Prehistoric Pottery
People, pattern and purpose

Edited by
Alex Gibson

BAR International Series 1156
2003
CHAPTER 11

PATTERNS OF SPATIAL REGULARITY IN LATE PREHISTORIC MATERIAL CULTURE STYLES OF THE NW IBERIAN PENINSULA

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Abstract
This paper explores the relationship between archaeological material culture and social landscapes in Prehistoric societies. It argues that it is possible to find and define regularities between ceramic styles (particularly decorative styles) and the strategies used to construct the cultural landscape. This hypothesis is based on the principle that both phenomena are expressed throughout spatial forms whose organisation was determined by the codes for representing space that existed within a given socio-cultural order.

Style and landscape: the basis of the study

When dealing with elements of material culture, particularly ceramics, is it possible to record the same type of spatial regularities that appear in other phenomenological levels of prehistoric socio-cultural formations? Or, more generally - is it possible to discover relationships within material culture with the models of organisation used for the cultural landscape, and to determine if the same principles of structural codification were applied in both environments? May we therefore conclude that beneath the styles of material culture, there lies the same formal style seen in the social landscape, as if something we refer to as ‘lifestyle’ impregnated the social world at all levels, was echoed at every level of the ‘real world’, and took shape as decorative, personal and group styles, styles of material culture and activity, fashion and fabrication? These are all different yet similar, as the ‘lifestyle’ in real terms would be the formalisation of the pattern of rationality of a particular socio-cultural context, and the material styles would instead be the specific versions of that rationality which, by being objectivised, make it real, and by being repeated, make it ‘good’. May we then consider that by analysing material styles spatially, observing their dimensions and spatial attributes, this is the same as studying the ‘stylistic spaces’ (using this slightly forced expression to describe the spatial models that characterise a material style)?

These questions led to the setting up of a systematic programme to investigate the relationships between material culture and the social landscape, combining ‘Pottery Archaeology’ with Landscape Archaeology. The investigations carried out from this perspective in recent years with the Galician ceramic record from the Neolithic and Bronze Age (Prieto 1998, 1999, 2002a, 2002b and 2002c) as well as the Iron Age, referred to as the Hillfort Culture or Cultura Castrixa (Cobas 1995, 1997 and 1999), now allow us to explore these questions and to offer some hypothetical explanations (see Cobas and Prieto 1998a, 1998b and 2002). We therefore arrive at the point where the ingratiations of a formal study of material elements, that on one hand refuses to once again reproduce the conventional typological proposals with the awareness that this working model is now exhausted, but on the other hand resists rushing in with radical alternatives (as has been done by so many different types of ‘revolutionary’ Archaeology, which set about reconstructing before they have even finished deconstructing), conscious that any work carried out using archaeological material must first give a rigorous examination of its empirical dimensions, starts to bear fruit when we open ourselves to new questions concerning our investigations, and possibilities for our understanding of the subject.

Fig.11.1: Galicia in Europe.

In this paper, our aim is to offer a joint vision of these different investigations and subjects, and will carry out a summary in which we integrate ceramic production with the social landscape. To do so, we have focused on a revision of ceramic styles from Late Prehistory in Galicia

1 This subject was initially covered in Cobas, Criado and Prieto (1998).
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(north western Spain), from the Neolithic to the Iron Age. We go on to compare them with styles of parietal art from these periods, and finally contextualise both phenomena within the models of landscape and spatial representation that we have reconstructed for these periods. Although we have used an empirical record from Galicia, which strictly refers to the north western Iberian Peninsula, the archaeological elements considered are widely varied and from a large area, and if any credence or significance is to be given to the proposals we will go on to make, then these should have a much wider scope and projection.

We would warn anyone who is tempted to consider that these positions have a certain deterministic ring, that in reality they are the result of applying the principles of Marx and Levi-Strauss, or materialist-structural concepts, to the stylistic study of material culture, that establish the material unity of all that is real, and go on to seek out relationships of compatibility between all of the levels that form reality as a whole.

Theoretical and methodological issues

Styles of material culture may be recognised in material objects. But this is not a random occurrence; it happens because at microscopic level, in details, in short, interpersonal spaces and at proxemic level, style is basic, because it is what creates differences in a microcosmic universe that generally tends towards interdetermination and ambiguity, in which closeness dilutes the differences between individuals or groups, at the same time as it reinforces the need to differentiate them².

In agreement with Conkey and Hastorf (1990), we believe that it is important to differentiate between the concept of style as a "methodological-analytical utility", used to organise objects from the past being studied, and the concept of style as a "potential source of meaning" about these societies in the past. Since the first archaeological studies carried out into style (Deetz 1965), attempts have been made to explain both the meaning and concept of style for past societies, as well as the causes of stylistic change, from a single point of view. Different schools of thought have attempted to reach a single answer, or 'revealed truth' (a concept applied by Hill 1987 to studies of the Iron Age) about the active role of style within the society being studied. This answer was based on the non-explicit belief that there is a universal and timeless behaviour that is identical to the logic of western European man (Hill 1987) and the subsequent supposition of the "predictability of history" (Braun 1991). However, we suggest that the value of style is precisely contained within the diversity of the active role of objects from the past, as this variety depends on each of the societies studied. In this case, the fact that we are working with societies that have now disappeared, and with a diachronic perspective, leads to the biggest problem faced by our discipline, as it is impossible to infer types of social organisation from the formal characteristics of material culture.

We are more inclined towards a definition of style in its widest sense (Fig. 11.2), that does not presuppose a determinist explanation of the meaning of style for past societies, but instead acts as a methodological tool for studying their material culture. We therefore identify style simply as the patterns of formal regularity that exist in different codes of material culture, that make them coherent with each other, and have a specific pattern of rationality. However, as we are dealing with long-vanished societies, and it is difficult to access the real implication or implications of the existence of a style, and the cause or causes of changes in style, our interest is concentrated on identifying as many possible implications and causes (cfr. Braun 1991). Only at a later stage may we risk possible interpretations of these phenomena.

This previous definition supposes that style is really "the materialisation (or formalisation) of the system of power" (Prieto 1998, 1999: 75 and 2002a), and implies regularity in lifestyles (or at least a degree of continuity between them). This means that at least from a theoretical point of view, it is necessary to recognise that there is the same style not only in material products, but also in artificial constructions, in ways of using the land, ways of modifying the surroundings, and ways of constructing the landscape. In the final analysis, both material culture and the social landscape, like any other product-effect of social activity, are the objectivisation of social beings and rationality³.

Seen in this light, it would appear to be legitimate to use the characterisable styles of material culture to discover and interpret lifestyles, and vice-versa, it is justifiable to extrapolate the recognisable meaning of lifestyles in order to be able to comprehend the styles of material culture.

Considering that ceramics, like any other human product, is the formalisation of a specific rationality, we propose that the way of studying material culture should be through what we refer to as formal analysis, consisting of the study of forms and the way in which these are related with each other, taking 'form' to mean not only the morphology and the finished product, but instead the array of activities, ideas, premises and mental schemes that concur in its elaboration (see Cobas and Prieto 1998a for the application of formal analysis to material culture, and Criado 1999 for its application in Landscape Archaeology). Formal analysis includes both the initial description as well as the classification of the material.

³ We consider style as a global pattern or abstraction; category as being the style of specialised abstractions or general versions within this style, and tendency as the style of the particular specialisations or variations of these categories.

² Although this issue has been covered by numerous authors, particular mention should be made of P.Bourdieu in La distinción, who gives a masterly description of the relationships between taste and social conditions, and has contributed to creating the theoretical and methodological framework for dealing with these phenomena (Bourdieu, 1988).
We believe that the working programme derived from all this may be carried out in a satisfactory way using the same theoretical-methodological model we previously proposed, in order to define and interpret social landscapes, and which involve a methodology for study that is based on four well differentiated and articulated stages (Criado 1999). We have detailed the methodological procedure we will use in a diagram that makes it possible to see the relationship each object dealt with has with the rest, and each analytical stage with the group of objects as a whole (Figs 11.3 and 11.4).

Description and formal analysis are also our starting point in this case. In the first stage of the study (section 2), we will attempt to establish the basic form or hypothetical specific model of each of the specific levels that form each ceramic group considered (treatment of the raw material, morphology, decoration, etcetera, and then each of the ceramic styles contemplated. Given the specific nature of the objects being studied, this analysis should be reinforced with procedures that are adapted to the formal description of ceramic material culture, such as the Technological Operative Chain, which we will present in more detail below (see section 1.3)\(^4\).

