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PREHISTORIC ART AS PREHISTORIC CULTURE

STUDIES IN HONOUR OF PROFESSOR
RODRIGO DE BALBÍN-BEHRMANN

edited by

**Primitiva Bueno-Ramírez
and Paul G. Bahn**

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Contents

List of Figures and Tables	iii
List of contributors	v
Prehistoric Art as Prehistoric Culture	vii
Primitiva Bueno-Ramírez and Paul Bahn	
‘Science’ versus Archaeology: Palaeolithic Rock Art at the beginning of the 21st century	1
José-Javier Alcolea-González and César González-Sainz	
Raman spectroscopy of prehistoric pictorial materials	11
Antonio Hernanz	
Prehistoric rock art and non-invasive analysis. Rouffignac as a case study	21
Patrick Paillet	
Reasoning processes in prehistoric art interpretation	25
Sophie A. de Beaune	
Are hand stencils in European cave art older than we think? An evaluation of the existing data and their potential implications.....	31
Paul Pettitt, Pablo Arias, Marcos García-Diez, Dirk Hoffmann, Alfredo Maximiano Castillejo, Roberto Ontañon-Peredo, Alistair Pike and João Zilhão	
Regional ontologies in the Early Upper Palaeolithic: the place of mammoth and cave lion in the ‘belief world’ (Glaubenswelt) of the Swabian Aurignacian	45
Shumon T. Hussain and Harald Floss	
Aurignacian art in the caves and rock-shelters of Aquitaine (France).....	59
Brigitte and Gilles Delluc	
Fuente del Trucho, Huesca (Spain): Reading interaction in Palaeolithic art	69
Pilar Utrilla and Manuel Bea	
Open-air Ice Age art: the history and reluctant acceptance of an unexpected phenomenon	79
Paul G. Bahn	
Decorated sites and habitat: social appropriation of territories	93
Denis Vialou	
Deep caves, ritual and graphic expression: a critical review of the archaeological evidence on hypogean human activity during the Upper Palaeolithic/Magdalenian.....	99
Pablo Arias	
Magdalenian settlement-subsistence systems in Cantabrian Spain: contributions from El Mirón Cave	111
Lawrence G. Straus, Manuel González Morales, Ana B. Marín-Arroyo and Lisa M. Fontes	
The Upper Palaeolithic rock art of Portugal in its Iberian context	123
André Tomás Santos, Maria de Jesus Sanches and Joana Castro Teixeira	

Old panels and new readings. La Pileta and pre-Solutrean graphics in Southern Iberia	135
Miguel Cortés Sánchez, María D. Simón Vallejo, Rubén Parrilla Giráldez, and Lydia Calle Román	
Palaeolithic art in the Iberian Mediterranean region. Characteristics and territorial variation	145
Valentín Villaverde	
Small seeds for big debates: Past and present contributions to Palaeoart studies from North-eastern Iberia ...	157
José María Fullola, Ines Domingo, Didac Román, María Pilar García-Argüelles, Marcos García-Díez and Jorge Nadal	
Throwing light on the hidden corners. New data on Palaeolithic art from NW Iberia	171
Ramón Fábregas Valcarce, Arturo de Lombera-Hermida, Ramón Viñas Vallverdú, Xose Pedro Rodríguez-Álvarez, and Sofia Soares Figueiredo	

The Upper Palaeolithic rock art of Portugal in its Iberian context

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Abstract This text presents a synthesis of what is known of Palaeolithic rock art in Portugal. We observe, in Portugal, a great graphic homogeneity in pre-Magdalenian rock art and considerable differences between the southern and northern rock art during the Magdalenian. However, during the Pleistocene/Holocene transition, we recognize a new process of homogenization of Portuguese rock art. This evolution is, nevertheless, perfectly explained when we take into account the wider Iberian context of Upper Palaeolithic rock art.

Keywords Portugal; Upper Palaeolithic; rock art; Iberian Peninsula

Foreword

Our aim in this text is to present a general overview of the Upper Palaeolithic rock art of Portugal. Texts about the same subject have appeared recently (Gomes 2006; Bicho *et al.* 2007: 117-31; Baptista 2012). However, those publications had very specific purposes and, for this reason, the Iberian context of Portuguese Palaeolithic rock-art (Fig. 1) was disregarded.

The most prominent characteristic of Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art is its vast number of open-air sites in comparison with its cave art, which is only to be found in a single cavern. Although open-air sites have some specific features (e.g. Balbín 2008; Balbín & Bueno 2009), to fully comprehend them we must take into account the cave art of the same period (Balbín, Bueno & Alcolea 2012) and refrain from creating artificial divisions that are meaningful only to us — prehistorians of the 21st century. Consequently, to understand Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art we must consider not only other Iberian open-air sites but also its cave art.

Therefore, we will try to present the Upper Palaeolithic rock art of Portugal against the background of its Iberian context. Something of this sort has already been presented in texts by Balbín and Alcolea (e.g. Balbín & Alcolea 2002; Alcolea & Balbín 2012), in which the Portuguese sites are integrated into the chronological framework those authors have developed for the Upper Palaeolithic art of the Iberian interior. This chronological framework raises several important questions, such as: what happened in the Côa valley while Siega Verde was being intensely engraved? This is the kind of issue we will try to explore while taking a bird’s eye view of Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art and its Iberian context.

