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Patterns of interaction: 'Celtic' and 'Iberian' weapons in Iron Age Spain¹

Fernando Quesada Sanz

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

SUMMARY

Although weapons in Iron Age Spain have traditionally been grouped into two supposedly distinctive broad cultural categories ('Iberian' and 'Celtiberian'), recent research shows a much more complex development. We will show that the panoply in the Celtic areas of Spain was the result of a complex pattern of relationships involving both the Iberian coastal areas, and the La Tène world north of the Pyrenees. The long and straight sword tradition, typical of Celtic areas, was heavily modified as a result of Mediterranean influences, while the Iberian panoply also saw innovations. Only an indisputably Iberian area, Catalonia, displays a large number of the elements of the La Tène panoply, such as *scuta* and 'real' La Tène swords, which are remarkably rare in the inland Meseta and Iberian lands south of the Ebro. Diplomatic gifts, commerce and mercenaries all played a part in the development of a Celtiberian tradition which is neither 'Iberian' nor purely 'Celtic'.

The weapons of the Iberian Peninsula during the Second Iron Age (from c. 500 BC to the Roman Conquest) can be broadly divided into three cultural and typological groups corresponding to three major cultural areas (Fig. 1), the Mediterranean coastal areas in southern and eastern Spain, the central regions – comprising the Meseta and Extremadura – and the northern and north-western Atlantic regions of the Iberian Peninsula, which were culturally more under-developed. Of these we shall now discuss the first two, which broadly correspond with the Iberian and Celtiberian cultures respectively, although more subdivisions can and should be made (see Almagro-Gorbea and Ruiz Zapatero 1992 for a useful summary in English of the palaeo-ethnology of the Iberian Peninsula).

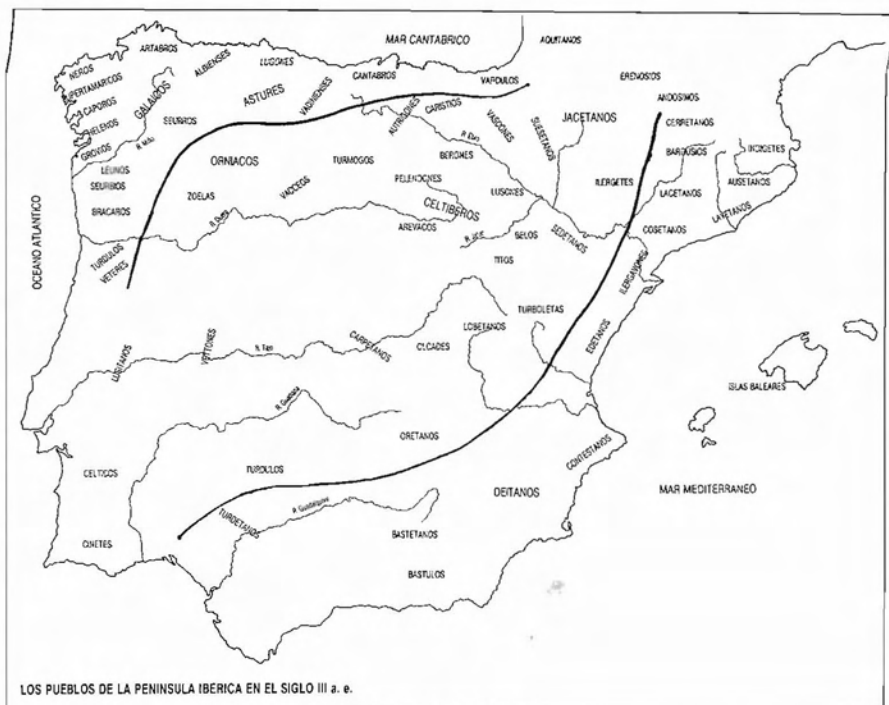


Fig. 1 Peoples of the Iberian Peninsula around 250 BC.

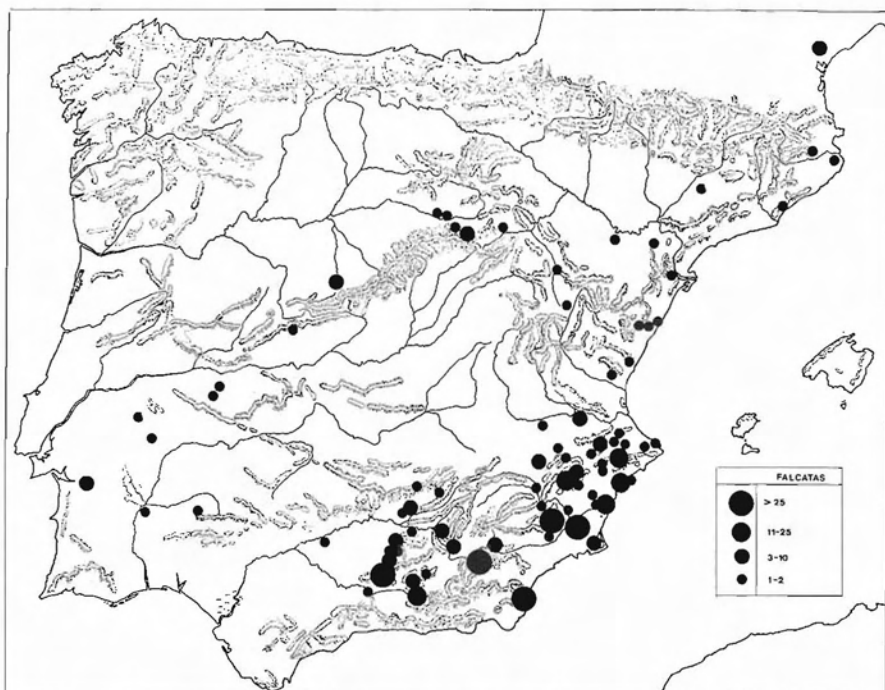


Fig. 2 Distribution of the Iberian *falcata*. Note its virtual absence not only from the Meseta but also in Catalonia, an 'Iberian' area.

The weapon assemblages in the 'Iberian' and 'Celtiberian' parts of Spain can be subdivided into regional groups according to archaeological data from the different sub-areas, thus differentiating the Duero basin's panoply from the Tagus basin's horizon, or Catalonia's from that of the Southern Levant's. This has been tentatively done for Celtiberia (Lorrio 1992) and Iberia (Quesada 1991). However, the state of research is in some respects in its infancy and these groupings are by no means definitive. As this paper deals with the *general patterns of interaction* between the 'Iberian' and 'Celtic' areas of Spain, these more detailed typologies will only be taken into account here when they are relevant to the overall discussion.

THE BURDEN OF TRADITION: EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY SCHOLARSHIP AND THE
'CELTIBERIAN MIRAGE'

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, while the archaeology of the Iberian Culture was still in its infancy, the indefatigable work of the Marquis de Cerralbo and Juan Cabre Aguiló in the Meseta resulted in the discovery and (hasty) excavation of dozens of Celtiberian cemeteries, whose grave-goods yielded a great number of unusually well-preserved iron weapons (Aguilera, 1911, 1916). These finds were duly matched with the ancient literary sources (Strabo, III,3,6; Diodorus, V,33; Ennius, Fr. 238 Sk.; Philon, *Mech. Syntax. IV-V* etc.) which praised the quality of the weapons that the Celtiberians used against the Romans. In a short time, the Celtiberian panoply was comparatively well known, so much so that the early work by H. Sandars on the 'Weapons of the Iberians' (Sandars, 1913) relied heavily on these weapons to complete the fragmentary picture of the true Iberian panoply, known only from earlier nineteenth-century excavations. The distinction between Iberian and Celtiberian weapons became blurred, and remained so for a long time.