Once the specific formal schemes have been revealed, in the second phase (section 3), we revise the formal attributes of the different stylistic directions, with the aim of breaking down their lines of strength and fundamental organisational codes. This allows us to define the most prominent lines of regularity, generalise the specific model for establishing an ideal specific model for each

\(^4\) Formal description, based on creating the different phases of the operative technological chain, was carried out using the Potes Database, details of which are given in Cobas, González and Prieto (1995 and 1996) and in Cobas and Prieto (1998c).
Fig. 11.3: Significant dimensions of style from Landscape Archaeology
Fig. 11.4: Specific phases of formal analysis.

ceramic style, and to define what actually forms the constant and generic rule for this group. In the third stage (section 4) we will compare each ceramic style with other phenomenological areas from the same culture backdrop, in order to see if the same ideal model reappears in them, or at least any transformations that took place. In our case, the most important areas used for comparison are parietal art and the forms of the cultural landscape. The correspondences that exist between the codes will make it possible to identify a common pattern of formal regularity and to glimpse the ideal generic model of the styles of material culture from that same horizon, or what
we refer to as ‘lifestyle’. It is important to note that in comparison with the stage when ceramic style is defined, considering all of the stages of the technological operative chain, this stage is based above all on the decorative aspects of the codes being compared: ceramics and parietal art.

By comparing these models with each other, and observing their similarities and differences, it will be possible (in the fourth stage, section 0) to interpret the social-symbolic meaning contained in each of these models.

This is the general methodological system that we will follow. We will not go any further in explaining and justifying it, as this has already been dealt with in greater detail elsewhere (Criado 1999, Cobas 1997 and 2002). However, it is necessary (see section 0) to specify the methodological details that refer to the first two analytical stages and to their adaptation, in order to consider prehistoric ceramics.

Theoretical principles and working hypotheses

As a starting point for this investigation, we propose the following theoretical principles:
The social products that are created within a community are intimately related to all of the areas of their reality, both material and imaginary. Therefore the characteristics and elements of a specific society are reflected in all of the different areas of material production, leading to complementary relationships between codes, as proposed by Lévi-Strauss (1987) for the study of myths or manifestations of different areas of material culture. This means that by examining any of the codes produced by the same culture, it is possible to study the rest, as they correspond to the same cultural norms (Lévi-Strauss 1986: 237 ss., Criado 1993b: 41).

Pottery, like any product of social action, is also conditioned by a specific strategy of ‘visibilisation’ (borrowing a term from Criado 1993b) that operates to manifest in one way or another the presence and character of the social being.

Pottery, like architecture or types of land use, is also the physical form of a specific system of spatial representation, and at the same time a device or technology for domesticking space, and for giving a sense of direction to experience and perception of the surroundings.

As seeing is one of the first and most important procedures for conforming social space, these cultural values also impose a way of seeing. Pottery, like any material product, is made to be seen, and imposes a specific sense of vision, or a specific way of being seen.

A number of working hypotheses may be extracted from these points:

The way of looking that is imposed by ceramics, or the way in which it should be seen, is not exclusive to it, but is instead the same as appears in other expressive and phenomenological areas of the same culture.

More specifically, we believe that it is possible to establish a direct relationship between ways of looking at ceramics, and ways of looking at parietal art.

These ways of looking finally correspond to the strategies of visualisation of material culture, and of construction of the social landscape, that operate in the socio-cultural context that each ceramic and artistic group belongs to.

Formal analysis and stylistic characterisation: methodological notes

The concept of the Technological Operative Chain most clearly contains the principles that serve as the basis for our proposal for studying material culture, as by using it to bring together aspects of a descriptive, analytical and interpretative nature, it is possible to define the formal patterns of regularity and the differences that exist in material culture throughout the technological process.

The concept of the Technological Operative Chain (TOC) is taken from studies of stone technology; however, in order to apply it to the study of ceramic materials we have not directly transposed it as was done at first (see the historiography of the concept in Merino 1994), but instead it has been completed with the advances that this concept has acquired in recent years. Our way of understanding and applying the TOC has points that are related, and in some cases which coincide, with a line of investigation that has only been developed in the field of Anthropology (specifically by French Structural Anthropology), or, in less frequent cases, in the field of archaeology considered according to anthropological parameters, known as Technological Anthropology, whose leading light is Pierre Lemonnier (1986: 147 and 1991), and which aims to offer a cultural approximation to technological systems (Gosselain 1992: 559).

The TOC is an analytical and interpretative tool that makes it possible to offer an orderly description of the archaeological record. It contains all of the instances and circumstances that determine the process of creating ceramic elements. These instances include three essential aspects that are profoundly interwoven: the technical aspects in the strictest sense, which may be correctly referred to as the technical chain; the aspects that refer to

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5 The concept of the Technological Operative Chain has been defined and widely developed in several studies (Cobas 1995 and 1997, Prieto 1993, 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2002a) although at present it has not been widely published (Prieto 1995, Cobas and Prieto 1998a, 1998b and 2002).
Fig. 11.5: Diagram of the Technological Operative Chain.

Fig. 11.6: Methodological diagram of the study of decoration in ceramics from late prehistory: decorative theme showing an example.
the social instances in which the social group and the individual are integrated within the historical context, that we refer to as the conceptual chain; and finally, the result of these two processes, that we refer to as the final product. However, this is a methodological division, as all of them are interrelated (Fig. 11.5).

By incorporating the concept of the TOC we have introduced a new focus into the study of ceramic material culture. Normally, studies into style are only based on the most material and apparent aspects, and generally on the factors that are most susceptible to change (Lemonnier, 1986), morphology and decoration, that are represented in the finished product, therefore only offering a partial image of the formal characteristics of the objects. In order to overcome this situation, we have to study the range of possibilities that may be chosen from among equally viable options in the TOC. This approximation makes it possible to have access to the formal characteristics as a whole, as instead of paying attention only to certain features of the final product, all of its features are considered, and instead of only considering the options used for a certain product, all of the possible options are considered. This analysis therefore makes it possible to recover both the active role of the object in past societies, the capacity of the individual agent, and the predetermination provided by the existence of a possibility of variable cultural choice for each society (what Lemonnier—1986: 153—called a ‘socially pertinent technological choice’) that goes beyond external constraints that make it possible to refer to a sole cause. Within the concept of the TOC, the technological aspect is incorporated as a new parameter of style; here, by being able to concentrate on the technical processes, we may also have access to criteria that are more resistant to change, and which therefore offer a more precise approximation to past societies (Gosselain 1992).

Once the working data have been obtained from the formal analysis carried out using the TOC, we propose making a synthetic characterisation of each ceramic style, based on the following group of operations and data. Above all, we will set out to make a formal and synthetic description of each ceramic style in relation to the TOC, defining the main morphological, technical and decorative features of each ceramic style (raw material, modelling, morphology, finish and firing).

There follows a description of the general characteristics of the ceramic styles covered, considering all of the different aspects of the Technological Operative Chain. We then attempt to deconstruct the main regularities used in the configuration of the decoration used in each ceramic style, to make it easier to then compare it with other codes from material culture, particularly parietal art (section 4). To do so, we have used an analogy derived from Landscape Archaeology: in the same way as movement and vision are two fundamental resources for building social space, we will characterise each ceramic style by observing the type of internal rhythm, the movement this communicates to the viewer, its pattern of ‘visibilisation’, and the ‘way of looking’ imposed by its formal composition. We should therefore focus mainly on the:

1) Subject of the decoration (Fig. 11.6): We will concentrate on three levels of information: elements, motifs and decorative schemes. In the case of the elements used, the aim is to determine if the decoration used is formed by naturalistic, schematic or geometric elements. In fact, in Prehistoric Galician pottery only geometric motifs have been found, although it is important to consider the possibility of there being other alternatives. With the decorative motifs, the aim is to identify their form and composition. Finally, we consider the decorative scheme according to the aggregation pattern used

2) Morphology of the decoration (Fig. 11.7): Here we concentrate on the situation, composition, definition, direction, visibility and visualisation of the decoration, by determining:

1. The situation of the decoration: its position on the piece as a whole, considering if it is zonal or integral.

2. Its composition: if the decoration is distributed in a disorderly fashion, or if it forms panels, friezes or bands.

3. Delimitation: if the decorative motifs are defined or merely separated, how this is accomplished, and the elements used.