1. Common ground: the pre-Magdalenian phase of the rock art of western Iberia

We know that during the Gravettian, people were already engraving in the Côa valley. This inference is possible because of the quartzite picks that were found in the Gravettian level of Olga Grande 4, which were, most probably, used to peck and abrade the traces that define a large number of figures of the Côa valley (e.g. Aubry, Sampaio & Luís 2011).

The vast majority of these figures are stylistically very homogeneous, with parallels found in caves such as Pair-non-Pair, La Tête du Lion, La Croze à Gontran, Pech-Merle, Nerja, Pileta, Escoural, etc (e.g. Guy 2000). Some of these sites have radiocarbon-dated figures from the Gravettian period, namely Mayenne-Sciences (Pigeaud 2004: 127) or Pech-Merle (Lorblanchet, Cachier & Valladas 1995). Nevertheless, paintings from other sites, such as La Pileta or Nerja, have been dated to the Solutrean period (Sanchidrián *et al.* 2001). Moreover, the Solutrean portable art of the aforementioned region has figures that resemble those of which we are speaking, such as the plaquette of Vale Boi (Algarve) (Simón, Cortés & Bicho 2012) or the Solutrean plaquettes of Parpalló (Villaverde 1994). Other sites, such as Pair-non-Pair, can be dated to the Aurignacian (Lenoir *et al.* 2006). Consequently, for the sake of precision, this art should be classified as pre-Magdalenian.

The Magdalenian as a *terminus ante quem* for this kind of figures is, in fact, well established in the Côa valley, thanks to the excavation of Fariseu (Aubry 2009a: 366-71). Here, the study of the stratigraphic sequence of the art on rock 1, in conjunction with the study of the archaeological stratigraphy that covers it, has shown

PREHISTORIC ART AS PREHISTORIC CULTURE

Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art (plus Molino Manzánéz)

- ordered by its chronology

Pre – Magdalenian

- 1 Sampaio
- 2 Pousadouro
- 3 Fraga Escrevida
- 4 Ribeira da Sardinha
- 5 Foz do Tua
- 6 Vale de Videiro
- 7 Redor do Porco
- 8 Faia
- 9 Ocreza
- 10 Vale Boi

Pre – Magdalenian ; Magdalenian

- 11 Mazouco

Pre – Magdalenian ; Magdalenian; Azilian

- 12 Foz do Coa
- 13 Canada do Inferno
- 14 Fariseu
- 15 Ribeira de Piscos
- 16 Penascosa
- 17 Quinta da Barca
- 18 Escoural

Pre – Magdalenian ; Azilian

- 19 Vale Escuro
- 20 Vale de Figueira

Magdalenian

- 21 Canada das Corraliças
- 22 Quinta da Moreiola
- 23 Costalta
- 24 Poço do Caldeirão
- 25 Buraca Grande
- 26 Caldeirão
- 27 Gardete
- 28 Fratel
- 29 Molino Manzánéz
- 30 Xarez
- 31 Porto Portel
- 32 Palha

Magdalenian?

- 33 Medai

Magdalenian; Azilian

- 34 Tudão
- 35 Vale de Cabrões
- 36 Vermelhusa
- 37 Vale de José Esteves
- 38 Quinta das Tulhas
- 39 Moínhos de Cima
- 40 Broeira

Undetermined chronology

- 41 Vale de Moínhos
- 42 Canada da Moreira
- 43 Rego da Vide
- 44 Ribeira das Cortes
- 45 Foz da Ribeira
- 46 Cardina

Azilian

- 47 Vale da Casa
- 48 Porto Velho
- 49 Bulha
- 50 Cascalheira
- 51 Ribeira de Urros
- 52 Vale do Forno
- 53 Ribeira da Cabreira
- 54 Lodão
- 55 Meilapão
- 56 Canada do Amendoeal
- 57 Vale de João Esquerdo
- 58 Canada do Arroba
- 59 Vale d'Arcos
- 60 Canada da Meca
- 61 Casa do Muro
- 62 Ribeira da Volta
- 63 Quinta da Barca Sul
- 64 Alto da Cotovia
- 65 Ribeira do Arroio
- 66 Moínholha
- 67 Polo