This was detrimental to the study of the weapons of the Iron Age in the Peninsula, as the huge work by Cerralbo and Cabre led to the assumption that Celtiberian weapons were the main factor in the development of the Iberian panoply. Diffusion being the accepted theoretical model, it was assumed that the Iberians copied many types from their warlike neighbours, probably encountered through the 'barbarian' Celtiberian mercenaries hired by the more civilised Iberians (Livy, XXXIV,17,4; XXXIV,19; Diodorus, XXV,10, see Santos and Monero, 1982). In fact, only the *falcata*, a type of curved, slashing, one-edged sword of supposedly Greek origin², was accepted as the 'national' weapon of the Iberians (Fig.2). The fact that large-scale, more or less scientific excavations in the cemeteries of the Meseta occurred at an earlier date than similar research in Andalusia or the Mediterranean coast, led to a kind of conceptual pre-eminence of the Celtiberian panoply over the Iberian. The work by the German scholar W.

Schüle on the Meseta Cultures of Spain (1969), arguably the best general study of Iron Age metalwork until the late eighties, contributed to this, as no comparable research for the Iberian Culture existed.

This phenomenon is still prevalent today. For example, some scholars have constantly pointed out that the panoply represented with minute *akribeia* in the large Iberian monument at Porcuna (Jaén, in the Guadalquivir Valley) – perhaps an *heroon* for an important Iberian ruler – in fact portrays the weaponry of Celtiberian mercenaries (Blázquez, 1985; Blázquez and García, 1986–87). A photograph of this monument even appeared in the catalogue of the Venetian exhibition 'I Celti'. The depiction of certain

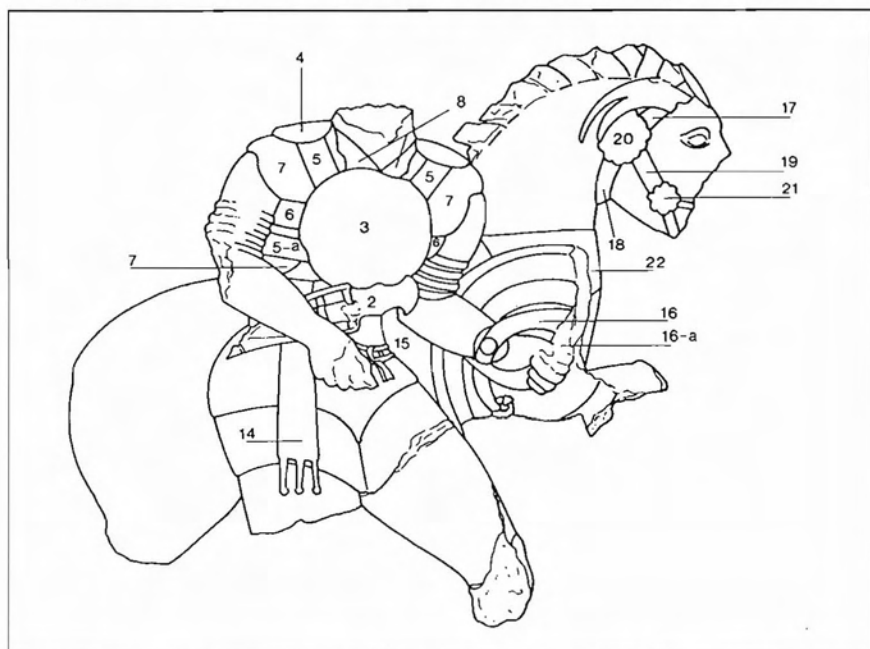


Fig. 3 Sculpture from Porcuna (Jaén) showing the clearly Iberian panoply (after I. Negueruela, 1990).

weapons such as disc-breastplates and 'frontón' daggers has been cited as a proof of their Celtic character (Fig.3). We believe, however, that it has been proved beyond doubt that these particular weapons are in fact typically Iberian. The evidence that some of the best preserved and first published of them come from the Meseta should not obscure three facts: that these types have since been discovered in a far greater number of Iberian cemeteries in Mediterranean Spain, and now heavily outnumber those in the Meseta; that some of them can be dated to an earlier period; and that all of them are of Mediterranean origin and cannot be held to be of Celtic origin (Quesada, 1991). This being so, the real problem is to discern the pattern of interaction whereby the two cultures came to share certain types of weapon.

Later work by certain scholars such as P. Stary or M. Lenerz de Wilde on 'Celtic' weapons in Spain has tended to strengthen the parallel and somewhat related view that the Celtic world north of the Pyrenees exerted a great influence on the later development of the Spanish Iron Age panoply, not only in Celtiberia but also in Iberia (Lenerz de Wilde, 1986, 1991, 1992; Stary, 1982). This is not the same theory as the one described above, but complements it, stressing as it does Celtic continental influences over Mediterranean ones.

Only in recent years has this set of theories been challenged by researchers from Spain, notably by M. E. Cabré (daughter of late J. Cabré, and therefore not under suspicion of 'pro-Iberism', Cabré, 1990; I. Negueruela, 1990; W. Kurtz, 1985; and myself, Quesada, 1990b). In my view, three points must be strongly emphasized. First, recent studies on the origin of the Iron Age panoply in Spain show a quite complex evolutionary picture in which no region takes precedence (Quesada, 1991; Lorrio, 1994). Second, if there must be a main line of diffusion, it runs from the coastal areas into the Meseta, and not the other way round (Quesada, 1990b). Third, the influence of the so called La Tène horizon in Iberia was limited to the north-eastern parts of Spain, and cannot be held responsible for the appearance of such types as *scuta* or Montefortino helmets in south-eastern Spain (Quesada, 1991), as has been argued (Stary, 1982).

ON THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF IRON AGE WEAPONS IN ANCIENT SPAIN: CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

During the Orientalizing period (seventh to sixth centuries BC) some attempts to copy the long bronze Ronda-Sa Idda type swords in forged iron were made in southern Spain (Blanco, 1963, 48), but this line of development, heir to the Late Bronze Age tradition, failed, and from the later decades of the sixth century BC onwards the new iron panoply developed along different lines, centred around much shorter swords and long, heavy iron spearheads.

During the fifth century BC two different sets of influences are in evidence: Mediterranean and continental (Fig. 4). These new ideas, however, did not limit themselves to different areas of influence (namely, Meseta and Mediterranean coast), but spread quickly. In fact, it seems to us that the new types of weapon spread much faster and do not really constitute an index of ethnic origin, because of the literally vital importance of new technologies in this field (Quesada, 1989b, 115).

North-Pyrenean influences appeared in the form of short antennae swords of different types and, probably, the *soliferreum*, a type of throwing spear entirely forged in iron, probably originating in the Languedoc or Aquitania regions (Quesada, 1993, 173-177) (Fig. 5). Both types were