5. Visibility: if the decoration used on a piece of pottery is monumental, visible, invisible or concealed, according to the global formal features that characterise it.

3) ‘Reading’ of the decoration (Fig. 11.8): or the visibility conditions of the piece, the way in which the decoration is contemplated, by determining:

6. The direction used for ‘reading’, or the decoration’s ‘axis of vision’.

7. The variety of static and dynamic points of view used to see the decoration on a ceramic piece.

8. The sense of movement needed to appreciate the decoration, by combining the two previous points.

Further problems

Before we continue, we should consider and anticipate a series of problems and issues that because of their general nature may affect the working process and its results in different ways.

Most importantly, it is necessary to start with a consideration that is partly a criticism of our own work,
partly a recognition of its limitations, and partly an attempt to overcome these limitations.

Our way of dealing with studies of material culture from an archaeological point of view has three main problems, which are actually different facets of the same problem. One is epistemological, another empirical, and another ontological.

The first is the fact that the level of analysis we propose has a projection and character that is so generic that if it really served for anything, it would not be to characterise ceramic styles and their relationship with specific socio-cultural contexts in Galician Prehistory, but instead to examine correspondences in the widest sense between material culture, systems of spatial representations, and models of rationality in European Prehistory.

The second is the problem caused by the characteristics of the archaeological record, as the data we have are not homogenous. These differences are related to a series of issues, such as the amount of material available (there is almost a complete lack of material from the Neolithic7) and also the context in which it appears (we have domestic and funerary contexts for the Bronze Age, but not for the Iron Age, for which we only have the domestic context), or its stratigraphic context (we have clear stratigraphic contexts for the Iron Age, but none for the Bronze Age).

The third problems is the fact that the nature of the subject being studied means that it may only be integrally comprehended in a general manner. A ceramic style, like any other style of material culture that History and Anthropology allows us to recognise (Romanesque, for example), is a phenomenon with a very wide extension and meaning. It does not correspond to a local context (Galicia, for example) in which this style may be significant, but instead its real significance lies in its general projection. It is justifiable to ask if we may really

7 Further details should be offered on this point, as although at the end of the 1980's the Galician Neolithic was evaluated on the basis of two sites from the early period (O Reiro and A Cuncho), as well as others (O Regueiro, A Paraxeira, A Fontenla and O Fixón) that supposedly contained 'cardial' pottery (Vázquez 1988: 332-3) and which actually turned out to be bell-beaker pottery decorated with shell marks, today there is a greater number of Neolithic sites. During work carried out by our Laboratory controlling the archaeological impact of public works, we have documented a total of 16 sites since 1992 (Prieto 2001), together with 8 other sites found in the hills of O Bocelo (González 1991), and others in the Baixa Limia region (Eguileta 1996 and 1997).
say anything substantial about bell beaker pottery or Romanesque materials if we only study its local variations. It appears quite obvious that it is possible to discover to what extent a local style is an adaptation of the general syntax, and to evaluate what this specific version of the style signifies, although it is also important to ask if whether it is also more than is done by our own study, as compared to a good characterisation of the local data, there is still no parallel definition of the general features.

In real terms, we are constrained to studying material phenomena at local level, although we should know from a theoretical viewpoint that these are only significant if we observe them on a scale that at least takes in the Atlantic regions, western Europe, or even Europe as a whole. Is it possible for an archaeologist to imagine what would happen if we had to reconstruct not only the iconographic repertoire and system of beliefs of Christianity, but also the concept of the individual, existence, the community and relationship with the world connected with it, limiting ourselves to study the sculpted exterior of Romanesque Galician churches, gargoyles and all?

This is the paradox, and indeed the tragedy of archaeology: we may only study phenomena in their specific physical form, through hyperspecialised systems of study, when in fact the phenomena being studied are only significant at a general level.

Ceramic forms (phase 1)

In this section we will carry out a formal analysis that allows us to identify the basic form of each of the levels that form a specific ceramic group or style, and characterise the main ceramic styles from Prehistory in the north western Iberian Peninsula.

Seven stylistic horizons have been identified in prehistoric and protohistoric pottery from this region, from the start of the Neolithic until the Iron Age. The scarcity of available data undoubtedly determines that the stylistic repertoire is smaller than that reported for other areas, although the archaeological record we do possess allows us to see that these styles are contained within the main stylistic tendencies of Atlantic Prehistory, offering in reality a local, Galician version of these styles.

There follows a description of each of these previous styles, their categories and stylistic tendencies. We will carry out a synthetic description of the formal features of each ceramic style, making an effort to not refer to the aspects we will deal with in more detail in subsequent sections. This description is made according to the TOC (we have included a diagram to avoid over-extending ourselves in the text), and is complemented in section 3 by making specific reference to the aspects detailed in section 1.3.

The pottery techniques throughout Late Prehistory are essentially the same. Yet this does not mean that there are no apparent technological changes. Instead there are significant transformations in the technology that moved at the same rhythm as changes in the other cultural standards from prehistoric societies.

In general, it may be seen that there is a process of change that leads from the Neolithic, marked by a formal similarity in ceramic traditions, to the Iron Age, characterised by variability. However, this change did not take place in a linear fashion, but was instead interrupted, leading to the following progression, with four main inflexion points: a) from the Early Neolithic onwards there was a progressive increase in variability, which
reached its peak in the Early Bronze Age, b) in the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age, there was a decrease in ceramic variability c) from the early Iron Age onwards, there was again an increase in variability that culminated in the second Iron Age, and d) variability again decreased at the end of the Iron Age, and on contact with the Roman Empire (Fig. 11.9). We will deal with these styles in the following sections.

**Neolithic period**

In the Neolithic, all ceramics are similar from a morphological and technical point of view. Only the decoration used makes it possible to indicate differences between categories within the group of ceramics as a whole, to identify stylistic tendencies (Prieto Martínez 1998), and allows us to define the distance between two ceramic styles that relatively correspond to the Early and Mid Neolithic, and the Late Neolithic (Prieto 2001a and 2002b) (see summary in Table 1.1).

Pottery from the Early and Mid Neolithic (Fig. 11.10) is characterised by a morphological homogeneity (with an emphasis on simple profiles) and technique (with a predominance of light colours, average finishes, firing in an oxidising environment, and matt finish). The occasional appearance of some decorated pottery (mainly using the impression technique) does not alter this uniformity. This means that as the same technical process is used for making all of the vessels, we consider that all of the pottery constitutes the same formal category, and even though the decoration used is so uniform, we are able to identify two different formal groups or stylistic tendencies within this category: decorated and undecorated pottery. There are few examples of the association of decorated and undecorated pottery, as generally only undecorated pieces are found. The fragmentation of the pottery and the technical features of the clay used do not offer suitable significant information to define the material, without the help of other resources such as stratigraphy or absolute chronology.

Pottery in the Late Neolithic (Fig. 11.11) is once again characterised by its morphological uniformity (with a predominance of simple profiles, although a composite cracked or 'longobordo' morphology was introduced, that had not been seen previously) and technique (with a predominance of the same features seen in the Early and Mid Neolithic). However, some differences may be seen, mainly in the decoration used (mainly incised, with metopes and friezes, known as 'Penha' ceramics') that make it possible to characterise two categories within the same style. These categories are undecorated and decorated pottery.

Decoration becomes an important feature that marks a differentiation within the ceramic groups; furthermore, within the category of decorated ceramics, we have detected three stylistic tendencies, classified according to colour, finish, decoration and context. In domestic contexts there is a predominance of two tendencies, one with borders (dark, burnished and with a shiny appearance due to the mica present on its surface) and a simple metope style with one or two decorative elements per vessel (light, smooth and with a shiny appearance); in funerary contexts we have documented a third stylistic tendency, referred to as 'complex' metope style, with five or six decorative elements per vessel, with black slip, and a highly polished appearance.

**The Bronze Age**

In the Bronze Age, the differences found in ceramics are not only seen in their decoration, specifically in the bell-beaker pottery tradition, but also in technical and morphological aspects that help to reaffirm a series of differences. There are also differences within each ceramic category (undecorated and decorated), although this is not found in sites without bell-beaker pottery; here undecorated and decorated pottery once again shares morphological and technical features, and the decoration used is difficult to detect on the surface of the clay (Prieto Martínez 1999). This means that two ceramic styles may be clearly seen in the Bronze Age (Prieto 2001a and 2002c) (see summary in Table 1.2).