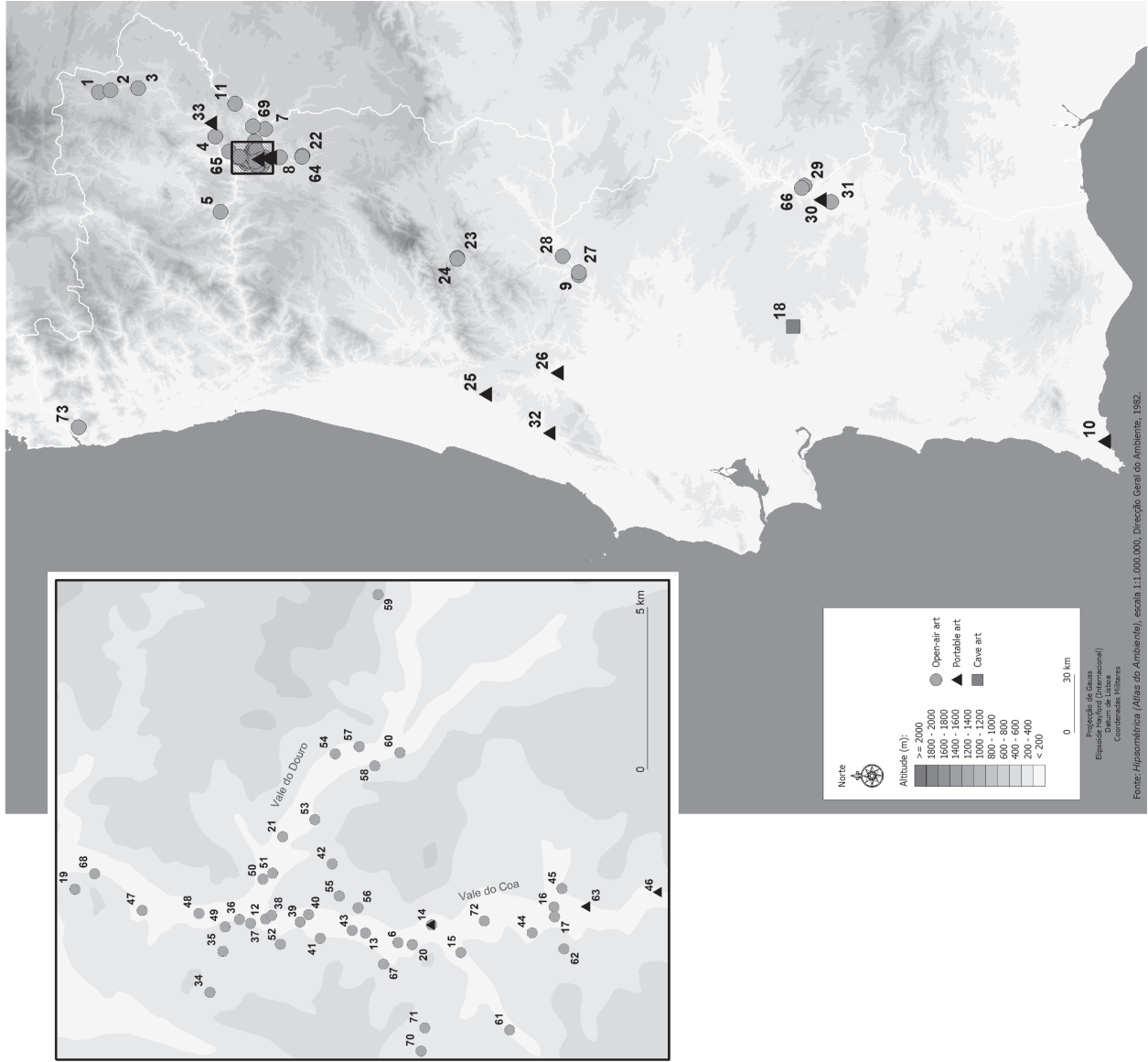


FIGURE 1. PORTUGUESE PALAEOLITHIC ROCK ART, PLUS MOULO MANZÁNEZ (LOCATED IN SPAIN, IT BORDERS PORTUGAL ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE GUADIANA RIVER).