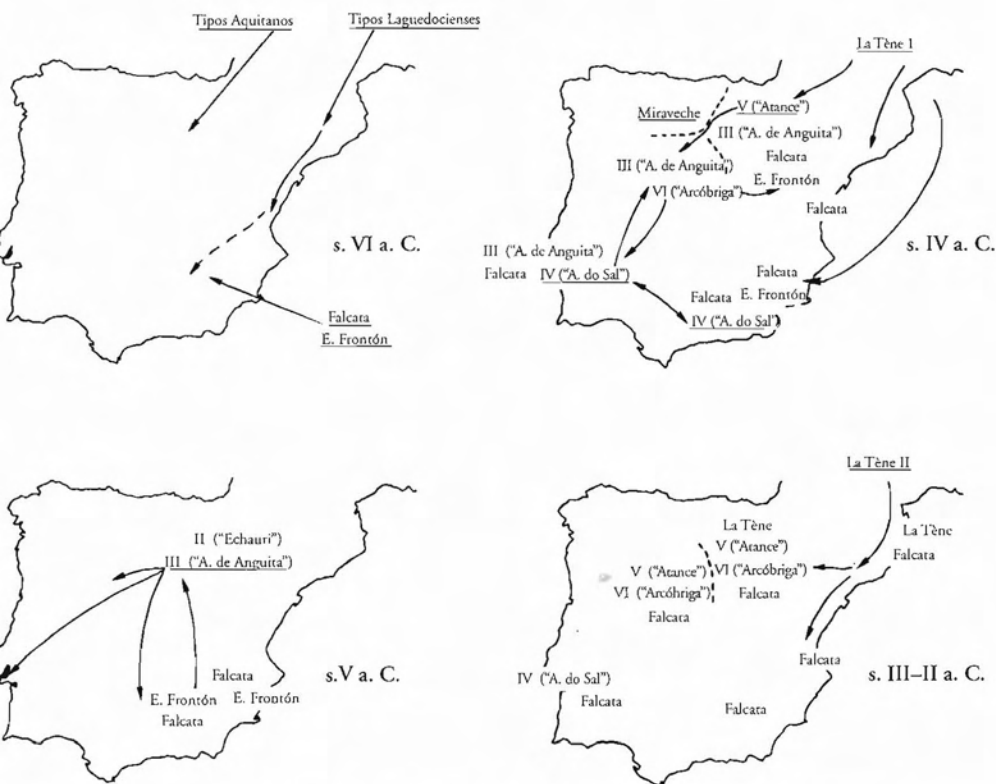


Fig. 4 Evolution of the Iron Age sword-types in Iberia from the sixth to the second century BC, indicating foreign influences and development of local types.

quickly transformed in Spain, reducing the length of sword blades and simplifying the *soliferrea*. There are also isolated examples of bronze cuirasses of European Hallstatt type, such as the example from Calaceite (Teruel, north-eastern Spain, Kurtz, 1985, 20–21) (Fig. 6). Most of these innovations cannot however be held to be genuinely 'Celtic', as the influx from Aquitania, a non-Celtic speaking area (Gorrochategui, 1993), seems to be particularly strong (e.g., the so-called Arcachon type; Cabré, 1990, 208–209; Mohen and Coffyn, 1970, pl. XXIV). While the sword types closest to northern parallels remained in Catalonia and the Meseta, local versions, many of them decorated with silver inlay on the hilt, were soon produced in the mining area of the Upper Guadalquivir in Andalusia (Cabré, 1990, 209–210). The *soliferreum* also spread quickly along the Mediterranean coast (Quesada, 1993, 170–171), together with other elements such as European bronze greaves (Dehn, 1988, 180 ff.) and fibulae.

At the same time, other types of weapon and body-armour of Mediterranean origin were introduced in the South, and from there into the Celti-

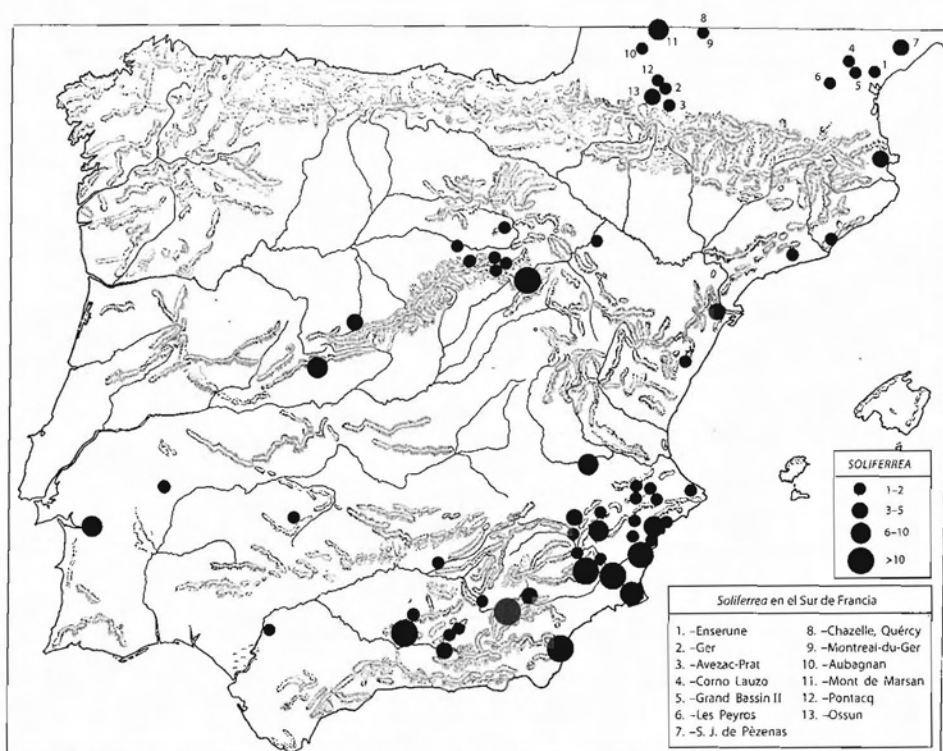


Fig. 5 Distribution of *soliferrea*. Those from Aquitania-Languedoc and Catalonia are the earliest types.

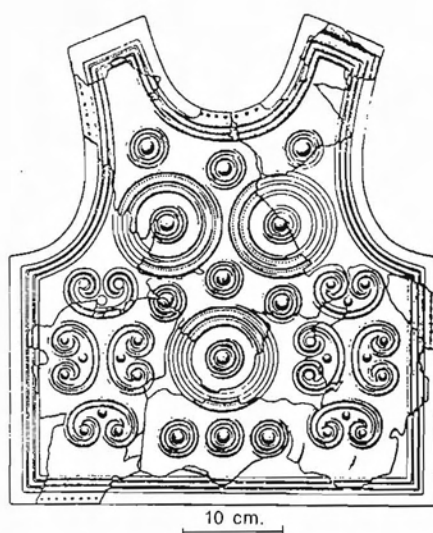


Fig. 6 Bronze decorated breastplate of the First Iron Age from Calaceite (Teruel) (after Cabré, 1990).

berian area: bronze and iron disc-breastplates, the so-called frontón sword and dagger, which had a long Bronze Age tradition (Quesada, 1991; Kurtz, 1985), and the Etruscan version of the *machaira*. The latter type of sword was duly transformed into a completely new type, with a different size, shape and function, the *falcata*, which was already in use in the Iberian area by c. 490 BC (Quesada, 1990a) (see Fig. 2).

After a short period during the sixth century when swords were virtually absent in Spain, and when heavy spears were the principal weapon, a new, complete, aristocratic panoply emerged early in the fifth century. It consisted of a dagger, sword (*falcata*, frontón sword, or antennae-sword), breastplate, greaves, heavy thrusting spear and throwing spear (*soliferreum*). This pattern seems to be quite homogeneous throughout both areas, although the *falcata* was not introduced in the Meseta and kept its status as a purely Iberian weapon. Early cemeteries in the Meseta, such as Aguilar de Anguita or Alpanseque, present some sets of grave goods with a distinct Iberian character, including some pieces of pottery such as the 'urnas de orejetas' (Cabr  , 1990, Fig.10; Lorrio, 1994, 223). It seems, then, that early elements of a Mediterranean aristocratic panoply (front  n swords, disc breast-plates) found their way into inland Spain as prestige items during the fifth century (Quesada, 1991, 1489–93).

