH* 14.91). The female figures on the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* are thus part of an ordered, ritualised, individual meal, in a motif that alludes to Greco-Roman banquets and wine. Although the *stelai* figures are not part of a communal feast or communal drinking bout, they are members of a dining club of the dead.

Food is often involved in marking rites of passage, changes in seasons, and social events. The ritual use of food is a central arena for the social construction of identities (Sørensen 2000, 104). The rite of passage represented by the meal in the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* is death. That the motif occurs only on funerary monuments strongly suggests a link with commemorative practices. This does not mean that Celtiberians necessarily conducted an actual banquet feast at the site of the burial or inhumation, or that they included foodstuffs and drink in the grave. Celtiberians living in and around the town at Lara de los Infantes chose to commemorate their wives and daughters seated at a table laden with vessels, because it had meaning in their value system. There are many messages in the motifs, including that the female figures are associated with elevated class status and have access to special food, drink, dress and service, but all of these messages must be seen in the general context of death and remembrance.

Dress

Dress is a central medium for the acquiring of socially ascribed identities and the communication of them (Sørensen 1997). Uniforms, for example, are standardised appearances that are socially acknowledged to represent certain positions and the duties and rights that come with them. Everyday clothing that is differentiated from others' clothing, can serve as a marker of social differentiation. A Roman man wore his toga *capite velato*, for example, when participating (or about to participate) in a religious activity. A Roman woman took on the *stola* as a marker of her married status and privileged class. Clothing can mark a rite of passage, as in the case of the *toga praetexta* for Roman citizen boys of a certain age, or the assumption of the veil by teenage girls in modern Muslim communities. Dress was just as important in the Greek world as in the Roman, with the *himation* the costume *de rigueur* of adult male citizens, and the *peplos* the dress of respectable women from the 5th century BC. Moreover, extraordinary garments, such as the snaky aegis of Athena and the lion's skin of Herakles, carried powerful connotations of special status and were often associated with a special individual. Today, the colleges of Oxford express rank within the academic community through a range of black gowns: undergraduates wear a lightweight, sleeveless, knee-length gown, and those at the top of the academic hierarchy wear a heavy, full-length gown, often embellished with hood, billowing sleeves, and stripes on the arm depending on the degree earned by the wearer.

Wearing the toga, *stola*, *toga praetexta*, and so forth, was a right to be gained, and in gaining it the wearer earned membership in the group represented by that garment. Wearing a certain type of clothing, in other words, can be a way to express visually membership in a social or political group. Thus, appearance can be used to identify people – an act taken to its fullest capacity in the theatre, where masks and costumes play a central role in identifying the characters in terms of age, gender, and background. Personal adornments such as jewellery (*e.g.* wedding rings) and headgear (*e.g.* the yarmulke) also play a role in constructing cultural identity.

Dress is a primary means by which gender roles are clarified and distinguished. This can mean both that males are distinguished from females by what they wear (children learn very young that boys do not wear pink frills and girls do not wear football shirts), and that within the sex members are distinguished from each other (married women from single girls, for example). The research on the construction of gender roles through dress and overall appearance is extensive, and numerous theories have been formulated to assist in the analysis and interpretation of gender-coded costume (Eicher and Roach-Higgins 1992; Kaiser 1983-84; Schwarz 1979;

Sørensen 1997, 2000; Treherne 1995). These theories are relevant to our analysis of the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* because the female figures on the *stelai* wear special clothing that distinguishes them from male figures as well as from other female figures. Only the seated female figure wears the long garment and elaborate headgear; auxiliary figures, including standing females, wear different, simpler, clothing. The female figures on the *stelai* differ radically in appearance from the male figures on the coins as well as on the men's *stelai*: the male figures presented on horseback or on foot wear a knee-length tunic, often with armaments including a helmet, breastplate, and greaves. Since dress communicates specific social identities (Sørensen 1997, 93), we can look for social identities represented by these costumes. In the case of the male figures, dress clearly communicates the roles of warrior and hunter, and (probably) elite status. These roles are clearly communicated because there is ample evidence from Celtiberia, as well as from other times and regions, to support the idea that armaments and weapons were/are associated with fighting and hunting. These roles are further clarified by the context of the figures, particularly in those instances where a figure is engaged in fighting or hunting. What roles the female figures on the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* communicate, and what cultural identities are expressed by the figures' clothing, are more difficult to determine.

Any individual has many overlapping identities and whether she feels best described by her age, sex, religion, profession, family name, or nationality, will depend on a number of variables affected by context and company. The surviving images of female figures from Lara de los Infantes provide us with a glimpse of a few types of costume: the standard image from the 'banquet' *stelai* (elaborate headdress, long garment); the veil and fancy dress worn on the female figure painted onto the pot from Numancia; the veil, long belted garment, and apron worn by the ceramic figure from Numancia; and, the long tunic worn by the auxiliary figure on the *stela* dedicated to Pompeia Flacilla (figure 6.3).⁶ The painted figure on the ceramic vessel from Numancia, which was discussed thoroughly in chapter 3, is visible from the waist up. She wears a high-necked garment cinched at the waist by a thick belt decorated with a lattice pattern. The sleeves of her garment end just above the elbow in a stack of bracelets, or heavily stitched cuffs. Over each breast is a sunburst symbol of concentric circles and radiating lines. On her head she wears a veil, held in place by a tightly fitting cap under which the hair is tucked, framing the forehead in a heart shape (Lorrio 1997, 331).

The ceramic figurine from Numancia is presented in a long garment with a thick belt at the waist, long apron (well past the knees), sash hanging at the back from the belt, and headdress.

The figure's neckline is embellished with two bands of fabric or jewellery, fanning from shoulder to shoulder along the sternum. Her veil hangs from the top of the head to the shoulders, covering all of her hair. The feet and arms are missing, so no comments can be made about footwear or sleeves (Wattenberg 1963).

The auxiliary figure on the *stèle* dedicated to Pompeia Flacilla wears a long tunic with her hair tied back or tucked underneath a scarf or veil; the abstract rendering of the figures impedes a more exact description. Finally, the seated female figures on the Lara de los Infantes *stelai* tend to wear the 'sartén' headdress, long garment, and (in a few cases) heeled shoes (figures 6.1, 6.2).