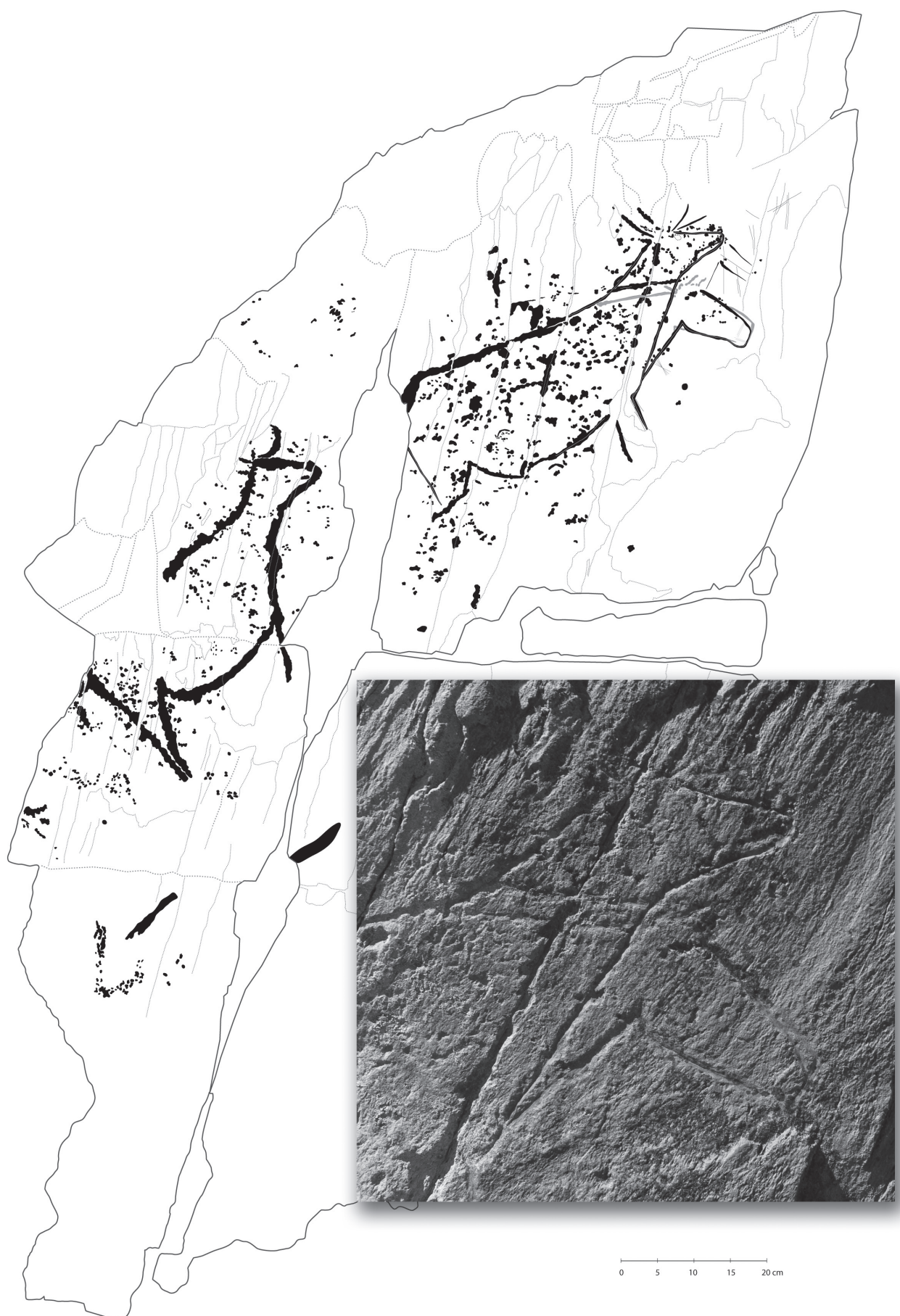


FIGURE 2. PANEL 31 OF FOZ DO TUA ROCKSHELTER.

PREHISTORIC ART AS PREHISTORIC CULTURE

that the rock was engraved around 14,500 BP (Aubry, Santos & Luís 2014). Moreover, an engraved fragment of the rock was found inside layer 8, from the top of which comes an OSL date of 18,400 BP (Aubry, 2009a: 368). Hence, we can assume that, around 18,400 BP, the rock was already engraved and facing a process of degradation. On the other hand, the geoarchaeological analysis of the site (Aubry, Santos & Luís 2014) suggests that the soil contemporary to the engraving of the rock must have been eroded by fluvial action in a moment previous to the accumulation of layer 8. Probable remains of this ancient soil can be found some metres away from the rock panel, where a layer radiocarbon-dated to $19,020 \pm 80$ BP (GrA-40167) was identified (*ibidem*: 265).

Pre-Magdalenian zoomorphic figures are, *grosso modo*, characterized by prominent and convex bellies, rounded hips, naturalistic heads with few or no anatomical details. With few exceptions, only one leg per pair is represented, most of the time without hoofs; usually only one horn is observed, but if both were portrayed they are depicted in a straight or oblique bi-angular profile; the tails are depicted in a very formalized manner, obeying very strict rules that are in accordance with each species; the same goes for the dorsal lines, which, as a common aspect, have their anatomical features (withers, back and croups) depicted in a very prominent fashion.

Figures of this kind are extremely common in the Côa valley, defining what researchers unanimously accept as the oldest phase of engraving in the region (e.g. Balbín & Alcolea 2002: 150; Zilhão 2003; Baptista 2012; Santos 2012).

We also find figures of this kind in other sites of western Iberia, such as in the cave of Escoural (e.g. Glory, Vaultier & Santos 1965; Santos, Gomes & Monteiro 1981; Lejeune 1996; Gomes 2002; García *et al.* 2000; Silva 2011; Baptista 2012: 308-13), and in open-air sites like Siega Verde (Alcolea & Balbín 2006: 334) and Redor do Porco in the Águeda valley (Baptista & Reis 2011), Ribeira da Sardinha, Fraga Escrevida, Sampaio and Pousadouro in the Sabor valley (Baptista 2009: 196-207), Ocreza near the mouth of the eponymous river in the Tagus valley (Baptista 2009: 208-11), La Grajera 2 in the Spanish Extremadura (Bueno *et al.* 2010), Mazouco (e.g. Jorge *et al.* 1981; Balbín & Alcolea 1992: 436-41; Gomes 1994; Baptista 2009: 194-95) and the Foz do Tua rock-shelter (Sanches & Teixeira 2013; Valdez-Tullett 2013).

The monographic study of the Foz do do rock-shelter is still in progress, but it is imperative to clarify some observations that have been made about its panel 31 (Baptista 2012: 326). Forty-eight panels were found at the site, forty-six of which are located inside the shelter and are characterized mainly by the presence of deep



FIGURE 3. LEJEUNE'S FIGURE 5.9 OF ESCOURAL.
FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: ORIGINAL PHOTO; PHOTO WORKED ON BY
DSTRETCH; OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE PAINTED MOTIFS.

and light incisions that are dated to the beginning of the Holocene, although a slightly earlier chronology should not be ruled out (Sanches & Teixeira 2013). Schematic red paintings were found outside the shelter on a panel to the right of the opening. These paintings date to the Neolithic or Chalcolithic (*ibid.*: 62). A panel with possible Palaeolithic engravings was also found to the right of the big opening (panel 2) and a second one, clearly displaying Palaeolithic engravings, was found to the left of the opening (panel 31) (Fig. 2). We have identified, on this last panel, two red deer in a line. The one to the right is a little more complex, because a second neck was added to its body. This fact, *per se*, is not uncommon in Palaeolithic art, especially in the Côa valley where several examples of animation have been identified (Luís 2012). However, at the end of this second neck we do not see a red deer head, but the head of a second animal under the head of a third. In short, we have one body, two necks and three different heads! In fact, a close inspection of the relevant sector of the panel reveals that the head of an aurochs is transformed into that of a horse. This transformation is achieved by the reconfiguration of the original head and the addition of a mane, which converts the horns of the aurochs into the ears of the horse (Fig. 2). Pecking and abrasion define all the figures on the panel, with incision also noticeable in the muzzle and mouth of the second/third head.