During the fourth century the situation changed, and this homogeneity was lost. The panoply of Iberian and Celtic areas developed along different lines, while still sharing some common elements. Bronze and iron armour disappeared in both areas, but while the Celtiberian panoply was based on very short 'atrophied' antennae swords (average blade length 30–35 cm. Quesada, 1991, 684), circular shield and two spears, the Iberian panoply gradually abandoned straight swords (although antennae daggers remained in existence as prestige symbols) and concentrated on the *falcata* (Quesada, 1992a). It is a century of local developments with little external influence, as La T  ne I elements are scarce (*v. infra*) and Mediterranean influences seem to fade out in this particular aspect of material culture.

From the third century BC onwards the situation changed again: new elements such as *scuta* and jockey-cap helmets appeared in south-eastern Spain as a result of the Punic Wars and the influx of mercenaries (*v. infra*), while north-eastern Spain north of the river Ebro began to adopt something akin to the La T  ne complex of weapons. In Celtiberia, however, La T  ne influence was slight, while Iberian items become more common, as the *falcata* appears occasionally in Celtic contexts. It was in Celtiberia, however, that new types of weapons appeared. These were later adopted by the Romans: a short, simplified version of the La T  ne sword (which is probably the later *gladius hispaniensis* of literary sources), and the 'double-globular' dagger (with a swelling half way down the handle, and another as a pommel at the top).

To sum up, there are no clear-cut differences between the two regions, and the historical component has to be taken into account. Over more than three centuries, different types were adopted, invented or abandoned, and some were transmitted – most of them as prestige items – to other areas. No Hallstatt or La Tène panoplies are evident, except during the latter period in the restricted area north of the river Ebro. The key words should be ‘transformation’ and ‘interaction’, rather than ‘adoption’ and ‘diffusion’.

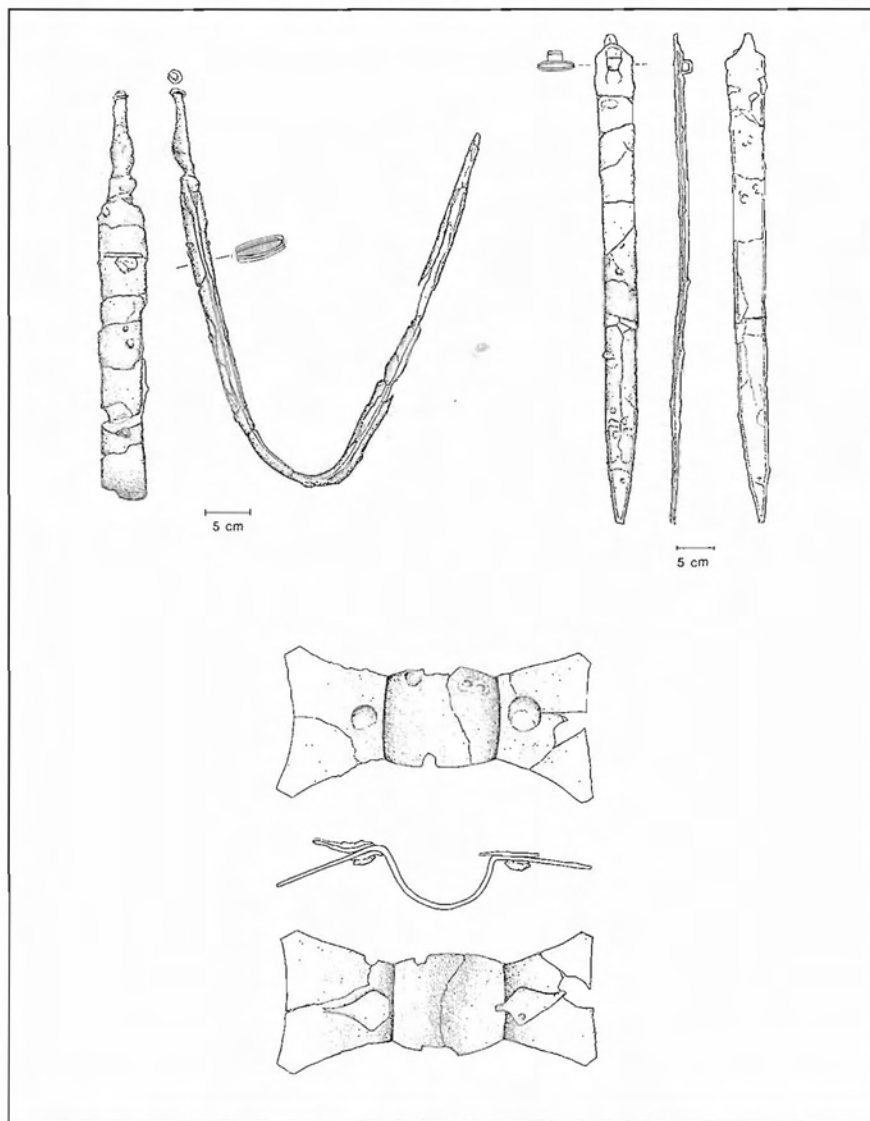


Fig. 7 La Tène swords and iron umbo from Turo dels Dos Pins (Barcelona) (after García Roselló, 1993).

'LA TÈNE' WEAPONS IN IBERIA: ADOPTION AND TRANSFORMATION

The appearance of true La Tène weapons in Spain is rare. The La Tène prototype, the long sword with iron scabbard and the oval *scutum* with iron boss, have not been found in quantity except in one area, Catalonia (Fig. 7), and parts of the Ebro basin, in Teruel and Saragossa (Quesada, 1991, 705 ff.). La Tène I weapons are rare, and only very few can be dated to the end of the fourth century, such as the sword from La Pedrera (Lérida, Catalonia), accompanied by an iron helmet of probably local manufacture along Gallic lines (Schule, 1969, Taf. 180.1), perhaps the sword from Quintanas de Gormaz (Soria) (Lenerz, 1986, Fig. 1, 5–6), and the strange specimen from El Cigarralejo (Murcia, south-eastern Spain) (Cuadrado, 1987, 169; Quesada, 1990b, 233) (*v. infra*). Most of the finds are dated to the third and second centuries BC, being part of the La Tène II horizon – Arcobriga in Saragossa, la Revilla in Soria, and many from Catalonia (Turo dels dos Pins, Cabrera de Mar, Puig Castellar, Ullastret, etc). Some swords are even later and should be related to the Roman Conquest (finds from the early first century BC in Caminreal, Teruel, or in Ampurias).³ True assemblages consisting of more than one sword *and* iron boss in association are really only found in Catalonia and Saragossa, and not south of the Ebro river (Figs. 7, 8). No

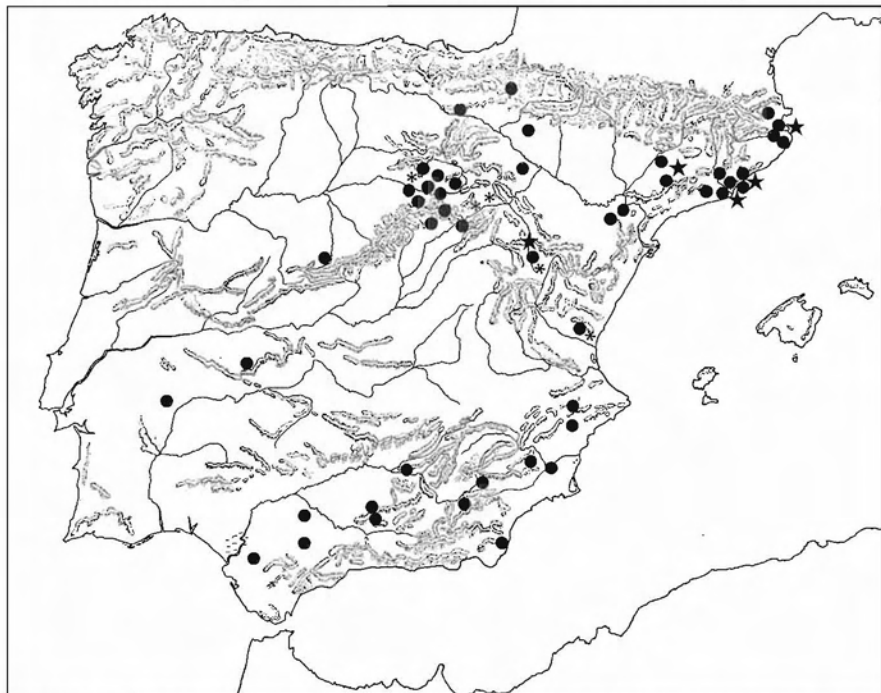


fig. 8 Distribution of La Tène swords and imitations (circles), long iron *scutum* bosses (stars) and round *scutum* bosses (small stars). The abundance of swords could be misleading. Only in Catalonia is the association of La Tène weapons (swords, scuta and spearheads) common, and they are only the dominant types in this particular area.