What observations can be made about female dress in Celtiberia, based on these objects? Most striking is the treatment of the hair. None of the figures has hair that is worn loose or long. The veils of the ceramic figures, and special headdress of the *stelai* figures, suggests that the preference was for Celtiberian women to cover or pull back their hair. That the auxiliary female figure in the *stèle* to Pompeia Flacilla, presumably a servant, wears her hair covered or back, too, indicates that this was an aspect of female appearance that was not limited to rarefied social groups or ritualised settings. Perhaps Strabo's report, that the women of Celtiberia strip their hair along the forehead to make the forehead shine, has credence (Strabo, 3.4.17). Where the seated figure has striations along her head in addition to the 'sartén' (e.g. figure 6.2), it seems likely that the hair has been treated in a special way, perhaps plaiting or some other form of styling.

Covering the body was also, evidently, an important aspect of Celtiberian female appearance. Whereas male figures sport short-sleeved, knee-length tunics, female figures do not show bare legs and do not seem to show bare arms (at least, not above the elbow). Female bodies were modestly covered, then, but not necessarily plainly covered: the painted figure on the vessel from Numancia, as well as the ceramic figurine from Numancia, present elaborate female dress with decorative details and jewellery. Both figures have breasts that are clearly signified, so the modest aspect of female dress did not extend to the denial of sexed body parts.

Female figures in Celtiberian visual media were not presented wearing body armour or holding weapons, and they were not presented in helmets. This is an obvious point, but one worth emphasising because their dissociation from armour and weapons suggests non-aggressive social roles for women. Female and male figures were differentiated by dress. Veils and long tunics were acceptable for women but not men, short tunics and armaments for men but not women. This fact has significance for how we interpret the social roles of men and women in Celtiberia. Male figures, as I stated earlier, and by extension, men, were associated with fighting and hunting

⁶ I am excluding from this discussion the figures engaged in the ritual on the vase fragment from Numancia (figure 3.8). Although I raised the possibility that these figures are female, their sex is not, in the end, able

by means of their appearance. Their dress is constructed in such a way that men were seen to occupy the roles of protectors, providers, and dynamic leaders. Female figures, and by extension, women, were associated with domestic, pacific roles. Their long garments were unsuited to horseback riding, fighting, or working in heavy industry. Actual Celtiberian women may not have dressed this way, everyday or at all, but the choice to represent them visually in this garb points to societal idealisation of the female gender role. The female gender role in Celtiberia was expressed through a well-covered body, specially treated (sometimes invisible) hair, and jewellery.

Gender identity will have been only one aspect of a given Celtiberian woman's cultural identity. In order to understand the range of social roles and identities among Celtiberian women, we must study their names and family links.

IV. What the names say

Architecture and art give an idea of the impact of Roman practices on the physical terrain, but, as Katherine Lomas writes, 'One of the more slippery variables in any study of ethnic and cultural change is the process of change in the linguistic and onomastic history of a region' (Lomas 2000). Like all areas under the Roman Empire, Tarraconensis was multilingual by nature, and the way in which the indigenous languages thrived varied widely from settlement to settlement. The discovery in Lara de los Infantes of a late 1st century BC *stelai* inscribed with non-Latin letters indicates some measure of survival of the Celtiberian tongue in what was increasingly a Latin-dominated environment. As Lomas observes, 'Closely linked to [linguistic development] is the survival of non-Roman names and patterns of structuring names, which on the surface seems to be an ideal means of getting insight into the problematic issue of the interface between ethnic background and cultural identity' (Lomas 2000). The inscriptional evidence from the Lara de los Infantes *stelai*, however, indicates that nomenclature does not necessarily provide easy answers to the question of cultural identity.

In northern Tarraconensis, nearly 900 Roman inscriptions have been discovered. They demonstrate that during the late Republic and early Augustan eras, Latin names were common in major centres (especially in coastal cities and near military forts such as Legio and Clunia), whereas in smaller towns, they came into use later (Keay 1988, 73). By the early 1st century AD on the eastern coast of Tarraconensis, there is evidence for purely Latin names among the emerging Hispano-Roman aristocracy, who profited from Rome's desire for high-quality Spanish

to be determined with certainty.

goods. They fully participated in the public life of the towns and the empire as a whole, leaving their names on the amphitheatres and temples they financed. In Lara de los Infantes, information about names comes primarily from *stelai*. Of the *stelai* recovered from Lara de los Infantes, all have (or had) inscriptions on the front, and all use Latin letters. In sum, seventeen *stelai* have legible epitaphs, and within this group ten feature names of the deceased or kin (usually the deceased's father, occasionally her husband) that can be considered Latin in origin (B.72, B.73, B.74, B.75, B.76, B.79, B.81, B.83, B.84, B.99). Thirteen *stelai* bear names that are classified as having an indigenous root, but that have been Latinised by a Latin-sounding ending (B.73, B.75, B.76, B.78, B.79, B.81, B.84, B.86, B.87, B.92, B.93, B.94, B.95). In addition, two damaged epitaphs use letters that suggest they originally spelt indigenous names.⁷

More interesting are the combinations of indigenous and Latin names, since they shed light on the interplay of identities within the same family. In five cases, all of the names – referring to the deceased as well as any kin – are of indigenous origin (B. 81, B.87, B.91, B.92, B.93). In four cases a commemorative has an indigenous *nomen* and *cognomen*, but is related to a father with a Latin name (B.75, B.76, B.79, B.86). In four cases, all cited individuals have fully Latin names (B.72, B.74, B.80, B.83). Three unusual cases remain. *Stele* B.73 commemorates a woman with indigenous *nomen* (Arcea) and *cognomen* (Auca), but her father has an indigenous *nomen* (Ambatus) and a Latin *cognomen* (Terentius). In the case of *stela* B.78, the deceased bears indigenous names (Ambata Aionca), her father has an indigenous name (Lougei), but her husband has a Latin name (Satelius). A final example shows the deceased with an indigenous name (Arcea) and her father with a Latin *nomen* (Marcus) and an indigenous *cognomen* (Ambatus) (B.99).⁸

The mixing of indigenous with Latin names in the same family, a generation apart, prompts questions about self- and family-identity in this area of Tarraconensis. One interesting phenomenon – intriguing because it seems to be a step away from what is normally considered a Roman identity – was the bestowal of indigenous names upon children by fathers whose names were Latin. Marco Simón notes that out of fifteen documented instances of this practice, from the *Conventus Cluniensis*, only six involve sons. He argues that there was a revival of indigenous names among the Hispano-Roman population during the reign of Caracalla, who had offered citizenship to the residents of the provinces (Marco Simón 1978, 75). However, he writes of ‘el renacimiento de la antroponimia indígena’ (‘the rebirth of the indigenous family name’) when, as

⁷ Completing B.85 as (Am)BA(ta) and B.91 as DOVIDO(na).