It is very interesting to note that the ibex is absent at the Foz do Tua site, whereas it is the third most represented animal in the Côa valley, after aurochs and horses.

In Escoural, by contrast, both red deer and ibex appear to be rare or absent during this period. In fact, figures that are identified as ibex have probably been misinterpreted. Take for instance Lejeune's figure 59, which is usually interpreted as one or several ibexes, but we think that it could depict a horse, and the head of another horse or of a female red deer (Fig. 3).

However, besides animals, we also find signs during this phase. These signs are mainly incised and very simple in shape, consisting of single lines, pairs of lines, packs of parallel lines, angles, wavy lines, etc. In the Côa valley there is an apparent tendency to concentrate these signs on certain rocks, like Canada do Inferno 1 (Baptista & Gomes 1997: 264), Penascosa 3 (*ibid.*: 380) or Fariseu 1 (Baptista 2009: 66-67).

Pecking, abrasion and red (Escoural, and Faia in the Côa valley) and black painting (Escoural) are the main techniques used to depict animals during this phase. However, in the Côa valley we also find some incised animals, on rocks such as Fariseu 1 or Canada do Inferno 1 (Baptista & Gomes 1997: 268), that are depicted according to the same formal principles applied to the pecked and abraded ones.

We find, however, another type of incised animals in rock 3 at Canada do Inferno, namely the horses and the aurochs that are engraved above the bigger animals that are depicted in the bottom third of the rock. These animals, particularly the horses, have striking differences from those we have previously dealt with. On the other hand, they bear a remarkable resemblance to some figures that are usually dated to the late Solutrean or early Magdalenian...

2. Breaking ground: Magdalenian art

In fact, the most similar parallels to the horses of Canada do Inferno 3 can be found in the cave of El Buxu, in Asturias, which dates to the late Solutrean / early Magdalenian (Obermaier & Vega del Sella 1918; Menéndez 1984). The horses of group number VI of gallery B (Obermaier & Vega del Sella 1918: pl. IV and V) are among the best parallels to the figures of Canada do Inferno 3. Moreover, if we look closely, we find in the Asturian cave a lot of motifs that greatly resemble other engravings of the Côa valley. Good examples from the cave include horse number 1 of gallery A (*ibid.*: 13), ibex g of group XII of gallery C (*ibid.*: 13) or horse A of group XIII of gallery D (*ibid.*: pl. XIII). The respective parallels can be seen in the horses of the left sector of Quinta da Barca 23 (Fig. 4), the ibexes of Vale de Cabrões 5 (Baptista 2009: 166) and Quinta da Barca 56 (Santos 2012: 51) or the horse of Vale de Cabrões 7 (Santos 2012: 58).

This connection with northern Spain, particularly with Asturias, is something that is observed in the Côa valley throughout the Magdalenian period, a period during which no southern influence can be identified (Santos 2012: 46). In fact, although style IV, in its classic form (Leroi-Gourhan, Delluc & Delluc 1995: 283-89), cannot be identified in the Mediterranean region of the Peninsula (Villaverde 1994: 333-34), it is easily recognized in the Côa valley (Santos 2012: 46). Vale de José Esteves 4 (Santos, Aubry & Walter 2014: 45), Vale de Cabrões 32 (Santos 2012: 60), Fariseu 8 (Baptista 2009: 106-7), Canada da Moreira 7 (Fig. 5) or Canada do Inferno 41 (Baptista 2009: 188-89), are among the best examples of 'classic' style IV in the Côa valley. Parallels to these figures are impossible to find in southern Iberia, but are easily spotted in northern Spain. The plaquette of La Güelga (Menéndez & Martínez 1991-1992), the 'wall of engravings' of La Peña de Candamo (Hernández 1919: 46-48; Moure 1981), the ibexes of phase V of Llonín (Fortea, Rasilla & Rodríguez 2004: 22), the engraved panel of La Loja (Alcalde, Breuil & Sierra 1911: 53-59), or some horses of Pindal (e.g. *ibid.*: 73-74) are remarkable examples of parallels to the figures we have mentioned above.