Recent studies (Prieto 1998, 1999, 2002a) have made it possible to identify a ceramic style from the Early Bronze Age (Fig. 11.12) that is characterised by the presence of three ceramic categories that are interrelated both formally and contextually through a complex series of oppositions; this type of relationship implies a profound change with regard to the previously existing tradition. The three ceramic categories that have been defined are: decorated bell-beaker pottery, non-bell beaker undecorated and decorated pottery; the most frequently-found decorated ceramics are bell-beaker pottery (the decorative features used in domestic non-bell beaker pottery is reminiscent of the Early and Mid Neolithic tradition), although there is a quantitative predominance of undecorated pottery (with a generally rougher appearance). Bell-beaker pottery (with four stylistic tendencies) appears in occupational and monumental funerary contexts. Undecorated pottery (with two tendencies) that appears in the funerary context, and shares the same technical features as bell-beaker pottery (the most predominant morphologies are tapered vessels and 'tartario'-type pieces), corresponds to individual and

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9 In general terms, this type of pottery is related to ceramics from the Early and Mid-Chalcolithic period in northern Portugal (studied in detail by S.O. Jorge in 1986) and the southern half of the Peninsula, containing what have been referred to as 'symbolic ceramics'.

10 Traditionally, this type of pottery is associated with the late Chalcolithic period, although we consider that the presence of this type of ceramics, together with the general characteristics of other elements from the archaeological record (the ceramic style and elements of material culture known for that period) imply a series of transformations that indicate a socio-cultural change and separation from what is referred to as the Late Neolithic in the case of Galicia, or as the Late Chalcolithic in other parts of the peninsula.
Fig. 11.10: Formal characterisation of early/mid Neolithic pottery in Galicia (NW Spain).
Fig. 11.11: Formal characterisation of Galician late Neolithic pottery.
### Table 11.1: Characteristics of Neolithic ceramic styles in the north-western Iberian Peninsula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supply of Raw Material</th>
<th>Early and Mid Neolithic</th>
<th>Late Neolithic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of the Raw Material (textures, grain and distribution)</td>
<td>Fine and rough compact</td>
<td>Fine and medium compact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mica, granite</td>
<td>Granite, mica, quartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scarce, irregular</td>
<td>Abundant, irregular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelling</td>
<td>Simple, closed (lugs) and open composite (with or without smoothing)</td>
<td>Simple, closed, closed composite (flexed) and open composite (cracked)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish Decoration Techniques</td>
<td>Rough and medium finish. Fine smoothing and burnishing in exceptional cases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements Motifs</td>
<td>Impression (punch and nails)</td>
<td>Incision (punch and comb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incision (punch): rare</td>
<td>Impression (punch and comb): large impressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curved lines, Homogeneity</td>
<td>Straight and curved lines, Variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designs (Direction, situation, grouping, position, composition, 'reading')</td>
<td>Rupture: non-decorated spaces Small size, Homogeneity</td>
<td>Rupture: changes in direction of elements and non-decorated spaces Large size, Variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firing</td>
<td>Oxidising. Monochrome in both firing conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling</td>
<td>Gentle light, matt tones. Exception: dark, lustrous tones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Product</td>
<td>1 category with 2 stylistic tendencies. Morphotechnical similarity. Homogeneity of contexts</td>
<td>2 categories with 4 stylistic tendencies. Morphotechnical similarity. Contextual diversity in decorated ceramics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 11.2: Characteristics of ceramic styles from the Bronze Age in the north-western Iberian Peninsula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supply of Raw Material</th>
<th>Early Bronze Age</th>
<th>Late Bronze Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of the Raw Material (textures, grain and distribution)</td>
<td>Large, compact Quartz Scarce and irregular</td>
<td>Fine, compact Mica Scarce and regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium, compact Mica, quartz, granite, Scarce and irregular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modelling</td>
<td>Simple closed and open Closed composite Accessory elements</td>
<td>Simple closed Open composite (flexed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple closed and open. Closed composite (flexed) and open composite (cracked)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish</td>
<td>Rough smoothing Fine smoothing and polishing in exceptional cases</td>
<td>Fine smoothing and burnishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rough smoothing and medium burnishing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decoration Techniques</td>
<td>Impression (nails), Dragging (fingers), Small impressions</td>
<td>Impression (comb, shell, punch, cord). Incision (punch). Small impressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incision (punch), Impression (comb). Accessory elements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements Motifs</td>
<td>Straight lines, Homogeneity</td>
<td>Straight lines, Homogeneity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firing</td>
<td>Monochrome oxidant</td>
<td>'Sandwich' Oxidant Monochrome, reducing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling</td>
<td>Gentle, light matt tones. Exception: lustrous</td>
<td>Strong, lustrous light and dark tones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtle, light matt tones. Exception: dark, lustrous tones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Product</td>
<td>3 categories with 7 stylistic tendencies. Formal diversity. Important contextual variability</td>
<td>1 category with 3 stylistic tendencies. Morphotechnical similarity. Little contextual diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
invisible burials; however, in domestic contexts they are generally roughly finished, and are easily differentiated from the decorated pottery. Finally, non-bell beaker decorated pottery presents a tendency with two variants; one which shares morphological and technical features that at times are similar to undecorated domestic pottery, and another that is more similar to bell-beaker pottery.

The other style presents features that are quite the opposite in the formal relationships that exist within it, and which may be attributed to the Late Bronze Age (Fig. 11.13). It is characterised by achieving a clear formal similarity in the ceramic group as a whole, and by the lack of pottery from the bell-beaker tradition. From our observations, we may propose that at this time there was a return to the morphological and technical similarity between undecorated and decorated pottery that had been one of the most characteristic features of Neolithic styles. However, the formal relationships that exist in pottery from these sites and the manufacturing processes involved are different, and more complex than in the Neolithic. A formal similarity has also been seen in the contexts we know, and there do not appear to be any
Fig. 11.13: Formal characterisation of late Bronze Age pottery in Galicia

Differences in the way pottery was made. In the light of this similarity, we believe that ceramic style from the Late Bronze Age was formed by a ceramic category and three stylistic tendencies: decorated, which we could refer to as belonging to the 'local tradition'; undecorated, without any accessories on the outside of the piece, and pottery decorated with accessory elements (this was the first time that accessory elements were developed as an adornment\(^\text{11}\)), starting a feature that would continue to be developed throughout the Iron Age.

\(^{11}\) The consideration of accessory elements as being decorative or non-decorative is based on their size, distribution and situation. Until the Late Bronze Age, accessory elements such as lugs and cordage were used in very specific parts of the piece (close to the base or the border), and were limited to forming a medium sized horizontal line. The combination of these elements made it easier to handle the object. In the

The Iron Age

As recent investigations have shown (Cobas 1997 and 1999) a single ceramic style was maintained throughout all of the Iron Age (nearly one thousand years), that has only been documented in the domestic context, the only context known for this period to date. However, it is possible to differentiate stronger or weaker categories and stylistic tendencies within it, some of which have a

Late Bronze Age, the size of these elements shrank considerably in domestic contexts, in some cases with the whole receptacle combining its elements as a grid. However, in funerary contexts, although these were larger, they were combined in horizontal lines containing cordage and lugs in the same piece, generally presenting characteristics that were more suited for decorative purposes than for the actual use of the piece (often making it more uncomfortable to use).
spatial significance, as they demonstrate a visible geographical partitioning within the ‘Castrexa’ or Hillfort Culture, as may be seen in the studies of Rey 1991 and Rodríguez 1986. Others are chronological, as they vary noticeably between the first and second Iron Age, passing from a system of binary opposition to a system of ternary organisation, characterised in particular by the appearance of stamped decoration, and others are functional. The following table details the chronological categories (Iron Age I, Iron Age II and Late Iron Age, in contact with the Roman world), as well as the ceramic categories which existed in each of these periods (Table 11.3).

The most significant rupture points between these three periods occurred after what is known as the Iron Age I, referred to in the context of the north western Iberian Peninsula as ‘Castrexa Inicial’ (Early Hillfort Culture), in opposition to the last two periods, that were much more similar. This has been reported by several authors, not only for pottery (Rey 1990-1) but also for other aspects, including habitat and use of space (Faría et al. 1983, Sørensen and Thomas 1988 for the rest of Europe). This rupture after the first period did not imply that there were not any differences between the second and third periods (Iron Age II, and the Late Iron Age, in contact with the Roman Empire); instead, they contained less stages of the technical operative chain, and were perhaps limited to the most evident features.