⁸ All information on names comes from Marco Simón's catalogue of epitaphs and list of names (Marco Simón 1978, ‘Índice onomástico,’ 227-39). I have excluded from the discussion those *stelai* with damaged inscriptions that are beyond discernment (B.84, B.85, B.89, B.90, B.94).

far as women were concerned, it appears that there was never a decline in the use of indigenous family names in the first place. In the majority of the inscriptions, from Lara de los Infantes as well as from neighbouring towns in the Arevaci ambit, women's monuments bear fully indigenous names. Apparently, Celtiberian women were slower to adopt Latin and Latinised names than were men.

Marco Simón's argument – that there was a renewed interest in indigenous names during the 3rd century AD – has implications for how we might understand the state of 'Romanitas' among the Celtiberians. Acquiring citizenship opened up new civic and social avenues, but may also have prompted the descendants of the Celtiberian tribes to reiterate their long-standing affiliation with the land. Bestowing indigenous names on a person became a way of connecting with one's ethnic roots, predicated on Roman self-identity having strengthened to such a degree that the people felt secure enough to re-introduce traditional names. Nevertheless, the relative infrequency of this practice for male offspring hints at concern on the part of the parents that a Celtiberian name would limit the boy's chances at political or economic advancement. Marco Simón observes that since women played no official public role, they could carry ethnically symbolic nomenclature without political disadvantage. Nevertheless, the overwhelming evidence from imperial Tarraconensis proves that names were increasingly Latinised as the years progressed. Marco Simón's catalogue features fifteen examples of 'revived' indigenous names, out of a total of 312 epitaphs (0.048%). This is not enough to make generalisations about supposed ethnic nostalgia among the Hispano-Romans.

More can be gleaned from the specifics of dedicatees' names. In all instances in which the epitaph is legible, she is identified with two names – *nomen* and *cognomen*. Iiro Kajanto's study of Latin *cognomina* from Italy indicates that their use was originally restricted to the *domi nobiles*, not spreading among *liberti* and *ingenui* until around 100 BC. Women are the clear minority in *cognomina* lists, probably because they began to bear the second name much later than men (Kajanto 1965, 19 and 29). Mika Kajava interprets this situation as evidence of women's 'inferior position in Roman law and society' (Kajava 1994, 29). Kajava's study of women's *praenomina* indicates that the majority of Roman women were known by just a *nomen* and *cognomen*, the latter usually added on at marriage. Of the women identified in written evidence from early imperial Italy, 40% are mentioned in conjunction with the father's name in the genitive case (not always with F[ilia]).

Burillo Mozota's study of nomenclature in the Astur-Cantabrian zone (north central Spain) reveals that well into the 2nd century AD, individuals were identified with the personal name as a genitive plural, corresponding to the group to which s/he belonged. This was frequently

followed by the name of the father in the genitive (Burillo Mozota 1988, 185). He concludes that the *gentilitates* carried connotations of territorial identity and a distinctly non-Roman titular tradition. Indigenous *gentilitates* are not included in the epitaphs on the Lara de los Infantes *stelai*, setting them closer to the Roman end of the cultural spectrum. Several indigenous names occur more than once: there are eight instances of AMBATA, four of ARCEA, three of AIONCA, and two each of AIA and COMEA. Each of these is documented in other types of *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes, but more interesting is their appearance in neighbouring towns. AMBATA is found on two banquet *stelai*, one from San Pedro de Arlanza (B.238) and one from Iglesia Pinta (B.30). AIONCA recurs as a dittonym in Tondesalas (B.24). Perhaps this indicates women having moved from Lara de los Infantes, married men from other towns, and taken with them the commemorative conventions of their kinfolk.

It is significant that even those names identified as indigenous at root, conform to Latin grammatical conventions in case endings. Most of the epitaphs identify the dedicatee in the dative singular in two names – a *nomen* and a family *cognomen*. These names are then followed by the genitive form of a masculine name (patronym) plus F(ilia); or, less commonly, a gamonym plus VXOR. The text can at times be difficult to decipher:

AMBATAE · AI
ONCAE · T
TI · F · / AN · LV
PATERN... / MATRI
F · C

Evidently, the stone (B.79) was set up in honor of Ambata Aionca, daughter of Titus, who lived to be fifty-five. Both ‘Ambata’ and ‘Aionca’ are of indigenous origin, and the two appear together in three epitaphs (B.78, B.79, B.92) from Lara de los Infantes. While AMBATA can occur as a *nomen* for women (B.63, B.68, B.78, B.79, B.87, B.92, B.113, B.150) or men (masculine AMBATVS, B.63, B.73, B.87, B.99, B.125, B.149), AIONCA is only used as a *cognomen* and only in connection with AMBATA. PATERN... is probably Paternus, a name of Latin origin occurring on five *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes, and in eight other epitaphs from around the region (Marco Simón 1978, 237). MATRI is a bit more ambiguous. ‘Matria’ is attested as a *cognomen*, occurring once in Monte Cildá, but in the Lara de los Infantes epitaph it appears that MATRI is complete, with no space after the ‘I’ for additional letters. This, I suggest, is *mater* in the dative singular, understood with PATERN(us) in the nominative singular, reading: *Paternus matri faciendum curavit* (‘Paternus saw to the doing [of the *stela*’s construction] for his mother’).

Another example reads (B.87):

AMBATA · PAESI
CA · ARGA
MONICA
AMBATI · VXOR
F · C

In this case, the dedicatee, Ambata Paesica, is named in the nominative singular. Her *nomen* is common in Lara de los Infantes, and the *cognomen* is found on one other *stela* from the region (Hontoria de la Cantera, B.21). ARGAMONICA is not attested elsewhere, but the ARC- and ARG- stems recur nine times in Marco Simón's register of Celtiberian names. Though this name takes the form of a nominative singular, it does not necessarily refer to the dedicatee; indeed, it is unlikely that she was identified with three names. Instead, ARGAMONICA could be a *communia* referring to her husband, AMBATVS, named immediately afterwards in the genitive singular. The formula F * C (*faciendum curavit*) is attested in six of seventeen examples (B.75, B.76, B.78, B.79, B.83, B.87), with one instance of H * F * C (*heres faciendum curavit*) in B.73. Ambata's age is not given, which runs contrary to common practice, since in nine of sixteen complete epitaphs, the dedicatee's years are tallied.