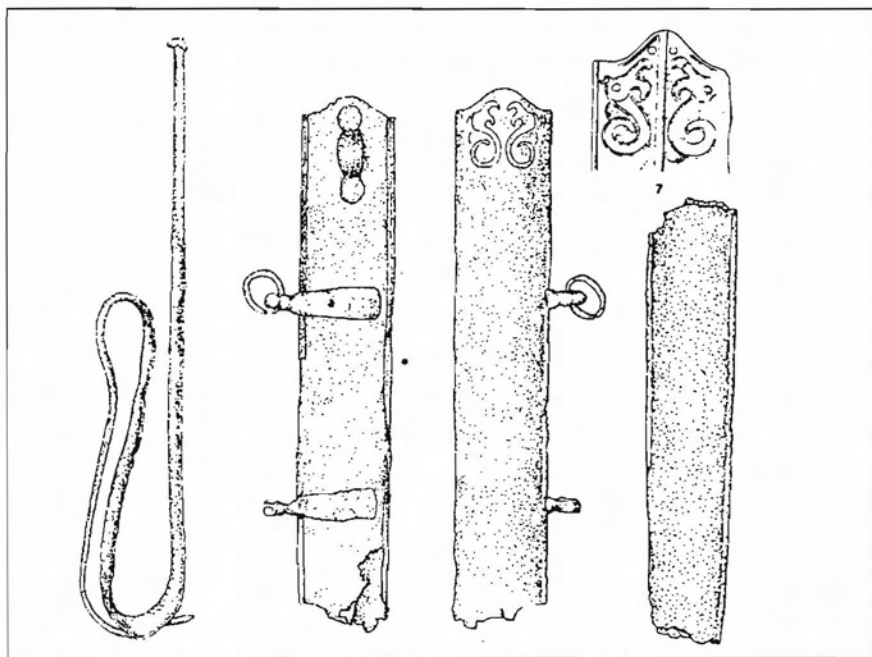


Fig. 9 Iron La Tène sword and decorated scabbard from Soria. Note the modification of the carrying system with the addition of 'Mediterranean type' rings (after Lenerz de Wilde, 1986).

real archaeological or iconographical evidence of the use of mail armour has been found in Spain: thus the late reference in Strabo (III,3,6) to the Lusitanians from south-western Spain must be treated with suspicion.

In this respect, Catalonia, an Iberian-language speaking area, departs completely from the rest of the Iberian Culture: the *falcata* is as rare here (Fig. 2) as it is in Celtiberia (Quesada, 1992a, 129–133) and, on the whole, the panoply of these peoples cannot be described as Iberian. There are very few finds from the fourth century, and those from the third can be better described as La Tène, rather than Iberian or Celtiberian. The close contacts documented in many other aspects with Languedoc and Provence (Jannoray, 1955; Grau, 1962; Jullý, 1976–78; Solier, 1976–78; Ugolini and Olive, 1991) are also confirmed by this particular field of research.

If the 'adoption' of the La Tène panoply is only to be found in Catalonia (Fig. 8), the 'transformation' of La Tène prototypes is another matter. One of the recurring features of Iberian and Celtiberian cultures is their ability to absorb foreign influences through a process of adaptation to local tastes and conditions. Perhaps the best example are the scabbards of two La Tène swords from Quintanas de Gormaz (Soria in the Meseta) (Fig.9) and Cigarralejo (Murcia, in the south-east) (Fig. 10). The first one is a late La Tène I sword (Lenerz, 1985). Its scabbard is decorated with a pair of dragons

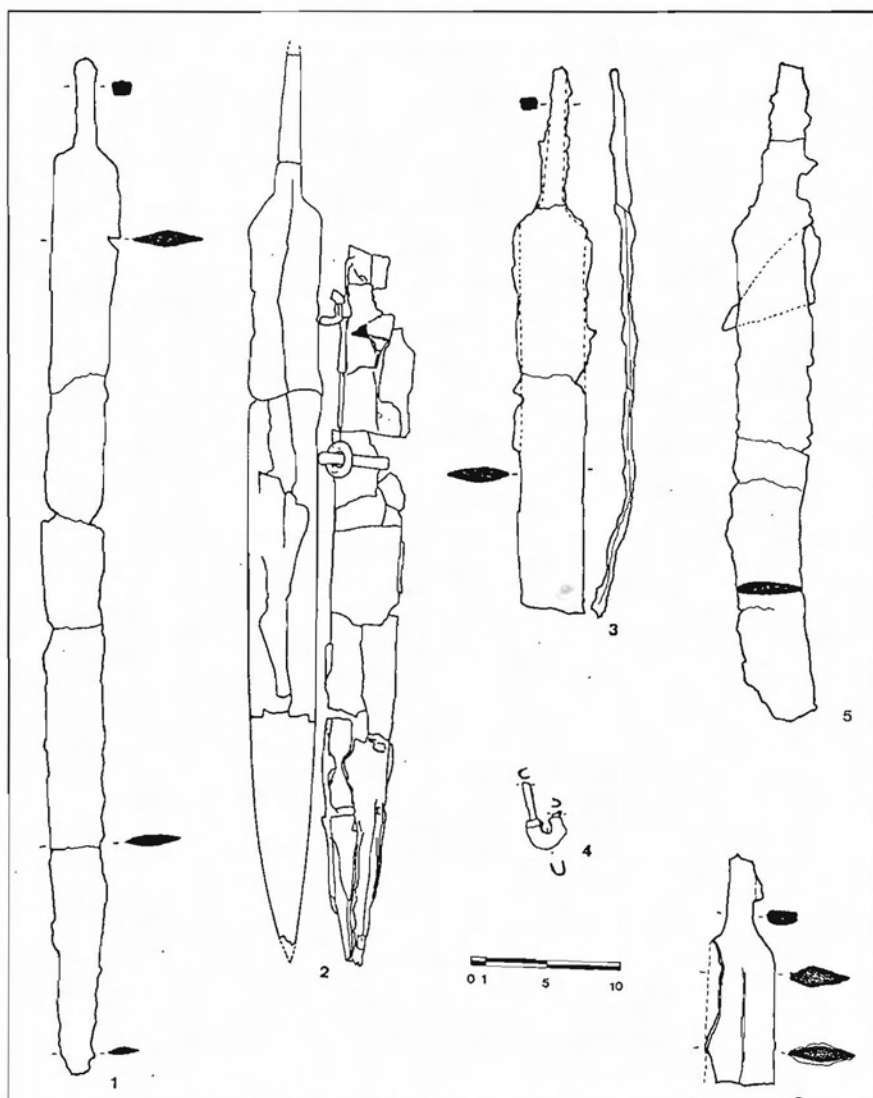


Fig. 10 La Tène swords in Murcia (south-eastern Iberia). Most of them are of Italian origin. Note carrying system of no. 2, from Cigarralejo.

characteristic of many Celtic sites in Europe (Megaw, 1989), and fitted with the usual carrying loop intended for a chain-belt typical of Celtic scabbards (Rapin, 1987). The idea is, of course, to hang the sword vertically along the wearer's leg. The owner of this imported scabbard transformed this alien system, adding two suspension rings which conform to the traditional way of carrying a sword both in Iberia and Celtiberia: a baldric passing over the shoulder and attached to two, three or four rings riveted to the scabbard.