A change took place in the concept of pottery between the Iron Age I and II, passing from a pattern of binary opposition to a system of ternary categorisation. This system of categorisation, based on ternary series, is not shown as a partitioning between three differentiated groups, but instead as a system of complex relationships and combinations of choices from among a wide range of varieties within each phase of the TOC. However, all of the points of variability are clearly brought together in a single morphology, as we will see later in this article (vessels with a composite, flexed profile) and new types of decoration (stamping) (see table 11.4).

Iron Age I (Fig. 11.14): The concept of ceramics in the early Iron Age is characterised by the formal similarity of ceramics as a whole, and similarities in the treatment given to undecorated and decorated pottery in all of the stages of the manufacturing TOC, so that both form a single category. Similarly, this period is characterised by the existence of pattern of binary opposition that may be glimpsed within a complex web of complex relationships that are exposed throughout the different stages of the TOC, although in more general terms it corresponds to a difference between decorated and undecorated shapes. This opposition has a consistent connection point, as the same technical treatment was used for both.

Iron Age II (Fig. 11.15): In this period the binary opposition is converted into a ternary series. This categorisation system based on ternary series does not only appear as a division between three groups of ceramic pieces that respond to three specific TOC models, but instead as a system of complex relationships and combinations of choices from among a wide range of varieties within each stage of the TOC. However, all of these differences are clearly combined in the separation between undecorated pottery, pottery with simple decoration that to some extent follows the pattern observed in the Iron Age I, and pottery with complex decoration, connected with a novel morphology (with composite flexed profiles) and decoration (stamping). And so the opposition between pottery with a simple profile, and pottery with a composite edged profile, was joined with the opposition of a very specific type of pottery that was not incorporated as yet another variation, but was instead superimposed over the previous scheme. Whereas this opposition from the previous period found a connection point between them that consisted of generally maintaining the same technological treatment, this third category (represented by pottery with a flexed composite profile with a mixed decorative pattern), loosens this connection point, as it has a differential technological treatment.

Late Iron Age (Fig. 11.16): In general terms, a more eclectic approach may be seen towards the concept of ceramics, combining aspects of pottery from the Iron Age I (the simplification of decorations, and a similar treatment for undecorated and decorated shapes), and the Iron Age II (with which it has a greater sense of continuity). The treatment given to undecorated and decorated pottery is homogenised throughout the TOC, and some vessels acquire a specific character thanks to the care taken with the clay, without necessarily having to have any decoration, whereas decorated pottery may reveal that it was given much rougher treatment. The decoration used becomes more similar, although not so much in specific aspects (elements and motifs) as in the general pattern used, with a quantitative increase in the number of decorated ceramics, but with a decline in their complexity and the amount of effort given over to their manufacture. Complex decorations are still seen in some pottery, although unlike the Iron Age II, this is connected with pieces in which the clay has been given a rough treatment. In general, it may be seen that interest declined in using pottery as a support for decoration, which was used instead in new areas such as sculpture and architecture.

Deconstruction of style (phase 2)

As well as making a positive description of its features and formal characteristics, the process of defining a style should involve establishing the code or set of rules applied in the development of the empirical products through which this style is accomplished. This gives the ‘ideal specific model’ or ‘constant rule’ to which a style is subjected. In our case we are testing a deconstructive way of dealing with this issue, by defining each of the styles according to the codes of movement and vision they suggest. We may then offer a description of all of the styles, focusing on the internal rhythm and movement

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Fig. 11.14: Formal characterisation of Iron Age I ceramics in Galicia
Fig. 11.15: Formal characterisation of ceramics from the Iron Age II in Galicia.
Fig. 11.16: Formal characterisation of ceramics from the late Iron Age in Galicia.
Table 11.3: Characteristics of ceramic style from the Iron Age in the north western Iberian Peninsula

Table 11.4: Summary of the main formal characteristics of ceramic styles from the Iron Age

The Neolithic

Neolithic pottery is fairly similar with regard to its morphological and technical aspects, and its decoration signals the change between the final period and its predecessor. Despite the changes in decoration that emerged, there are common aspects in both periods: the use of geometrical decorations, the use of stamping and incision with large implements, the partial situation of decoration on the vessel, and division between decorative motifs. We will now examine the differences that are found in the decoration used (Prieto 2001a, 2001b and 2002d).

Decorated pottery from the Early / Mid Neolithic style is ‘invisible’. It has little decoration, using geometric and schematic motifs (including schematic representations of apparently natural elements – impressions made by punches and scorers, and analogies of the human body – marks made by fingers and nails) dominate the impression techniques used. The element, the motif and the scheme coincide morphologically, as the last two consist of the same, repeated element, and in most cases the element is repeated either twice or not at all. The decoration is ‘open’ (there are no borders on the body of the vessel), it is distributed simply and horizontally, and is situated on the upper third of the vessel; it may be seen head-on, it does not form a unitary group, and therefore the piece’s ‘sense of vision’ is static and precise, and offers a single point of view.

Decorated ceramics from the Late Neolithic style are based on two strategies: (1) visible decoration, known as ‘Penha-type’ pottery, that is extravagantly decorated (we refer to it as ‘complex decorated metope pottery’; (2) ‘invisible’ decoration, concealed by the colour and finish
in particular (what we refer to as ‘simple decorated metope pottery’, and ‘bordered decorated pottery’). There is a predominance of incision in the decoration, and in this case there are several morphological differences between the decorative element, motif and scheme, on the contrary to the previous period. The motifs are made by combining straight lines, successive horizontal and vertical zigzags, groups of horizontal lines, vertical and oblique lines, and wavy lines made using a comb. The motifs are large, and are combined in numerous ways in the decorative scheme, and occasionally the combination is complex, using geometrical and schematic-symbolic motifs. The decoration is applied to a single frieze on the upper half of the vessel, that is either semi-open or semi-closed (as it is only confined by the upper part of the scheme, and is open on the lower part). The decorative scheme is also divided longitudinally, forming a series of metopes, each of which has a different decorative motif (although an alternating pattern is often used). Occasionally a decorated border with a single decorative element is used instead of a metope; the decoration is to be viewed horizontally, and in order to appreciate the piece as a whole, it has to be rotated horizontally, producing a circular movement that offers several points of view.

The Bronze Age

In the Bronze Age (Prieto 2001a, 2001b and 2002d) a global change took place in the way of making pottery, and the concept of making pottery was well differentiated from the Neolithic. Some common characteristics may also be seen in the Bronze Age, based on morphological and technical aspects, particularly with regard to decoration. Throughout the Bronze Age, the morphology of undecorated ceramics was maintained, both simple profiles (open and closed), and essentially closed composites are characteristic of the Bronze Age. The same techniques were used in all of the stages of production, with a tendency towards rough finishes in the later period of the Bronze Age in all pottery. The following features were shared in the decoration used: small geometrical elements using straight lines, impression and incision techniques, horizontal direction, and structuring in defined bands that generally covered the pottery. One of the peculiarities that allows us to differentiate Neolithic pottery is the fact that it is extremely difficult to isolate decorative motifs within the scheme. The basic differences between the styles from the Early and Late Bronze Ages are the following:

The main characteristic of Early Bronze Age pottery is seen in the strong sense of formal opposition between the three ceramic categories: decorated bell-beaker pottery, undecorated pottery and decorated non-bell beaker pottery, that is only rarely found in the record. We will go on to explore these three pottery categories in more detail.

Bell-beaker pottery is highly visible or monumental, and is the only category with open composite morphologies, and in technical terms its appearance is good. The decorative technique used was impressed, using mainly combs and shells, followed by punches or cords. It is the first type of pottery whose decoration covers the whole body of the piece, although at times it creates a significant sequence between decorated and undecorated strips that are spaced horizontally in the design. The motifs used are strictly geometrical, and are always gathered in regular closed strips (clearly defined on both sides) that are situated horizontally, and change in a vertical position, following an alternating pattern. This implies that the reading to be given to the decoration is vertical; as the decoration does not change in a horizontal position, it is not necessary to turn the vessel around in order to see it completely, which means that its ‘reading’ is static and vertical, with a single point of view.