Unusual ligatures occur in some epitaphs, including *annorum* collapsed into one letter, A + N. The capital letter 'A' is often missing its crossbar, a convention characterizing inscriptions dated to around AD 100. DM or DMS is sometimes used, as an abbreviation for *Dis Manibus*, appearing on Roman monuments from the Flavian era until the beginning of the 2nd century (Lejeune 1988, 7). When the name of the deceased appears by itself in the dative, this hints at a convention of the late 1st – early 2nd century (according to the *RIG*). The epitaphs do not contain heartfelt eulogies or personalised touches. Rather, these are straightforward advertisements of the social status and relationship between dedicatee and dedicator.

Epitaphs are important for the information they yield on names and formulae. The mix of indigenous and Latin names shows a gradual progression of Roman influence, with the absorption of Latin names slower among women's monuments than men's. The attestation of Latin-named fathers bestowing indigenous names upon their daughters is interpreted by Marco Simón as a revival of ethnic nomenclature, but it more likely documents a gap between men's and women's respective rates of adoption of Latinised names.

V. Placing the women's *stelae* in a theoretical framework

Sex and Gender in Celtiberia

Gender is not a stable, objective identity or structure. Gender has several facets and dimensions that may be differently explored by the abilities and techniques of different disciplines. Archaeologists have the opportunity to explore gender roles and gender identity through material remains, giving 'gender' a different aspect than it would develop in the hands of, say, psychologists or sociologists.

As a structuring principle within society, gender is a fundamental element of social organisation and of identity (Conkey and Spector 1984, Sørensen 1992; 2000). For the purposes of this discussion, it is important to distinguish sex from gender. Generally, 'sex' refers to biological characteristics, in particular the reproductive capacities and genitalia of an individual. 'Gender' refers to a social and/or cultural construction. Sex identity carries its own assumptions, and is surrounded by societal conventions that affect expectations and behaviours. But the locus of social and cultural constructions, and therefore related to individual construction of self and identity, is gender.

Gender is not exclusively about women, or men, or women and men. Rather, gender is about people's relationships in terms of how societies organise themselves and how individuals understand themselves. Social constructions of male gender roles mean that men, too, are expected to take on different types of labour and participate in domestic and public life in certain ways. In previous chapters I have tried to show that Celtiberian masculinity is idealised through a set of images that present male figures as strong, courageous, young, agile, and victorious. Every Celtiberian man was not, in reality, a superhero, but male gender was configured in such a way that male identity was strongly associated with virility and aggression. Masculinity was differentiated from femininity in Celtiberia by the manner of its materialisation and by its domination of the visual and material record. Before embarking on a discussion of Celtiberian women, their self- and corporate-identity, and their social roles, it is important to emphasise that men can usefully be given the 'gender treatment', too.

Gender is a multifaceted social phenomenon made up of several components. These components are clarified in a set of categories of gender designation as follows:

1. *Gender identity* concerns an individual's own feeling of whether he or she is a woman or man (or other) regardless of genetic makeup.
2. *Gender role* describes what men and women actually do (behaviours) in specific cultural settings.

3. *Gender attribution* refers to the biological, social, and/or material criteria people of a particular social group use to identify others as males, females, or any other culturally defined gender category.

4. *Gender ideology* encompasses the meanings of male, female, masculine, feminine, sex, and reproduction in any given culture. These might include prescriptions and sanctions for appropriate male and female behaviour or cultural rationalisations and explanations for social and political relationships between males and females (Spector and Whelan 1989, 69-70).

Gender role and attribution is recoverable archaeologically in Celtiberia because gender differences were expressed in burial. Gender ideology can be examined, albeit to a limited extent, through the images on the funerary monuments with reliefs, as well as through the other iconographic sources discussed in this thesis. Gender identity on an individual level is largely untraceable, although some comments can be made about group gender identity.

One readily observable difference in the treatment of male and female images on Celtiberian funerary monuments is that male figures tend to be portrayed in combat and/or on horseback, whereas female figures tend to be seated (or serving a seated female figure). In other words, the use of female images often seems to be associated with the indoors, in a domestic setting. Male images are more often associated with the outdoors, emphasising strength and power. From this dichotomy we should not, however, draw the overly simplistic conclusion that women are portrayed as weak and passive, men as strong and active. Both sets of images are linked by *virtus*, power or culture, with the female images especially set in the context of culture and well-mannered behaviour. This reading will have implications for how we assess the social roles of Celtiberian women in the 1st century AD.

Sex differentiation in burials

Although images can reveal a great deal about social roles and gender ideals, the evidence from burials is important because it informs us as to how, if at all, women were distinguished from men in the funerary setting. Labelling a burial 'female' or 'male' based on objects alone is, however, entails a set of assumptions about how a society categorises its goods along gender lines. But without full skeletal burials, and, in most cases, a marker that includes the deceased's

gendered name, object association is our best hope of observing gender differentiation in necropoleis (Gibbs 1987; Gilchrist 1994; Sofaer-Derevenski 1997).

The Celtiberian necropolis at modern-day Padilla de Duero (Valladolid) is a well-excavated and -published site that will serve as the first case study. The necropolis, excavated from November 1985 until August 1987, covers some 70 hectares and was used from the end of the 4th century BC to the AD 1st century. Sixty-five burials have been excavated, and 80% of them were found to contain objects. The excavator, Carlos Sanz Mínguez, makes sex attributions to the burials based on the objects contained within (Sanz Mínguez 1990). He identifies a category of male burials called 'tumbas de guerrero' (warrior tombs) and defines them as burials containing objects 'characteristic of warriors': swords, scabbards, and lance points, for example. Sanz Mínguez places eleven burials in the category of 'tumbas de guerrero', and notes that in addition to containing 'goods of masculine properties,' they also contain 'masculine urns' that are larger in size than those found in the supposed women's burials.