This is a typically Mediterranean device, used by the Greeks, Iberians, and later by Romans, as opposed to the Celtic way. That this is a common form of local adaptation and not a *hapax* is confirmed by a similar example from Arcobriga in Saragossa (Schule, 1969, Taf. 66.2), and in particular by an iron sword from grave 54 at El Cigarralejo (Quesada, 1990b, 232–233), in the Iberian region of Murcia. Here the carrying loop of the scabbard has been removed and replaced by two rings (Fig. 10.2).

A further comment may be made about the origin of the sword from Quintanas de Gormaz. Its new carrying rings are fastened in the same way as those from Cigarralejo, and it looks likely that this sword, among the earliest of La Tène type found in inland Spain, could have arrived not through the Pyrenees, but as an item bought or captured from Iberian enemies, or brought by a mercenary returning from Sicily or Campania; the pair of dragons should not pose a problem, as decorations of this type have also been found in Italy (Megaw, 1989, 99–100).

If these adjustments of detail testify to the strength of local customs, the long tradition of very short swords in Celtiberia (most of them should be called daggers by European standards) determined that a new type coming from abroad, the La Tène sword, was not adopted but heavily modified. This resulted in a not very common – and very rare in Iberian lands – but undoubtedly useful new type, the so-called Castilian sword, derived from the La Tène originals (Aguilera, 1916, 27 ff.; Schule, 1969, 105; Stary, 1982, 137; Lenerz, 1985, 273; Cabré, 1990, 217–218). The blade is somewhat shorter and wider, and keeps the traditional decorative ribs and grooves of earlier, antennae swords, but the influence is unmistakable. This is a dual purpose, thrusting and cutting sword, longer than the usual Celtiberian swords, but much shorter than the ever longer La Tène prototypes. We believe that this is the type of weapon the Romans adopted and called *gladius hispaniensis* (Quesada, *forthcoming*).

There are two other items which are commonly thought to be ‘late Celtic’, and that are found in culturally and linguistically Iberian areas: oval *scuta* and ‘jockey-cap’ helmets of the Montefortino type. It has often been said that these types are Celtic, and prove the Celtiberian influence on Iberian weapons. We believe this simply not to be true.

Scuta, in fact, are only documented in Iberian lands south of the Júcar river in the iconography, the southernmost boss of *scutum* type being an early first century *umbo* from Liria (Valencia) (Quesada, 1991, pl. XLIXA). *Scuta* are common in the painted pottery of Liria (Ballester *et al.*, 1954), and are clearly depicted in the monument at Osuna (Seville) (León, 1981; García y Bellido, 1980, Figs. 66–69) (Fig. 11). However, both pieces of evidence are very late, as Liria pottery cannot be dated earlier than the end of the third century BC (Bonet and Mata, 1982) (that is, by the Second Punic War), and the Osuna monument may be even later, second century BC, as



Fig. 11 Late Iberian or Celtiberian warrior from the monument of Osuna (Seville). Probably second century B.C. (Madrid, Museo Arqueológico Nacional).

the late 'butterfly' shape of its boss and other details indicate. This being so, we believe that oval *scuta* in Iberian lands (excluding, of course, Catalonia, *v. supra*) are not Celtic items introduced from the Meseta, but the defensive weapons of Carthaginian and Iberian soldiers fighting for Carthage during the Second Punic War; the Osuna monument may even show the panoply of an Iberian auxiliary *scutarius* of Roman republican date. The shields used in Spain during the Iron Age, both in Iberia and in the inland areas, were circular and of varying size; *scuta* were adopted only in Catalonia and in southern regions by mercenaries and auxiliaries during the later periods of Iberian history.

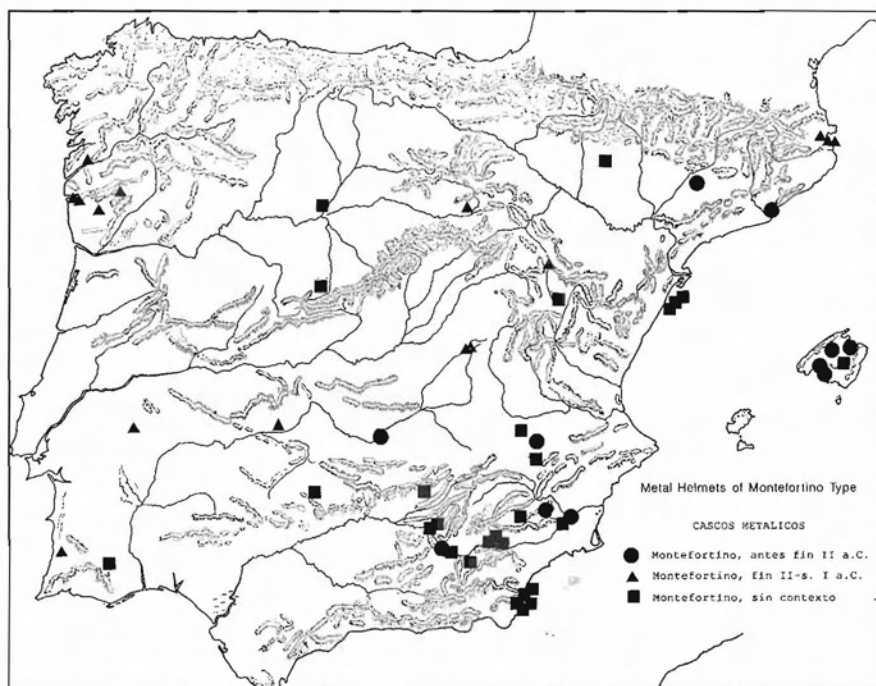


Fig. 12 Helmets of the generic 'jockey cap' type: third-first centuries BC.

A similar pattern is revealed by the analysis of the distribution of 'jockey cap' helmets (Quesada, 1992b; García Mauriño, 1993) (Fig.12). Although some of the best preserved and first documented helmets come from Celtiberia or the southern central plateau, and have thus been labelled Celtic (Mena and Ruiz, 1987), the great majority of them have been found in south-eastern Spain. In fact, three groups can be differentiated. The earliest helmets come from Iberian cemeteries in Murcia and Andalusia, and should not be dated earlier than the end of the fourth century BC. Other helmets are Republican Roman, and have been found underwater in ancient coastal shipwrecks, or in certain Late Iberian cemeteries, where they can be interpreted as discarded mercenaries' armour, or in isolated locations in inland areas, such as Alcaracejos (Cordoba in western Andalusia) or Soria in the Meseta. The third group consists of local productions of early Imperial date, and are found mainly in northern Portugal and Galicia, where the last campaigns of conquest on Spanish soil took place under Augustus.