Undecorated pottery shows two tendencies, which despite being present in domestic and funerary contexts, predominate in an opposite fashion, as we will see below. The predominant pottery in domestic contexts (stylistic tendency 1) is invisible; it has a coarse finish (in technical terms, it is of a better quality than bell-beaker pottery), and it may be supposed that it was not determined by a specific desire for visibility. Its most noteworthy feature is that it totally inverts the formal characteristics of the bell-beaker style, not only in its external visual features (which would be trivial, considering that one is decorated and the other is not), but also in all of the stages of the TOC that in many cases do not take any physical shape. It is therefore obvious that this style was conceived as the antithesis of the former style, with each functioning as a point of reference or model that was symmetrical and inverse to the other. The predominant pottery found in funerary contexts (stylistic tendency 2) is visible; it occupies an intermediary position between the bell-beaker category and the previous category, as on one hand it is not decorated (which sets it apart from the bell-beaker category), but on the other it has a better outward appearance that is only achieved through the finish, and in general it tends towards a

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12 These are motifs taken from symbolic ceramics, such as the representation of the so-called 'divinity of eyes' from the Chalcolithic period in the peninsula. Some of the zigzags may be representations of hair, as may be seen in some figures of idols from the Chalcolithic. Although there are very few examples in Galicia, this has been documented in 'Penha'-type ceramics. For some authors (González 1999) concepts such as 'Penha ceramics', incised, incised-metope and symbolic are all synonymous, and are used indifferently. However, others (Martín and Camalich 1982) differentiate symbolic ceramics from other types of ceramics, and in particular refer to their motifs in the shape of eyes. We believe that Penha-type ceramics are a more general concept that encompasses a series of decorated vessels with multiple variations, mainly incised, that could be metopes, eyes or symbolic figures, with friezes, etc.

13 These general features may be seen in vessels from other areas and from the same period, for example in food vessels and food vessel arms (see Burgess 1986; Gibson 1978; Longworth 1984).

14 Achieving a good appearance through the finish, while the vessel as such has a poor technical quality, has also been seen in bell-beaker pottery from the British Isles (Boast 1995).
Fig. 11.17: Evolution of the decorative sequence of ceramics from the early and middle Neolithic to the late Iron Age.
series of technological options throughout the TOC that differentiate it from mainly domestic undecorated pottery, and make it more similar to bell-beaker pottery in formal terms. For these reasons, it may be said that this style had a specific intention of ‘visibilisation’ that was different from bell-beaker pottery, but which undoubtedly existed.

Decorated non-bell beaker pottery tends towards invisibility, and has two stylistic tendencies with two small variations, that in this case do not present any differences between contexts; the differences may only be seen in certain aspects of the TOC. On one hand, vessels with a composite profile use similar clays as bell-beaker pottery (with a tendency towards being visible), and those with simple profiles are technically similar to ‘coarse’ undecorated pottery, and invisible. The differences in decoration are more easily seen, as although the main technique used was impression, the instruments used were fingers and nails; the space given over to decoration was reduced to the upper half of the vessel, and in some cases only the upper third, and it is difficult to distinguish the decorative element, motif and scheme (as in the Early and Mid Neolithic).

Pottery from the Late Bronze Age is generally invisible (‘concealed’). The formal opposition that was so clearly defined in the previous period disappears, and together with the disappearance of decorated bell-beaker pottery, it is possible to observe a return to morphological and technical similarity. All of the pottery shares the same TOC, and no differences may be seen between undecorated and decorated pottery. All of the pottery, both decorated and undecorated, forms the same ceramic category. Decorated pottery from the ‘local tradition’ (grooved decoration), decorated pottery with accessory elements, and undecorated pottery are the three stylistic tendencies from the same category. In morphological terms, the profiles of undecorated pottery from the previous period are maintained in all of the ceramics, with the clay tending to have a coarse appearance, although burnishing is fairly common.

The decoration has two variations: firstly, pottery which we refer to as decorated according to the ‘local tradition’ that maintains geometrical decorative elements, although it uses the technique of grooved incisions or scraping with the fingers in a simplified version, as the element, the motif and the scheme coincide morphologically within the design; distribution is still in strips or bands, and although the decoration is not confined, it is designed to provoke a sensation of confinement, as the elements used are small in size, and are restricted to the upper third of the vessel (using invisible and concealed decoration). On the other hand, there is a type of pottery with accessory elements (remember that this is the first time that accessories were used as an additional resource for decoration), that included lugs, braiding, or a combination of both, forming designs with strips of horizontal lines, horizontal and vertical lines, or grid patterns (this type of decoration is visible, and strengthened by the large size of the vessels on which it is found). In general, this type of decoration is difficult to perceive, and it even appears that it has been designed not to be seen on purpose, using a series of mainly technical resources (using a specific finish or matt colour) to make it invisible. The designs are situated horizontally, provoking a vertical reading of the decoration, and the direction of vision could be oblique, as with pottery from the bell-beaker tradition (it is not necessary to turn the vessel in order to perceive its shape and distribution). In general, the decorated section is reduced, concentrated in the upper third of the vessel, although some vessels with braiding are completely covered.

The Iron Age

As we indicated in the previous section, in order to completely develop the TOC for the manufacture of pottery from the Iron Age (Cobas 1999 and 2001) with regard to decoration, it is possible to indicate a series of differences in its conception that allow us to define three main periods (Iron Age I, Iron Age II, Late Iron Age, in contact with the Roman Empire), although it is also possible to define a series of common features that make it possible to identify them as belonging to the Iron Age style.

With regard to thematic issues, the constants refer to the decorative elements and motifs. With regard to decorative elements, the common point is their geometrical nature. In the case of decorative motifs, the most evident characteristic is that each of the motifs may be isolated from the others, without the composition apparently losing its meaning; as no single element is used as an axis for the design, and it may be said that more emphasis is given to the particular motif than the general theme. This is even more apparent if we consider that the decorative elements are always geometrical, and no figurative decoration has been documented.

Regarding morphological issues, we may focus on three important aspects: direction, distribution and visibility. In the case of direction, the most outstanding feature is the verticality of the decoration. Despite the fact that there are three types of readings that may be given to the decoration on the vessel (vertical, horizontal and mixed), the combination between direction, situation, distribution and decorative scheme is made so that the decoration always presents either specific or vertical content. Vessels or sections of the vessel with decoration that is read horizontally always show a reiterative pattern of aggregation, that makes it possible to appreciate the decoration without needing to turn the vessel, and there are never successive patterns of aggregation that require the vessel to be turned in order to view its decoration. This means that we may refer to a different, completely

18 Although this homogeneity is also a feature of the Neolithic, there are differences in the specific development of the phases of manufacture and ceramic variations between both periods. Naturally, the possible meaning or intentionality of this homogeneity would be different in the Neolithic and Late Bronze Age; the contexts changed, as well as the resources used in the different manufacturing stages, and in the end products themselves.
horizontal concept of decoration. With regard to its distribution, we may refer to a type of decoration that divides up the vessel. The common feature of the two decorative concepts from the period (zonal and integral), is that it makes the different parts of the vessel independent, separating each of its parts by using different decorations. The decoration does not unify the vessel’s profile, but instead divides it. Finally, with regard to visibility, in general terms we would say that the decoration is visible, although there are also examples in which visible and invisible decoration is combined on the same item, and examples of decoration that is only relatively invisible, which is situated on the upper part of the border. This means that in ‘Castreña’ or hillfort pottery there is no invisible decoration as such, as there is never any decoration on the interior of the vessel or its underside.

**Iron Age I:** In this period we have only found one way of treating pottery throughout the TOC, although it is possible to find two major variations in its pattern of ‘visibilisation’ with regard to the concept of decoration:

*Undecorated Pottery:* The pottery is neutral, with relatively simple technological treatment, without reaching the level of the coarseness seen in undecorated pottery from the domestic context of the Bronze Age style. It is not seen as the antithesis of decorated pottery, but instead as something that complements it. One of its significant features is the abundance of mica on its surface, making the vessel as a whole more visible.

*Decorated Pottery:* With a barely visible type of decoration, except for a few exceptions, both in the treatment given to the vessel, that is the same as with undecorated pottery, and the way in which the decoration is configured. The factors that make this type of decoration more visible are the large size of its decorative elements, and their situation, on the upper third of the belly. However, the aspects that make it less visible are its zonal location, the fact that it is not divided, or divided ambiguously, either by making use of the morphology of the vessel, or using a faint and discontinuous decorative element (straight, discontinuous lines that appear in peripheral zones and disappear in others). There is a slight division within the pottery that is the result of the opposition between decorated and undecorated sections. The decorative pattern is precise or reiterative, and the reading is either precise or vertical, by maintaining a single point of view looking at the item head-on, at eye level. The decoration is mainly applied using the incision technique, although stamping is also used, and occasionally some artistic decoration.