Objects associated with women's burials are brooches (found in six burials) and other jewellery (four burials). Also diagnostic of female burials are rings, associated with smaller urns in two burials. Tools are not considered by Sanz Mínguez to possess a 'feminine property' (Sanz Mínguez 1990, 165), so Tumba 50, with its metal punches, is assigned to a man. Sex distinction is most obvious in Tumba 30, a double burial that contained a large urn surrounded by metal tools, and a smaller urn, set apart from the larger urn, surrounded by ceramic vessels. In this case, the two people are differentiated in three ways: size of urn, types of objects, and objects' material.

The conclusion from Padilla de Duero is grave deposits in the pre-Roman and early Roman period were different for women and men, with men's cremated remains placed in relatively large urns and buried with metal tools and/or weapons. Women's cremated remains were placed in relatively small urns and buried with items of jewellery or ceramic cups and other vessels. It should be noted that although urns were sometimes decorated with incised line patterns and other geometric designs, it does not seem that designs were chosen on the basis of sex. The evidence from Padilla de Duero also demonstrates that men tended to be given richer burials, with more metal objects and (in one case, Tumba 32) precious metal, than women, in whose burials were placed smaller metal pieces or ceramics only. I read this discrepancy as a reflection of men's higher social status and levels of wealth. The double burial of Tumba 30 is proof of this, in that a male-female couple was buried together and he received fine metal goods whereas she received ceramics. Ceramics, it is true, could have been valuable and highly symbolic in a funerary context, and it is possible that certain ceramics objects were imbued with significance in the Celtiberian value system but that this significance evades us today. But the superiority of

metal object to ceramic object in Iron Age societies is amply attested, and the object differentiation between men and women's burials looks very much like status discrepancy.

What should we make of the burials that contained tools as well as jewellery? This was the case at the necropolis at La Mercadera (Soria), discussed above in chapter 2 and used here as the second case study. Sex attributions have been made to the one hundred burials excavated in the necropolis, and what links all thirty-one of the so-called female burials is that each contains a bracelet or spiral adornment (earring?) (Lorrio 1990, 41 fig. 2). The forty-four burials associated with men have in common the inclusion of weapons (swords, lance points, shields, knives), certain kinds of fibulae, and tools. There remain twenty-five burials without sex attribution, some of them because they contained no objects with which to make an attribution, some because the objects within are not easily associated with a sex. It is interesting to note that four 'female' burials – tombs 47, 70, 84, and 88 – contained elements associated with both sexes: 'elementos de adorno' (feminine) as well as 'utiles' (tools) (masculine).

It is not my aim to argue against object-based sex attributions in archaeology. There are problems with this practice, and I have cited these problems, but as an approach to the bewildering array of goods at an excavation site, object-based sex attribution has its merits. My intention is to stress that Celtiberians *did* differentiate men from women in burial sites, and did so both by the types of objects they offered and the sizes of urn used. Nevertheless, the gender lines are not always clear in Celtiberian burials, and it appears likely that women as well as men could be buried with weapons and tools.

Domestic spaces

The last category of material evidence to be considered in this gender context is house remains. Relatively little evidence of how Celtiberians lived day-to-day, and in what types of structures, has been preserved. But the ruins of domestic structures from El Ceremeño, Castilmontán, and Numancia offer insight to what form Celtiberian houses took in the period prior to the Roman era.

Houses were generally long and rectangular, made of mud-brick and thatch. Mud-brick and wood walls divided a house into rooms, often one of these containing a fire pit, shelves, and permanent benches, and another containing a loom and large vessels. None of the rooms, typically, was devoted to sleeping but it is likely that sleeping mats and blankets were taken down at night and used for sleeping around the fire (see, for example, the house at Castilmontán: Arlegui 1990b). The presence of looms and large, plain vessels suggests that work – probably women's work, since women are more likely to be associated with loom weights and weaving – was

done in the house. Whereas Greek houses ensured a secluded and private women's space, Celtiberian houses seem to have contained no such arrangement.

Excavations at Numancia and El Ceremeño illustrate the arrangement of houses in urban blocks (Jimeno 1994 and Cerdeño *et al.* 1993-95, respectively). Houses abutted each other and shared thick walls, a good strategy for insulation and protection from harsh weather. The close proximity must have ensured a measure of community-mindedness since wells and woodpiles were shared, and entrance doors were tightly packed. With such an arrangement we can imagine that women were not isolated from the outside world and were able to communicate and work with other women and men from the neighbourhood (Lorrio 1997, 96-103).

Already by the 1st century BC, some Celtiberians had abandoned the indigenous rectangular house plan for more sumptuous quarters. The Casa de Likine at La Caridad de Caminreal, was a great mansion organised internally according to classic, central Italian house plans: *fauces* at the entrance, *atrium* at the centre of the house, *cubicula* surrounding the *atrium*, and a large reception room, or *tablinum*, at the back of the house, across the *atrium* from the *fauces* (Lorrio 1997, fig. 33). The elaborate floor mosaic in room one, the so-called *tablinum*, contains text in Celtiberian letters, giving the Celtiberian name of the owner of the house. From this information we know that the owner and his family were Celtiberian. The domestic space in the Casa de Likine is divided up into twenty-two rooms, and it is possible that some of these were dedicated to the women of the family. The mark of social prestige for this family was the adoption of a Roman house form, and although they brought with them indigenous names and language, they did not continue indigenous practices of household organisation. This brief look at house plans in Celtiberia suggests that the move from *oppidum*-type house to *municipium domus* meant changes in women's household activities and, along with that, changes in how women perceived themselves and were perceived.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have examined the cultural identity of Celtiberian women through a variety of sources, with emphasis on the iconography. The *stelai* from Lara de los Infantes, providing us with our largest body of visual depictions of female figures in Celtiberia, carry cultural and symbolic significance on a number of levels. The use of a *mensa tripes*, high-backed chair, and drinking vessels suggests that patrons and makers were aware of Greco-Roman banquet iconography, and chose to adapt elements of the classic 'funerary banquet' motif to their own

local tombstones. Food and drink are loaded with social and cultural importance, because they were both commodities that could be differentiated to distinguish groups within society. The formal presentation of the *stela* meal, including tools for the arrangement of food and drink, mark this is a special meal. The presentation of a female figure as seated and heavily clothed, implies that female gender ideology placed the woman in a domestic setting wearing modest dress. The hair is treated in such a way that women's hair was not worn long and loose, but was tucked underneath a veil or similar headdress. As Roman in appearance as the iconography is, however, the use of the discoid elements at the top of the *stelae* attest to continued interest in indigenous visual vocabulary.