At least two helmets which were initially considered to be of Celtic origin and of early date (fourth century) have been shown by later restoration to be Roman and probably second century BC, those from the Iberian cemetery at Pozo Moro (south-eastern Spain, García Mauriño, 1993, 115) and Gorrita in Valladolid (western Meseta, Abasolo and Perez, 1980). In both cases,

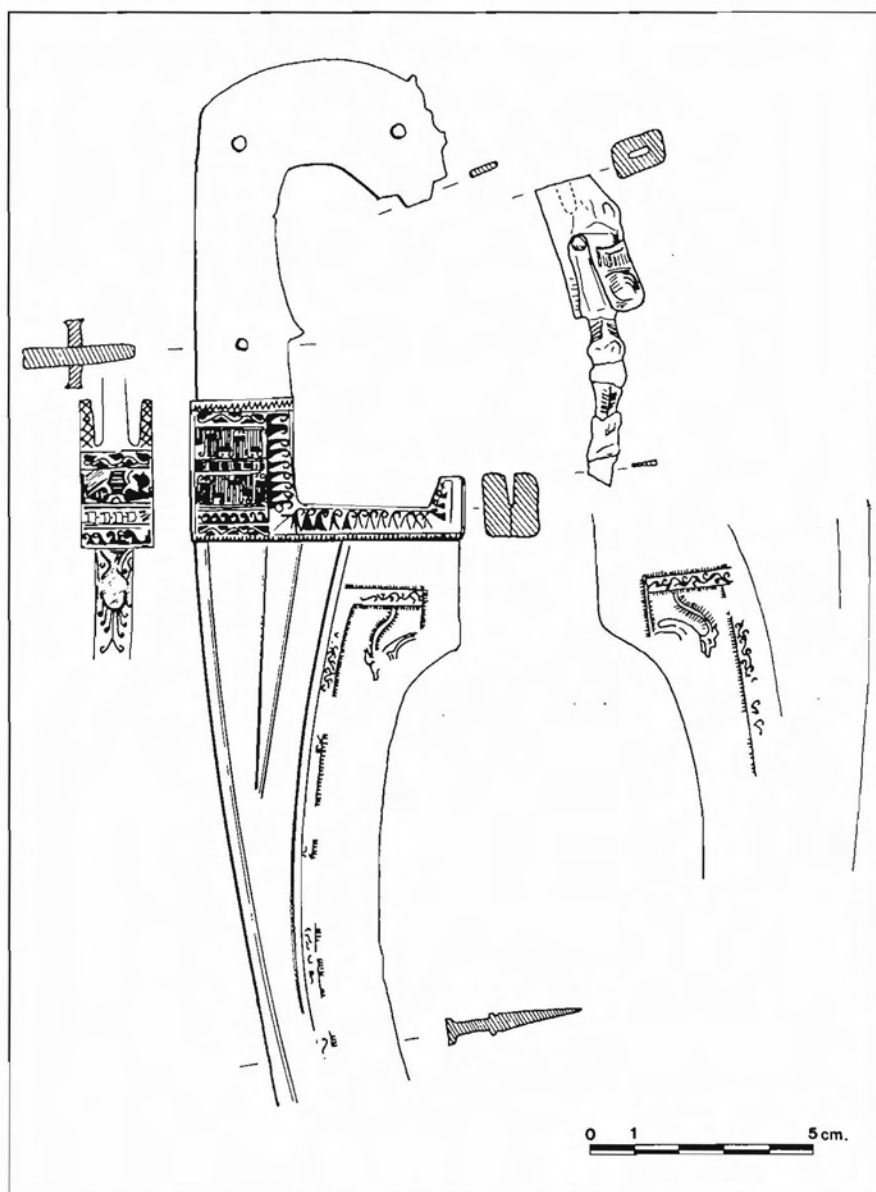


Fig. 13 Iron *falcata* with silver inlay decoration (Museo Cerralbo, Madrid).

Latin names have been found inscribed on the helmet (for Pozo Moro, see de Hoz, 1994, with a – still incorrect – fourth century BC chronology; for Gorrita, see Martín Valls and Esparza, 1992, 273).

Thus we believe that the first group of Montefortino helmets in Iberia is of Italian origin (we entirely agree with Lenerz, 1985, 273), and that

they were used as prestige items in tombs (even if the type itself was mass-produced and common enough in other countries); most of them date to the First or Second Punic Wars. The other two groups of 'Celtic' helmets are later, and although found in central and western Spain, would be better classified as Roman than given any other label. There is just one possible exception: some isolated helmets in Catalonia seem to have been made locally or imported from Gaul, (e.g. the helmet from Vallfogona de Balaguer, Lérida).

Last, but not least, some authors have found Celtic influences in the inlay silver decoration found on some *falcatas* from Andalusia and Murcia (Lenerz, 1985, 1991). These isolated elements, with parallels in the Waldalgesheim style, should not obscure the fact that most other decorative patterns are purely Iberian, and that some of the most characteristic, such as the stylized palmettes and ivy leaves, are clearly Mediterranean (Fig. 13). In fact, many Celtic decorative patterns are in turn stylised classical motifs; so, why maintain a 'Grand Tour' of influences marching north from Italy into the Alps and France, then south into the Meseta, and finally into Andalusia, when the direct connections between Italy and Iberia have been proved beyond doubt? This is not to say that many of the – quite different – examples of silver inlay on weapons from the Duero basin (e.g. the so-called Miraveche daggers: Griño, 1989, 71 ff.) cannot be shown to be a local development of a generally Celtic type (Fig. 14). These weapons are a purely local production, 'Celtic' in character because their manufacturers were of 'Celtic' origin, although, of course, not of the La Tène culture. We shall not discuss them here, as they are not found in Iberian areas. Nor shall we discuss here the mistaken view that some 'atrophied' antennae swords found in Andalusia, such as those from Moraleda in Granada, are Celtiberian, and therefore prove the presence in the South of Celtiberian mercenaries (e.g. still in Almagro-Gorbea, 1995, 124).

IBERIAN WEAPONS IN INLAND SPAIN

We have so far shown that direct La Tène influences in Spain were limited to the north-east, but also that indirect ones resulted in the modification of foreign types to suit local tastes, even though this happened on a small scale. We have also argued that many late influences in the Iberian panoply, previously thought to be of Celtiberian influence, do in fact have a quite different explanation, the involvement of Iberia in the great wars between the super-powers of the time. We shall now contend that, against the still commonly accepted idea that the Meseta was the most dynamic producer of new ideas in weapons, this was only true in the second century BC, when the Iberian Culture proper was slowly starting the vanishing and merging process known as Romanization.