Rocks 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 (Baptista & Gomes 1997: 319-26) or 24 (Baptista 2009: 94-101) of Ribeira de Piscos are

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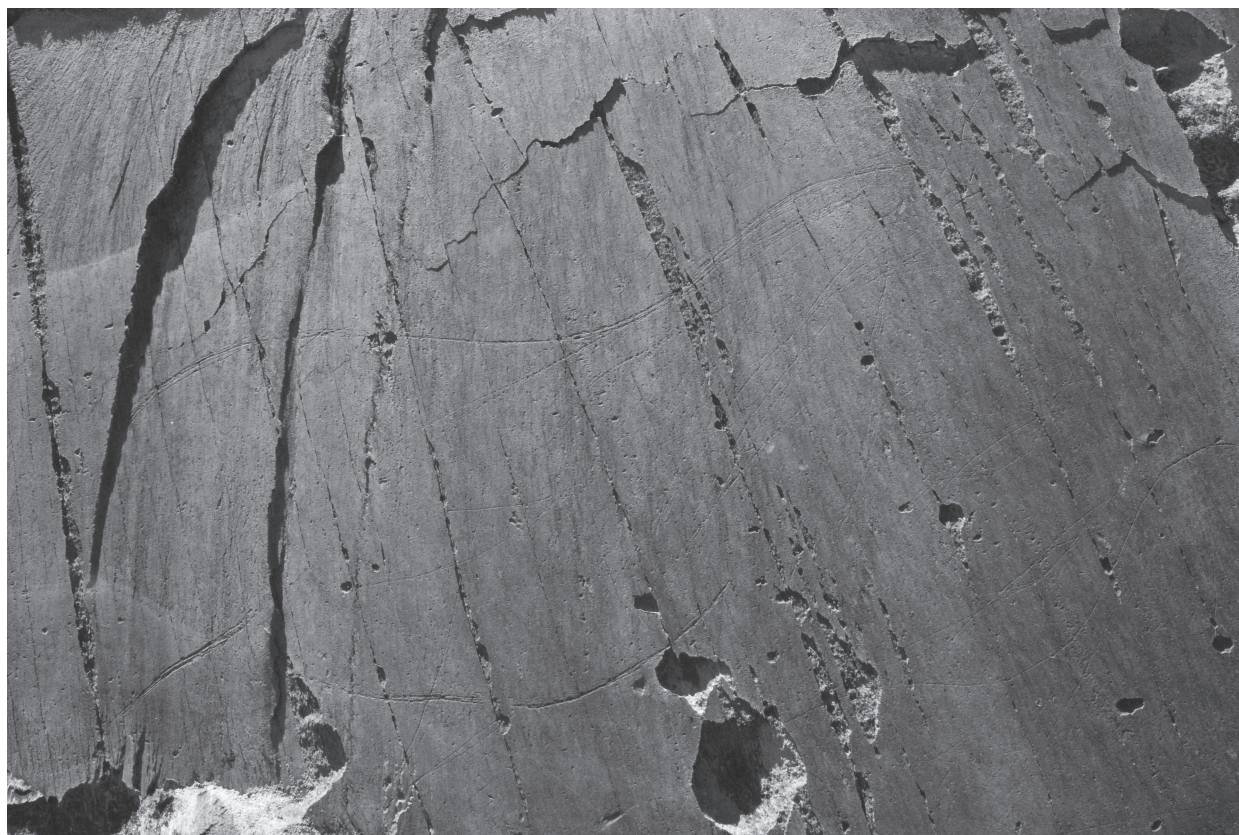


FIGURE 4. HORSE OF THE LEFT SECTOR OF QUINTA DA BARCA 23 (CÔA VALLEY).

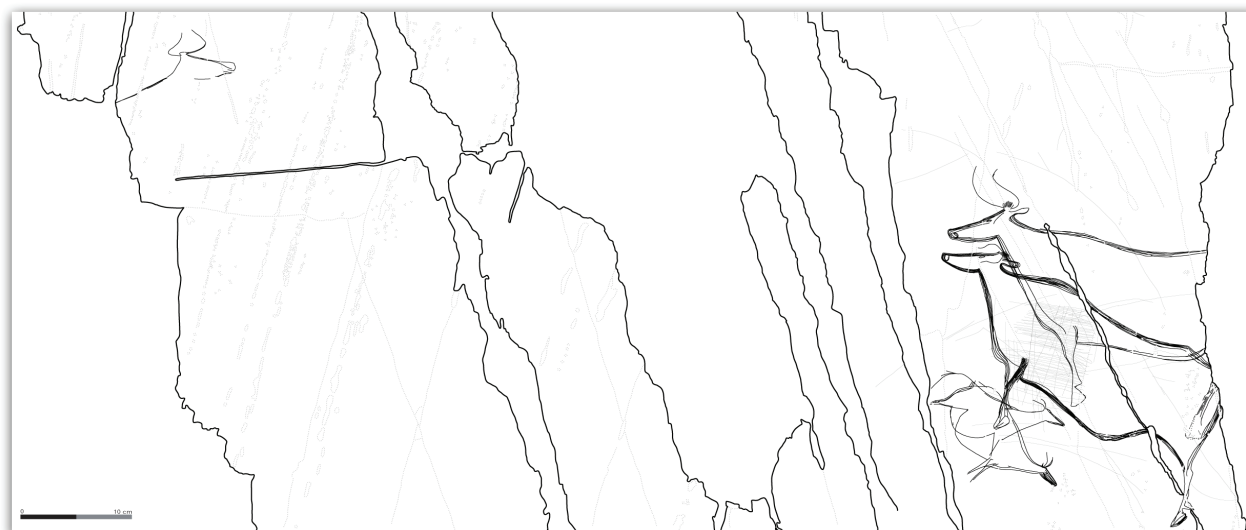


FIGURE 5. DETAIL OF ROCK 7 OF CANADA DA MOREIRA-CÔA VALLEY
(DRAWING BY FERNANDO BARBOSA).

other important examples of this period. Engravings of this phase are mainly produced by incision, but they can also be pecked, or pecked and abraded. Rego de Vide 1 and 6 (Baptista & Gomes 1997: 298, 303) or Quinta da Barca 3 (Baptista 2009: 148-49) are among the best examples.