The *stelae* also give us information on locals' names, in the form of Latin epitaphs. Analysis of these names reveals that Latin and Latinised names were progressively adopted throughout the AD 1st century, with women slower to take up such names than their fathers and husbands. The epitaphs also show that there were local families in which a member of the older generation still bore a Celtiberian name, whilst the younger members of the family had Latin or Latinised names. Such information gives us tantalising insight to the changes in self-perception and cultural identity in Celtiberia during a period of considerable social evolution. The adoption of Roman practices varied from province to province, town to town, family member to family member. The very format of the Lara de los Infantes funerary monuments – a flat slab of stone carved with an image and words and stood upright over a burial – prove that Celtiberians had taken up a classic, Greco-Roman practice of commemoration.

But the *stelae* tell us about a select group of women. These women were fortunate enough to be remembered with an individualised monument, and the images are relevant to women of high social status: decorously dressed, in a sumptuous setting and accompanied by smaller, perhaps servile, people. For a look at the social roles of women ranked lower on the class hierarchy, it is necessary to make use of the burial remains, house plans, and Greek and Latin texts. The evidence from burials indicates that men and women were differentiated in death, with men generally receiving tools, weapons, and armour made of metal, and women generally receiving metal jewellery or ceramic vessels. The house plans indicate that there was no archaeologically recoverable separation of space along gender lines, and that the wide-open spaces must have allowed women to circulate freely as they went about their work. The classical authors present a biased image of Celtiberian women. Supposedly they were hardy and could endure great pain, fighting alongside their husbands (Florus III.8; Appian, *Iber.* 74), joining in the defence of towns (Strabo, 3.4.18), and carrying out agriculture. Such reports are classic features of the 'Celtic savage' discursive portrait from Greek and Latin texts. But the texts also report that

women passed along tribal history to their children (Sallust, *Histories*, Book 6), and were allowed to inherit property (Strabo, 3.3.7). We are left with a visual image of Celtiberian women as competent, and exercising some measure of independence in the family. If men were, as the ancient sources say, often away at war, then it would have been left to Celtiberian women to continue running the settlement and carrying out the work.

The *stelai* cannot compete for technical quality with the marble portraits of women from larger cities such as Tarraco, Mérida and Itálica – but then, they did not need to because they fulfilled local needs. The women's commemorative monuments commissioned by the people of Lara de los Infantes testify to a certain level of allegiance to Roman culture, displayed in a medium that the indigenes must have seen as reflections of their cultural identity: banquet scenes on *stelai*. They pointedly did not continue to use simple house-shaped urns or plinths without figures, which are attested to in other Celtiberian regions from the same period. The combination of motif, human figures and Latin epitaphs points to self-identification as Romans. Applying theoretical models to the visual materials forms a picture of an incipient Romanness among the Celtiberian people – a continuum of culture rather than a stark 'civilised versus barbaric' dichotomy.

CONCLUSIONS

¡Qué gracia! En la Hesperia triste, promontorio occidental en este cansino rabo de Europa, por desollar, y en una ciudad Antigua, chiquita como un dedal, el hombrecillo que fuma y piensa, y ríe al pensar: ¡cayeron las altas torres; en un basurero están la corona de Guillermo la testa de Nicolás!	<i>(What a joke! In gloomy Hesperia, the westernmost promontory, this tail end of Europe that's really the limit, and in an ancient city about the size of a thimble, a little old man thinking away, smoking and chuckling, thinking: How the lofty towers have fallen, into the trash they've gone: the crown of the Caesar, the noddle of the Czar!)</i>
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– Antonio Machado, *Proverbios y cantares a José Ortega y Gasset* no. 83 (1919).

Antonio Machado's poem captures two views of the 'westernmost promontory' of the Roman Empire. On the one hand, outsiders have long tended to see the Iberian Peninsula ('Hesperia' – the Greek term used for this region) as the 'tail end of Europe' – far from the centre of action and dotted with cities the 'size of a thimble.' This 'limit' of the Empire is, nevertheless, Empire, having been subjugated by Roman forces and cultural practices. On the other hand, the local perspective provided by the 'little old man' betrays wry humour at the thought that the 'lofty towers' of Empire – *las altas torres* – have fallen. For all its pretensions to grandeur, Roman imperial power, represented by the 'crown of the Caesar' has slipped 'into the trash'. Moreover, to Machado, Spain has not been fully subjugated. The poet's reference to his country as the 'tail end of Europe' is a play on a Spanish colloquial phrase, translated 'the tail still to be flayed' (similar to 'you haven't heard the half of it yet'). To outsiders, the Iberian Peninsula is another Roman territory, its lustre faded by isolation and age. To locals, Machado suggests, the Peninsula has not yet reached its apogee; the Roman occupation was a brief moment in history. The two views crystallise the scholar's dilemma: is to speak of Celtiberian cultural identity simply to graft our own feelings about Romanness and Empire onto Celtiberians? In what follows I will draw conclusions from the various case studies presented in this thesis, and suggest some of the implications of this research.

Summary of findings

- (a) 3rd AND EARLY 2nd CENTURIES BC. In the period immediately prior to the arrival of Romans and Roman cultural practices – that is, the 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC – a distinctive Celtiberian identity was expressed linguistically, culturally, and visually. During this period, Celtiberians were at the height of their political power, and technological and artistic abilities. After centuries of absorbing people and ideas from Gaul, Britain, and southern and coastal Iberia, the region of Celtiberia had established a unique set of cultural practices that differentiated its people from the Celts and Iberians (and Celtic Iberians) of those other areas. Linguistically, Celtiberians spoke an archaic form of Celtic and wrote their words using Iberian letters (which were in turn learned from Phoenician colonists on the eastern and southern coasts of the Iberian Peninsula). There is also evidence of particular personal names restricted to Celtiberia which co-existed with other names of Indo-European origin that were more widely spread through the west and north of the Iberian Peninsula.