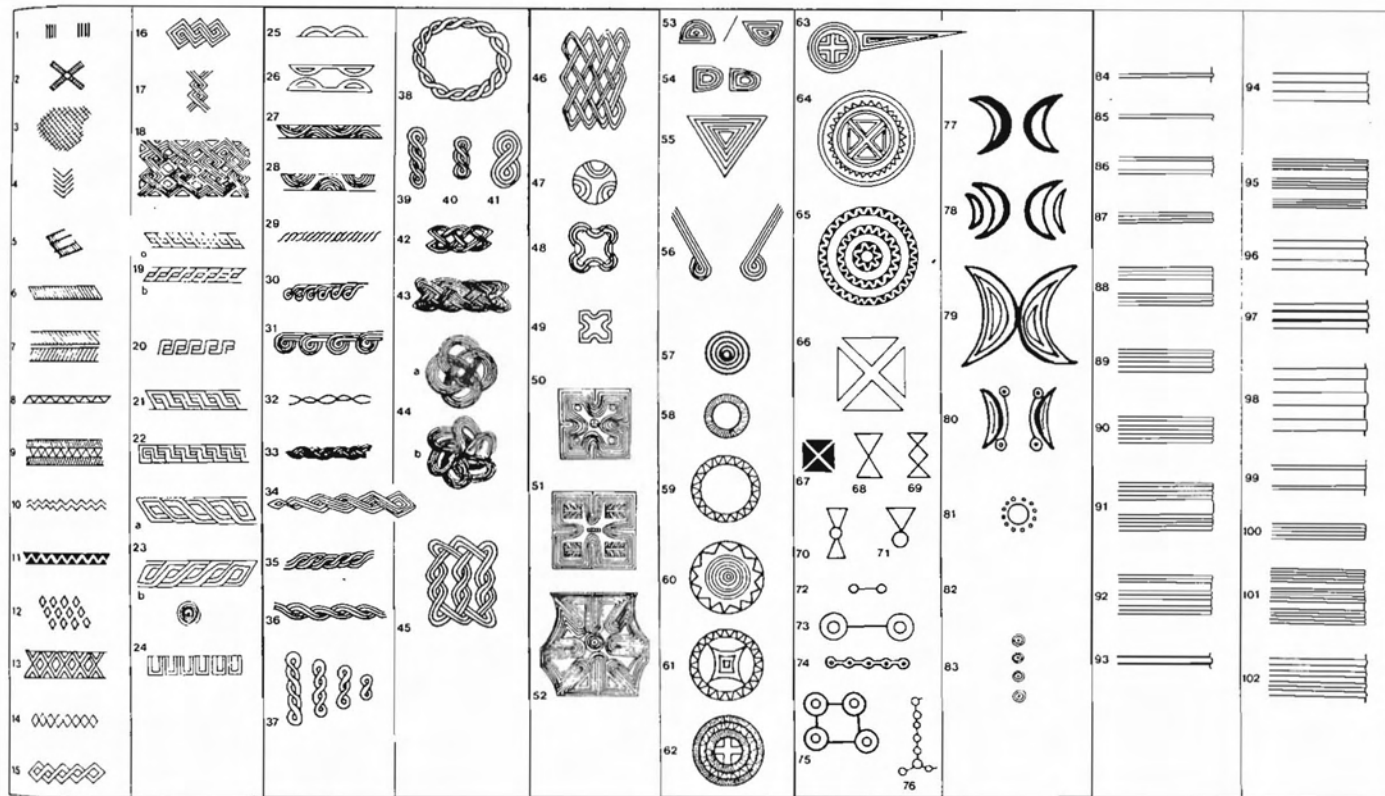


Fig. 14 Silver inlay motifs on Miraveche daggers from the Meseta (after Griñó, 1989).

In fact, during the sixth and fifth centuries BC both areas were in the process of cultural formation, and their panoplies were similar, as we have shown. During the fourth century, the two regions went their separate ways, and fewer weapons from one area have been found in the other. This is easy to see when the main obstacle, the old notion that the Iberians did not (or could not?) produce antennae-type (previously considered 'Celtiberian') swords and daggers is abandoned. During the third and early second centuries it was the Iberians who changed their panoply most radically when new types were introduced from the Mediterranean; in the Meseta local evolution continued, active but basically unchanged except for the adoption of a local version of La Tène swords, shorter and without iron scabbards. Only in the second century BC did new and successful types of dagger mark the swan song of Celtiberian metallurgy.

If a main direction of influence and contact between the panoplies of the two broad cultural areas is to be traced, then it runs from Iberia into the inland plateaux, in a cultural process well known in other fields, such as the spread of urbanization, or of monochrome painted, wheel-made pottery. Therefore, the weapons did not swim against the tide of cultural development, but followed or even led it, as prestige and high value items. In the early forties J. Cabré Aguiló excavated grave 350 at the cemetery at La Osera (Avila), and uncovered a rich assemblage of grave-goods (Cabré, Cabré and Molinero, 1950, Pl. LI ff.). Among them he found a set of silver-covered bronze belt-plaques, richly decorated in relief with eagles and other motifs of clearly Greek origin. He did not have to look so far away for parallels, however: grave 400 in the Iberian cemetery at El Cabecico del Tesoro, in Murcia, had an identical set of plaques, clearly from the same workshop. In fact, this was not the only similarity between the two tombs, as both contained a set of iron disc breastplates of the same size. I have argued elsewhere (Quesada, 1989a, II, 130 in the English summary) that the contents of the grave from La Osera were in fact an assemblage of prestige items (weapons and belt), of Iberian origin, a set which ended up in the Meseta as a diplomatic gift, or perhaps as the insignia of a mercenary chief. This pattern of prestige items coming from the Mediterranean into the central plateau of Spain is not by any means new; it has been well documented in the Orientalizing phase, and continued during the Second Iron Age. Weapons and body-armour such as these breast-plates, or the few *falcatas* so far found in the Meseta, are a testimony to this.

ADDENDUM

Since this paper was completed in July, 1995, there have been many further developments in scholarly research. I believe, however, that the basic facts, ideas and hypotheses put forward are still perfectly valid, although later

work by myself and other researchers has since been published that include more details, new material and even more up-to-date syntheses. Among them the most complete is probably my own work, which was in the press in 1995: Quesada, F., 1997, *El armamento ibérico, Estudio tipológico, geográfico, funcional, social y simbólico de las armas en la Cultura Ibérica (siglos VI-I a.C.)*, Monographies Instrumentum 3, Montagnac: Monique Mergoïl. This major, profusely illustrated work develops our ideas much further, especially pp. 248 ff. (La Tène swords), 538 ff. (*scuta*) and 618–632 (general synthesis). Also, Quesada, F., 2000, 'Gladius Hispaniensis: an archaeological view from Iberia' and 'Montefortino-type and related helmets in the Iberian Peninsula', both in Feugère, M. (ed.), *L'équipement militaire et l'armement de la République in Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 8; Quesada, F., 1999, 'Porcuna, Cástulo y la cuestión del supuesto carácter meseteño, indoeuropeo o céltico de su panoplia: el "armamento ibérico" como armamento ibérico', in Balbín, R. and Bueno, P. (eds), *Actas del II Congreso de Arqueología Peninsular*, Zamora 1996, vol. III, 425–434, Alcalá de Henares.

Also useful, and along similar lines of thought, is Cabré, E. and Baquedano, M. I. 1997, 'El armamento céltico de la II Edad del Hierro', in *La guerra en la Antigüedad*, Madrid, 240–259. See also Lorrio, A., 1994, 'L'armement des Celtibères: phases et groupes', in *Actes du XIV^e Colloque AFEAF, Agen 1992*, in *Aquitania* 12, 391–414; Lorrio, A., 1999, 'Elementos para la delimitación de la Celtiberia meridional', in Villar, F. and Beltrán, F. (eds), *VII LCPPI*, 257–267, Salamanca UP. Most important, as it integrates the evidence of weapons with other aspects of material culture in supposedly Iberian Catalonia, is Sanmartí, J., 1994, 'Eléments de type celtique du nord-est de la Péninsule Ibérique', *Aquitania*, 12, 335–351. Also important, although outdated in many aspects by the time it was printed, is Stary, P. F., 1994, *Zur Eisenzeitlichen Bewaffnung und Kampfweise auf der Iberischen Halbinsel. I. Text. II. Dokumentation*. Madrider Forschungen 18, Berlin (but see review by W. Kurtz Schaeffer in *Trabajos de Prehistoria* 51.2, 1994, 200–203).

We must also emphasize that the maps included in this paper are by now slightly outdated, though new discoveries continue to support our hypotheses.

NOTES

1. This paper has been prepared within Research Project DGICYT PB94/0189
2. But the origin of the type is probably to be found along the Illyrian coast, and the provenance of the type is not Greek but Etruscan (see Quasada, 1990).
3. Arcobriga: Aguilera, 1916, Fig. 31; Cabré, 1990, 216. La Revilla: Ortego, 1983. Catalonia: García y Roselló, 1993, 122ff.; Serra Rafols, 1942, Lam. IV; Barbera, 1969–70, 181ff; Almagro Basch, 1953, 251ff., and others.

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