**Iron Age II:** As mentioned in section 2.3, we may differentiate two categories of pottery: undecorated pottery and pottery with simple decoration on one hand, and pottery with complex decoration on the other. However, we will now examine each of these possibilities in detail, considering issues such as movement, internal rhythm and ways of looking.

*Undecorated Pottery:* Undecorated pottery and pottery with simple decorations have the same technological treatment. The presence of mica that was typical in the Iron Age I is reduced considerably.

*Pottery with simple decoration:* This type of pottery is often represented in relation to pottery with complex decoration, occupying an intermediate position between undecorated pottery and pottery with complex decoration; on one hand it is decorated (which separates it from undecorated pottery), although on the other it does not show any signs of having been made with great care, and in general terms all of the technological choices throughout the TOC, as well as its morphology, make it more similar to undecorated pottery in formal terms. This type of decoration generally conserves the features detailed for the Iron Age I: it is ambiguous in nature due to its simplicity, it is barely visible, and either lacks divisions or is only barely divided and zonal. It may therefore be said that it only has a limited intention to be visible. The decorative techniques used are, as in the Iron Age I, stamping, incision and artistic decoration, although in contrast to the fine incisions applied in the Iron Age I, there is now an emphasis on grooving and burning, with occasional stamping.

*Pottery with complex decoration:* This type of decoration is highly visible, not only because of the configuration of the decoration itself, but also because of the technical treatment given to the piece, which was particularly scrupulous (at least superficially) as compared to undecorated pottery or pottery with simple decoration. Although the decorative elements were smaller than those used in the Iron Age I, and also in some cases than in pottery with simple decoration, these responded to a complex decorative standard that was mainly applied to the upper third of the belly, and even to the upper section of the border. This type of decoration is clearly defined, and the vessel also appears to be divided by the variety of decorative elements that correspond to each part of the vessel, by using a decorative standard that is predominantly successive. For the first time, the ‘reading’ of the decoration is made in two different directions on the vessel (horizontally and vertically), although there is a predominance of the vertical, as although the decoration is occasionally situated horizontally, in this case it is never successive as in the rest of the vessel, but instead is repeated all the way round the perimeter. This decoration therefore has different ‘vision axes’ and points of view, caused by changes in the arrangement of the decoration, and where it is located. This complex decoration corresponds to the decorative technique of stamping, that has come to be a specific element from the Iron Age in the northwestern Iberian Peninsula. The process of stamping is a differential factor not only in a temporal dimension, as it does not appear until the Iron Age II, but is also a purely formal dimension, as it not only implies the implantation of a new decorative technique, but also an independent TOC, and subsequently a different conception of the vessel itself. Pottery with stamped decoration is an exception to the similarity referred to between undecorated and decorated pottery from the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Ceramic Styles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Early Neolithic| Type: Non-monumental  
Context: Domestic  
Themes: Curved geometric decoration  
Organisation: frontal panels, zonal, without definition or boundaries  
Reading: no vision axis, horizontally from several different points of view |
| Mid-Neolithic  | Type: Non-monumental  
Context: Domestic and funerary (monumental tombs)  
Themes: Curved geometric decoration  
Organisation: horizontal  
Reading: no vision axis, horizontally from several different points of view |
| Late Neolithic | Type: Monumental and non-monumental  
Context: Domestic, very occasionally funerary  
Themes: elements with curved and straight lines  
Organisation: Composition in decorative friezes. Subdivided decoration  
Reading: Horizontal axis and view, numerous points of view |
| Early Bronze Age| Type: Monumental and non-monumental  
Context: Domestic and funerary  
Themes: Decoration with curved and straight geometric lines  
Organisation: Composition in horizontal and oblique bands. Enclosed decoration.  
Reading: Vertical vision axis, oblique view and single point of view |
| Late Bronze Age| Type: Monumental and non-monumental  
Context: Domestic and funerary  
Themes: Decoration using straight geometric lines  
Organisation: Composition in horizontal bands. Enclosed decoration  
Reading: Vertical vision axis, oblique view, single point of view |
| Iron Age I     | Type: Non-monumental  
Context: Domestic  
Themes: Linear geometric elements  
Organisation: Composition in bands and borders. Precise, vertical position. Decoration without divisions. Relatively subdivided by the opposition between the smaller, decorated zones, and the larger non-decorated part.  
Reading: Specific or vertical, specific or vertical vision axis, single point of view |
| Iron Age II    | Type: Monumental and non-monumental  
Context: Domestic  
Themes: Geometric elements with straight and curved lines  
Organisation: Composition using bands, borders, straight lines, metopes and ‘medallions’. Horizontal and vertical position. Clearly subdivided decoration. Decoration subdivides the piece.  
Reading: mixed reading, different vision axes, and multiple points of view |
| Late Iron Age  | Type: Non-monumental  
Context: Domestic  
Themes: Straight or curved geometric elements, schematic  
Organisation: Composition using borders, metopes and ‘medallions’. Specific and vertical position.  
Decoration without borders. Pottery is not subdivided by its decoration  
Reading: vertical or specific, with vertical or specific vision axes, and several points of view |

Table 11.5: The ‘ideal specific model’ or ‘constant rule’ of ceramic styles from Late Prehistory and Protohistory in Galicia

hillfort culture; this, in turn, may reflect a different symbolic content that may be derived from its connection with other manifestations of material culture that may be seen (as indicated by Rey Castiñeira 1993: 151), in the similarities that these forms have with metallic models.

Late Iron Age: As mentioned above, once again a similar technological treatment is given to undecorated and decorated pottery. In general, it is possible to see that ceramics were made with much less care, and less importance was given to its visibility and visibilisation. Once again, we will differentiate three tendencies in order to observe the change in the way in which they were conceived, with regard to previous periods.

Undecorated Pottery: In most of the items from this period, there are no differences in the treatment given to undecorated and decorated pottery. However, at this time there was an important presence of specific forms that only appear without decoration, and were given a very careful treatment, at least superficially.

Pottery with simple decoration: There are a large number of pieces with simple decoration. Although they generally maintain the characteristics seen in previous periods (an ambiguous nature, little visibility, lack of definition), this was now differentiated, as its situation changed. Although the decoration was still situated in the upper third of the body, it occasionally covered the whole side, or only the upper part of the border. The decorative techniques used were stamping, incision, and in particular at this time, artistic decoration.

Pottery with complex decoration: The concept of decoration in general tended towards greater simplification, even in this group. As a novel feature, this type of pottery with complex decoration does not have a different technical treatment than any other type of vessel, and the stamping technique is not used
exclusively, but instead may be combined even with ‘artistic’ decoration. The ‘mixed’ pattern of decoration as conceived in the previous period disappears, and a much more simplified concept appears; decoration may be defined or left undefined. Another novel feature is the appearance of a type of schematic decoration that has not been found for previous periods. Now we may summarise the specific ideal model for each ceramic style, defined using the chosen aspects, in a diagram as shown in Table 11.5. This summary favours a description of the different styles, focusing on their internal rhythm and their pattern of visualisation, as well as the relationship between the object and the spectator that each style imposes, which takes shape in the movement and way of looking that should be applied by the spectator.

For each style, the table indicates: The monumental or non-monumental nature of the resulting ceramic products; the context in which these products appear; the theme of any decoration present, either naturalistic, schematic or geometric; its organisation or internal rhythm, that includes specifying its distribution (without any specific shape, or forming panels, friezes or strips), indicating if the decorative space is bordered, how and using what element, and indicating the direction of the decoration and its horizontal or vertical position; and finally the visualisation pattern, first indicating the direction for reading (or viewing) the decoration (either frontally, horizontally or vertically), and the direction of visual movement needed to appreciate the decoration (static with a single point of view, horizontal or vertical with a single point of view, or circular, with numerous points of view).

The significance of style (phases 3 and 4)

Breaking down ceramic styles into a ‘beam of forces’ that determine how one should move and observe in relation to the ceramic product has the advantage of allowing us to compare these styles, and therefore pottery, with other culture elements that have also served (or needed) to regulate movement and vision.

Elsewhere we have see how Landscape Archaeology allows us to approximate models of cultural landscapes, each of which imposes or requires specific guidelines for movement and vision (see for example Criado 1989a, 1989b, 1993a and 1995). In this sense, it would not be difficult to compare these with ceramic styles. Simultaneously, however, and in order for the interpretative ‘leap’ to be less dizzying, we may examine another phenomenological area which is closer in scale and typology to pottery, and which is determined (equally or more so than social space) by movement and vision: we are referring to parietal representations, or what is more generally referred to as ‘rock art’.