Whereas the linguistic evidence is helpful in delineating the probable boundaries of the Celtiberian cultural ambit, the burial record attests the diversity of people and practices within this ambit. The variety of goods found in Celtiberian burials dated to the 3rd and early 2nd centuries BC makes possible the division of Celtiberians into *populi* or tribes. The cemeteries emphasise growing social distinctions, with the appearance of aristocratic tombs containing grave goods that consist of a number of expensive objects, including bronze weapons and armour or wheel-turned pottery. Many of the valuable objects had foreign origins, testifying to the use of Celtic and Iberian elements by local élites. So-called ‘warrior tombs’ could include swords (of the antenna and *frontón* types), spearheads, shield (with a bronze or iron boss), the curved-back knife, and, occasionally, bronze disc-breastplates and helmets. Where horse harnesses are found, the people with whom they were buried can be said to have occupied a high social position. The observation of cremation and interment of the ashes in an urn, along with interment of the body in shaft graves, indicates familiarity with Celtic as well as Iberian burial practices, and the cultural acceptability among Celtiberians of using both.

Finally, a distinctive Celtiberian identity was visually expressed in this period through schematic human figures on pots and bronze and silver *fibulae* modelled on Celtic La Tène forms. Major themes for both ceramics and metal objects were fighting, hunting, and riding and training horses. Male figures seem to have been depicted much more frequently than were female figures (there is very little evidence for artistic

renderings of female figures in the Celtiberian material record), and among these male figures, martial compositions were more popular than were non-aggressive compositions (say, ploughing or seated). Presenting male figures on horseback, armed, or engaged in combat, does not, in itself, differentiate Celtiberian visual expression from the visual traditions of their regional neighbours – Celts and Iberians. What differentiates Celtiberian iconography is the total lack of realistic features, such as naturalistic anatomy and expressive facial features (something that both Gallic Celts and southern Iberians implemented in their images), and the paucity of portraits. Iberians sculpted stone into portraits of recognisable personages, but Celtiberian ateliers did not present their human figures with unique or recognisable physical features, or in still, portrait-like poses. Evidently it was important to Celtiberians to use iconography that celebrated strong, dynamic, martial male figures, though the precise identification of those figures does not seem to have been important.

- (b) MID-2nd CENTURY BC – 1ST CENTURY AD. The period stretching from the fall of Numancia (133 BC) to the Flavian period is labelled ‘Late Celtiberian’ by scholars, since this is the final phase of a set of cultural practices that can be identified as uniquely Celtiberian. This era saw great transition and change in Celtiberia, which was formally inducted into the Roman political world first as part of *Hispania Citerior*, then *Tarraconensis*, with further divisions into *conventus*. The most outstanding feature of this period is the gravitation towards Roman values and cultural practices and away from Iberian and Celtic cultures as the main source of influence in Celtiberia.

This period demonstrates a trend towards urbanisation in Celtiberia, evinced by the grouping of towns into federations (reported by the Greek and Roman authors), the relocation of *oppida* to accommodate larger populations, and the minting of coins. The construction of roads by the Romans, initially intended to connect Roman soldiers from the city of Emporion on the eastern coast with their forts in central *Tarraconensis*, had the effect of drawing native people to the settlements that were situated close to the roads. The *canabae* that sprung up around Roman forts brought Celtiberians into contact with Romans and Roman goods (including wine and oil), and led to new population centres.

The burial record associated with this period indicates that jewellery and other metallic, personal adornments were frequently included with male and female burials. On the other hand, weapons were included less frequently than they had been in previous decades, perhaps indicative of the rise of jewellery as markers of social status. Other

changes in Celtiberian society datable to this period are the introduction of coinage and the proliferation of writing on *hospitium tesserae* and large bronze plaques.

The iconography associated with Celtiberian objects underwent interesting changes in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. The continued depiction of male figures on horseback indicates that this aspect of Celtiberian cultural identity remained important. Horsemen are attested on coins and funerary monuments that were produced after the arrival of Romans, and may at first glance be taken as the seamless continuation of pre-Roman iconographic preferences. But the images of Roman Celtiberia show unmistakable signs of Roman influence. Numismatic horsemen represent a Celtiberian visual idea in a fundamentally *non*-Celtiberian medium. Thanks to the coins, for the first time in Celtiberia we see naturalistic anatomy, expressive faces, and realistic details in clothing and accessories. Over time, numismatic horsemen shed Celtiberian tunics for Roman drapery, and the obverse portrait heads change from a male figure whom we cannot identify (local ruler, hero, or deity?) to one we can: Augustus.

Men's funerary monuments prove that the changes in visual expression of Celtiberian identity were not limited to numismatic images designed by a few minting officials. Men were commemorated with upright rectangular or discoid stone slabs, often carved with images of male figures armed, on horseback, hunting, fighting, or some permutation thereof. The themes of equestrianism and martial prowess continued from the pre-Roman era, but in the context of Roman-era *stelai* they are presented very differently: the image is reduced to allow room for a sizable Latin epitaph that named the deceased and his family in formulaic Latin commemorative prose.

The women's funerary monuments that are datable to the 1st century AD present an interesting case study in local adaptation of a Greco-Roman visual theme. The image of the banquet was well known throughout the Mediterranean world, and found its way into southern Iberian tomb paintings and *stelai*. Whereas southern Iberians depicted themselves reclined, on a *kline*, with men and women together, Celtiberians took the idea of the *mensa tripes* laden with drinking vessels, and placed in front of it a seated female figure, often alone. As with the men's funerary monuments, the so-called banquet *stelai* tended to include a Latin epitaph that named the deceased's father, mother, or husband. The restriction of the banquet imagery to stone *stelai*, a relatively expensive medium, indicates that elite, rather than poor, women appropriated it.

As with the previous period in Celtiberia, if a distinct non-elite cultural identity existed, it is not traceable with the archaeological evidence that we possess.

Implications

In the aftermath of the Romans' arrival, political and cultural changes led to a significant redefinition of what it meant to be a Celtiberian. The encouragement of Roman-style towns and cities, which began after the Numantine War and reached its apogee under the Flavian emperors, resulted in new political élites, a notion of civic identity based on common citizenship, and the complete replacement of Celtiberian by Roman in public contexts. Roman political ideas also encouraged the expression of a common Celtiberian identity, since the division of the region into *conventus* grouped Celtiberians by geographical proximity, not tribal affiliation. Being Romano-Celtiberian meant possessing citizenship in one of the cities of the *conventus*, adopting Latin or Latin-sounding names, identifying oneself along Roman (kinship) rather than Celtiberian (tribal) lines, and perhaps participating in the public cults and political apparatus common to Roman cities all over the empire. The spread of a common architectural vernacular throughout the Mediterranean world brought Roman-style temples, *fora*, theatres, and villas to Celtiberia, such that pre-Roman housing styles were obliterated and permanent, monumental stone temples replaced outdoor sanctuaries. Overall these changes meant a shift in the relative position of 'Celtiberian' and 'Roman' identities from opposition to complementation, the eventual consequence of which was the participation of Celtiberians in Roman assemblies and military campaigns in other lands.