The greater part of the Siega Verde rock-art is also dated to the late Solutrean/early Magdalenian (e.g. Alcolea & Balbín 2006) and, indeed, very strong similarities can be found between the pecked and abraded rock art of Siega Verde and engravings from such rocks as Rego de Vide 1 and 6, Fariseu 3 and 5, or Canada do Inferno

12 and 22 (Baptista & Gomes 1997: 274-76). However, the high number of engravings of this 'type' in Siega Verde is quite astonishing in comparison with the low numbers found in the Côa valley. This probably has a geoarchaeological explanation.

In fact, the work of Aubry *et al.* (2010) showed the existence of several phases of sedimentation and erosion in the Côa valley. The localization of rocks 12 and 22 of Canada do Inferno, which have Siega Verde-like figures, at a much lower altitude than the nearby panels with engravings of older style (rocks 16 and 17 of Canada do Inferno), can be explained by the probable existence of a phase of erosion between the engraving of the older panels and that of the Siega Verde-like panels. This phase of erosion would have destroyed the ancient pre-Magdalenian soil and 'uncovered' new panels that were used by Magdalenian people to engrave new motifs. Rocks 16 and 17, as a consequence, became out of reach of a man's arm, as they are today. This last fact was usually interpreted as evidence of use of scaffolding, but it should most probably be seen as the result of this process of erosion. However, in most parts of the Côa valley, subsequent phases of sedimentation were also identified, such as at Penascosa, where 5 m of deposits were identified in front of rocks 4 and 5 (Almeida 1997). This permits us to hypothesize the existence of Siega Verde-like art in the Côa valley under heavy deposits of sediment.

Late Solutrean / early Magdalenian or Magdalenian engravings are also identified at Mazouco in the Douro valley, Poço do Caldeirão and Costalta in the Zêzere valley (Baptista 2009: 216-22), Gardete and Fratel in the Tagus valley (Gomes 2010: 476), Molino Manzanéz (Collado 2006) and Porto Portel III (Baptista & Santos 2013: 220-26) on the Guadiana river, and in the cave of Escoural. We only find geometric figures in the sites of the Tagus valley. We also find figurative motifs in Molino Manzanéz and Porto Portel III. These figures are much simpler than those found in the Côa valley. Parallels for these last figures must be sought in southern Iberia (e.g. Bicho *et al.* 2007: 95-116, 119).

In the Côa valley this phase has not been as profoundly studied as the pre-Magdalenian. Apparently, the most represented animals are the same as those of the previous period. It appears, however, that the proportion of aurochs tends to become closer to that of the horses, and the same happens with ibex and red deer. The appearance of human figures should also be stressed. The signs of this phase are more complex than the older ones. We observe an increase of wavy lines, and the emergence of reticulates, triangles, tree-like signs and other complex motifs such as the one of Vale de Cabrões 32 (Santos 2012: 60).

Incision becomes the standard engraving technique. Pecking and abrasion are not, however, absent in the

Côa valley. Moreover, a lot of rocks that were engraved during this phase are probably under the sediments of the valley, and these buried rocks most probably belong to the monumental 'variant' of this phase: a kind of rock art that can be seen nowadays in Siega Verde and only here and there in the Côa valley (Rego da Vide, rocks 12 and 22 of Canada do Inferno or rocks 3 and 5 of Fariseu).

The identification of portable art in well established contexts is a crucial element in clarifying stylistic evolution during the Magdalenian. Unfortunately, portable art from the period is only represented in the Côa valley by the plaquette of Cardina, on which there are only non-figurative incisions (García 2009: 377). Outside the Côa valley, the known portable art is not, likewise, of much help in studying the Magdalenian sequence. In fact, some of the known examples are either very fragmented (e.g. Buraca Grande [Aubry & Moura 1993]) or engraved only with geometric motifs (e.g. Palha [Braz & Gaspar 2003] and Caldeirão [Zilhão 1988]). In the Sabor valley, a huge series of decorated plaquettes has been found in the site of Medal (Figueiredo *et al.* 2014). The zoomorphic motifs depicted on these pieces are undoubtedly very similar to some of the Côa valley and stylistically integrated within style IV. The exhaustive publication of the plaquettes and of their archaeological context is, therefore, awaited with great expectation. Regarding the portable art of western Iberia we must also mention the Magdalenian pebble engraved with angular designs that was discovered on the site of Xarez, in Alentejo (Gomes *et al.* 2000: 97).

Although portable art cannot help us to clarify the Magdalenian rock art sequence, it can help to determine the end of the Magdalenian phase, at least in the Côa valley.

3. Late Magdalenian / early Azilian rock-art

We know that between 12,000 and 10,000 BP the kind of Magdalenian art which we have discussed above was no longer being made. The plaquettes that were discovered in layer 4 of Fariseu, in Quinta da Barca Sul (Aubry 2009b; García 2009: 376-77) and recently in the azilian layer of Cardina (Aubry *et al.* in press) are proof of that fact.