These developments have been noted elsewhere; indeed, changes in socio-economic organisation and architectural styles are often used as evidence of shifting self-perception and cultural identity. What this thesis has emphasised is the centrality of iconography to cultural identity. Seeing oneself as Celtiberian, Romano-Celtiberian, or Roman meant just that – seeing, looking at images. Images played as large a role in debates *within* local identity as they did in definitions *of* it. In other words, the images considered in this thesis do not present a single, continuous, monolithic Celtiberian identity, but a constantly changing identity that reflected individuals' and localities' coming to terms with significant social processes.

Taken as a whole, the thesis has enabled us to trace the creation of Celtiberian identity visually – especially important for a group of people that did not write its own history or record verbal expressions of its view of its culture. It has also demonstrated what the study of images can add to current debates about cultural and ethnic identity. Several general themes have run throughout: the influence of 'foreign' artistic ideas on Celtiberian objects and iconography, Celtiberians' selective adoption and adaptation of Celtic, Iberian, and Roman political, social, and commemorative ideas, and the prominence of local élites in constructing visual expressions of new identities and values.

How does this study stand within the more general discussion of culture, ethnicity, and identity? Against the position held by Spanish scholars such as Blázquez, García y Bellido, and Wattenberg, this thesis suggests that Celtiberian artists and ateliers did *not* slavishly copy Iberian, Greek, and Roman visual ideas. Rather than interpreting Celtiberian images as ‘infantile,’ ‘poor’ imitations of Mediterranean art, we should understand them as locally significant and intentionally designed. Foreign images did come into Celtiberia, and the use and possession of foreign objects could denote high social status. But more often than not, adjustments were made to fit Celtiberian preferences and values.

The search for a distinctive Celtiberian cultural identity has been undertaken before this thesis, with language and burial practices the favoured sources of evidence. These categories of evidence, used most recently by Lorrio (1997) and Burillo Mozota (1998), are helpful for what they reveal about identity at the corporate level. What images tell us, and what linguistics and cemeteries do not, is how Celtiberians understood, and wished to portray, themselves and what sorts of personages they preferred to represent. The paucity of Celtiberian texts suggests that in the late Republican period, only a small proportion of the population used written communication. This being the case, iconography was a more widely understood means of communicating. The Latinisation of the region, including the Roman ‘epigraphic habit’ (propensity for commemorating individuals and public laws and actions on hard surfaces), made the written word more important and widespread. Nevertheless, the images made during Celtiberia’s Roman phase document the negotiations that local people made vis-à-vis how they perceived themselves. Presenting male figures with Roman shields and dress, and placing female figures at a Greco-Roman ‘funerary’ banquet, were ways of advertising individuals’ and groups’ allegiance to new Romano-Celtiberian identities. Building ruins and brick stamps can tell us what people built in their settlements and how many lived in them, but they do not give us the image that went along with socio-political change.

I have stressed throughout that we should not examine the material evidence through the filter of ‘Roman’ versus ‘Celtiberian.’ Cultural identity and self-perception more generally, was mitigated by gender, age, occupation, level of wealth, and place of residence. It was also mitigated by era, since political and economic circumstances shaped individuals’ self-perception and groups’ allegiances and identifications. In times of strife and stress, adherence to a particular cultural identity might be more strongly felt. In Celtiberia during the period covered by this study, emulation of and aspiration for La Tène Celtic goods and certain Iberian cultural practices gave way to emulation of and aspiration for Roman goods and cultural practices.

Cultural identity in Celtiberia was thus fluid, changing over time and space. These views fit current theories about cultural identity. In studying the adoption and adaptation of 'foreign' material and cultural practices in ancient societies, Shennan emphasises the importance of 'individuals as agents, creators as well as products of their sociocultural environment' (Shennan 1996, 283). But cultural identity was not so fluid, Shennan argues, that there was no social continuity: 'in their daily lives, people produce and reproduce the institutionalised practices of their society. Of key importance here is the idea of *routine*, since this makes up the bulk of day-to-day activity' (Shennan 1996, 284).

One objection to the approach adopted in this thesis might be that in focussing on iconography, I have excluded from the 'cultural identity' discussion the people of low social levels. To some extent, this objection has merit: bronze and silver fibulae are primarily associated with rich grave assemblages, and individualised, sculptured tombstones are clearly more expensive than undecorated, terracotta urns would have been. It is possible that poor, rural, or simply disaffected Celtiberians, rejected the Romanised tendencies of their local élites. But to draw sharp distinctions between 'rich' and 'poor' cultural identities is to put modern views onto the ancient situation. Bound up with social mobility in Roman towns was emulation, the process by which values of the élite were copied by lower levels. Emulation ensured the circulation of values and mentalities across social categories – perhaps prompting 'further symbolic elaboration by the élite in order to maintain their differentiation' (Shennan 1996, 283), but still bringing a form of élite behaviour to those of lower status. *Stelai* with a roughly-carved female 'banqueter', for example, accompanied by a simple epitaph in uneven Latin letters, may be emulations of the higher quality 'banquet' tombstones. If there were rugged individualists who did not emulate the values and practices of Romano-Celtiberian society, their material record is unobservable to us.

cur frater tibi dicor, ex Hiberis / et Celtis genitus Tagique civis? / an vultu similes videmur esse? / tu flexa nitidus coma vagaries, / Hispanis ego contumax capillis... Why do you call me 'brother', born as I am / of Iberians and Celts, a countryman of Tagus? / Is it that we look alike? You go around looking smart with your hair in curls, mine is stubborn and Spanish / ... (Martial, *Ep.* 10.65). As late as the end of the AD 1st century, Celtiberian-born Martial distinguishes his appearance from that of a Greek. In other ways (assimilating into the social scene at Rome, ingratiating himself to the literary establishment), he played down perceived differences. Martial's lines speak for the process of change in Celtiberian cultural identity that has been traced in this thesis. Adoption and adaptation of Roman practices notwithstanding, Celtiberian media remained different from Roman metropolitan examples, even three hundred years after the arrival of Roman soldiers to the region. Contumacious *Hispania* has the last word.

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