What we see in these plaquettes is the type of art that was defined by Roussot as style V (1990: 199-201). Bueno, Balbín & Alcolea (2007) had already provided evidence for the presence of this style in the Iberian Peninsula, namely in the Douro Basin.

The animals from this period have very geometricised bodies, with usually two legs per pair that are depicted according to an oblique or straight bi-angular perspective; the torsos are long, oval or rectangular in shape; the legs are usually triangular in shape; no anatomical details are visible, especially in the heads.

PREHISTORIC ART AS PREHISTORIC CULTURE

Most importantly, they are mainly incised and their interior is filled with lines. This feature led researchers to draw parallels between this kind of engraving and engraved figures in Cantabria dating to the late Solutrean / early Magdalenian that are, nevertheless, very different stylistically; this happened in the Côa valley (e.g. Baptista 2009: 170), at Domingo García (e.g. Ripoll & Municio 1999: 232) and in the cave of Escoural (e.g. Santos, Gomes & Monteiro 1981: 235). Today, both the plaquettes of Fariseu and the horizontal and vertical graphic stratigraphy of several rocks of the Côa valley (Santos 2012: 45) do not enable us to maintain that idea. This phase is the most widespread in the Côa valley (Santos 2012: 44), being identified on 70% of the 533 known rocks that were engraved in the region during the Pleistocene (Reis 2014: 33). Therefore, Collado was partially right when he defended the need to re-evaluate the chronology of this type of figures in the Côa valley (Collado 2006: 370). It is debatable if these figures should be dated to the Epipalaeolithic (Bueno, Balbín & Alcolea 2007: 553), but it is undeniable that they are more recent than late Solutrean / early Magdalenian.

Besides incision, other techniques are known, such as pecking (e.g. Canada do Inferno 34 [Baptista & Gomes 1997: 296]) or red painting (e.g. Faia 1 [Baptista 2009: 47]).

In the Côa valley, the bestiary of this period is dominated by the red deer, followed by ibex and horses, leaving aurochs as a residual species. In Escoural, however, ibexes are not known and horses are much more represented. This phase is also represented in Guadiana, at least at Moinhola 30 (Baptista & Santos 2013: 147-49).

4. Some final remarks

The common features and dissimilarities that we observe in Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art must be explained within the Iberian context of which they are part.

Portuguese rock art of pre-Magdalenian times is very homogeneous. Likewise, rock art with the same morphological features is observed in several other sites of France and Spain (Guy 2000), which suggests a strong social interaction between people living in south-western Europe at the time (Zilhão 2003), as well as a very strict codification of the ways of depicting animals during this period (Guy 2003). Zilhão (2003) defended the idea that this phenomenon was due to the cold conditions of the Pleniglacial, which promoted a greater need for social interaction.

We believe that the ‘upgrading’ of that reasoning can help us to explain the remaining sequence of the Palaeolithic rock art of western Iberia. In fact, the need for social interaction decreased when the climate became

milder after the end of the Pleniglacial (Santos 2012: 46). This led to a regionalization of contacts, and the previous homogeneity of the rock art is no longer found. Consequently, during the Magdalenian we continue to identify in the Côa valley and in Siega Verde strong relations with the Cantabrian region but not with southern Iberia. On the other hand, in Escoural or Guadiana we find graphic entities that are more closely related to the Magdalenian rock art of southern and eastern Iberia.

However, the beginning of the late Dryas and the reappearance of very cold conditions triggered a new need for social interactions, and thus long-distance contacts returned and rock art became more homogeneous once again, as is seen in the advent of ‘style V’ in several distant parts of Iberia.

This is obviously a very schematic view, imposed by the space limitations of this text. Reality, as always, was certainly more complex. For instance, if pre-Magdalenian times were undoubtedly a period of great formal homogeneity, this does not necessarily mean that local traditions did not exist and privileged relations between specific regions were not established. Not only have substantial differences already been noticed between the sites of the western and eastern Meseta (e.g. Alcolea & Balbín 2012), but also a factor analysis of the horses of La Griega showed a stronger connection of this site with southeastern Iberia than with the Cantabrian region or western Iberia (Corchón *et al.* 2012). On the other hand, this privileged relationship between the eastern Meseta and southeastern Iberia is no longer evident during the Magdalenian, when style IV is attested at Domingo García (e.g. rock 6 of Las Canteras [Ripoll & Municio 1999: 151-52]).

On the other hand, it should be stressed that there are two other known Portuguese Palaeolithic sites that we have not taken into account in this narrative. One is the site of Fraga do Gato in the Douro valley; although most probably Palaeolithic (Baptista 2009: 227), its date is hard to determine with any accuracy; the other is Monte de Góios in the Minho valley (Gomes 2007: 121) of which very little is currently known. The location of this last site strongly brings to mind a rock identified at the site of Vinhas, also in the Minho province, with a probable horse depiction that was compared to the horses of Pech-Merle and Penascosa (Cruz & Cardoso 2011: 262, 270; Cardoso 2014: 236-38, 270-71). Unfortunately, this rock was destroyed shortly after it was discovered, and all we have of it is a photo that lacks the required detail. After a thorough examination of that photo, we are not even sure if a horse is depicted there; for this reason we think that it should not be included among Portuguese Palaeolithic rock art sites. Last but not least, we must underline the need to further investigate the Erges valley where some clues that point to the existence of Palaeolithic rock art were found (Gomes 2010: 476; Henriques *et al.* 2011).

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