Cross-comparison between these three types of phenomena - pottery, representation and landscape - will allow us to identify the ideal generic model of the material styles from each socio-cultural setting involved. Going one step further, we could propose that each of these models actually configures the lifestyle constructed by the pattern of rationality from each cultural context. In this way we may finally have an ‘inroad’ into the deepest significance of not only ceramic and material styles, but also of all the historical models of rationality that nonetheless slip through the fingers of History.

Ceramics and representation: styles in material culture

Within the archaeological record from the north western Iberian Peninsula, we have four manifestations of parietal art that may be compared with the ceramic styles from the Neolithic, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age: megalithic carvings (Fig.11.18), megalithic painting (Fig. 11.19), carvings in cists, open air rock art from the Bronze Age (Fig. 11.20) and the Iron Age, and funerary steles from the Roman period (Fig. 11.21).

The first two are clearly Neolithic phenomena. Rock carvings are possibly a more ancient art form than painting. Apart from the major differences between them in their typology, formal features and styles, in some cases such as Dombate, (Bello 1998) it may be seen that the carvings were made when the megalithic chamber was being constructed, before the main slabs were put into place. The paintings, however, appear to be of less importance, and may have been made after the monument was built.

Carvings in cists and most of the rock art found correspond to the Bronze Age. Although their chronological situation has not been completely defined, in general terms they belong to the same chrono-cultural period. Finally, there are some carvings from the Iron Age, according to recent studies (Santos 1998), and the funerary steles date from the Roman occupation and subsequent periods.

The brevity of the empirical record does not allow us to decide if there are disparate stylistic tendencies, or even specific styles, within art from cists, carvings and megalithic paintings. However, in general terms, they appear to offer an important degree of homogeneity that also links them with a much wider generic phenomenon that groups together much of the Atlantic regions of western Europe (Shee 1981).

In the case of open-air carvings from the Bronze Age, we have identified at least two opposing styles of characteristics. On one hand we have the world of ‘classic’ Galician rock carvings, concentrated in Galicia’s more westerly regions, particularly in the south western coast; unlike schematic art in the rest of the Iberian Peninsula, the Galician style may be described as ‘naturalist’. However, in the rest of Galicia, particularly in its most southerly and south-westerly points, close to its frontier with schematic art, a number of rock art stations have appeared in recent years, which despite
being less complex, have a series of formal aspects that are close to the world of schematic representations.

In turn, within the realm of naturalist Galician carvings, a number of tendencies or stylistic groups have been identified which, in general, differ from each other in their greater or lesser tendency towards naturalist or schematic representations. In fact, as we move further south, the schematic world becomes less apparent, giving way to the Galician naturalist style, with the appearance of motifs that clearly belong to the schematic style. All of this contributes to blurring the frontier between Galician naturalist rock art and other types of schematic art from the Bronze Age.

If we compare the ceramic styles with these styles of parietal art, several lines of regularity may be seen that show us that the decorative styles from all of these contexts follow the same pattern of formal regularity, and impel us to take this comparison even further, seeking out not only shared elements and motifs, but also a spatial syntax, a series of rules for combining elements and organising movement and vision that may be the same. We shall now explore this point.

If we observe the decorative elements that appear in each of the manifestations of material culture, we may see that there is a tremendous sense of formal similarity, mainly due to the fact that they are elements of a geometric nature.

However, if we move up a level to the decorative motifs, variations start to appear, and increasingly clearer pairs become apparent. Decorated ceramics from the Early and Mid Neolithic have some similarities with megalithic carvings, metope-type ceramics with megalithic paintings, bell-beaker ceramics with carvings found in cists, and decorated ceramics from the Iron Age with rock art from the same period.

In turn, this similarity appears in other types of material culture if we observe the design as a whole, elements such as the pattern of situation, direction, 'visibilisation' and 'reading' of the decoration; the level of decoration used in the motif is reinforced by the organisational model of the decoration. In this way we may obtain a series of formal regularities, as shown in Table 11.6 below.

It is impossible for us to avoid suggesting that perhaps, in this context, the parallels between megalithic painting and bell-beaker pottery may be re-established; while megalithic painting involves red and black strokes over white primer, bell-beaker pottery uses white strokes (incrusting white clay) on red and dark-coloured surfaces.

Within this linked series of relationships, decontextualising some motifs or rules for styles of material culture, and recontextualising them within a different environment, we believe that one of the most interesting and significant similarities is the fact that the decorative system used for megalithic painting, its pattern of placement, the way in which it is to be 'read', and particularly the way of looking it requires of the spectator, bears no relation whatsoever to bell-beaker pottery, and is instead the same that is seen in 'Penha' pottery.

The sense of vision contained in both phenomena is the same: firstly it is a circular view: it is necessary to turn the vessel or turn oneself around to appreciate the successive panels contained within a megalithic chamber. It is then a horizontal view, and finally a vertical view, as each specific panel has to be viewed from top to bottom and vice versa. But above all it is precise: each panel may be seen as a discrete and independent unit. From this point of view, metope pottery and megalithic painting reproduce the same type of scheme or formal conception.

This parallelism continues, despite the lack of data available, between megalithic carvings and pottery from the Mid Neolithic (where the neutrality and openness of the pottery is a faithful representation of the isolation and randomness of carvings contained within a chamber), and similarly between carvings from Bronze Age cists and bell-beaker pottery (where instead there is a predominance of strips arranged in a horizontal direction, which alternate vertically) (see Fig. 11.1716).

As the empirical record is much more abundant, this final regularity may be seen better by comparing bell-beaker pottery and open-air rock carvings. In principle, it may appear to be a quite improbable and thankless task to compare a type of art with naturalist representations with pottery that uses geometrical decorations. In order to ascertain what draws both manifestations together, we have to consider the pattern of movement and observation that rock carvings configure and impose on the observer. As analysed in a recent study (Criado and Santos 2000), Galician open-air rock art panels are articulated according to a spatial scheme that is based above all on a continuous horizontal line of development, with a well defined ground line and a single point of view that is then re-elaborated within a vertical organisation and in which (much more importantly) vertical superimposition is significant, as it expresses specific sensations, and surely contributes to referring to the message contained in the carvings. Instead of including a more detailed description of this system of spatial organisation, it is better to rely on the representation itself.

We therefore have the situation that rock carvings imply an organisation in horizontal strips with vertical variation.

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16 Figure 17 shows a sequence of the transformations in decorative ceramic designs from the beginning of the Neolithic until the end of the Iron Age in Galicia. Most of the vessels from this figure correspond to the record directly documented by the LAFC, although there are seven pieces that have been taken from other sources, and we have reconstructed them in AutoCAD so that they fit within the group as a whole. These are: (1) Tumulus 3 from the necropolis of Minda da Paranhos (Rodriguez 1989). (2) Tumulus 5 from the necropolis of Coto de Gredos (Abad 1995). (3) Burial site at Coto da Laborada (Criado and Vázquez 1982). (4) Burial site at O Casal (Suárez 1998). (5) Castro da Forca Hillfort (Carballo 1987). (6) Caniça Hillfort, and some Portuguese examples (Silva 1986). (7) Nadelas Hillfort (Rey 1982).
Fig. 11.18: Examples of megalithic carvings in Galicia (after Rodriguez 1994).

Fig. 11.19: Examples of megalithic paintings in Galicia and Portugal.
Fig. 11.20: Examples of carvings in cists (top) and Bronze Age rock carvings (bottom) in Galicia.

The spectator remains motionless before them, while his gaze firstly sweeps over the panel in a horizontal direction, and then (and more importantly) in a vertical direction. In the final analysis, the pattern of movement and perception imposed by rock carvings is therefore the same as that implied by bell-beaker pottery, regardless of the vast difference between both physical styles.

The problem in extending this analysis is that we do not have available any later styles of parietal art with which we may compare later ceramic styles. However, we may substitute this with other elements of material culture, such as funerary slabs, and protohistoric and historical carvings.

Against all odds, a very direct correspondence may be detected between pottery styles from the Iron Age II, and the representative syntax shown in decorated Roman-indigenous funerary steles, and carvings from this period or the early Middle Ages. Ceramics have finally imposed a representation with an emphasis on verticality, and the creation of significant differences in the vertical organisation of the decoration. This is also the organisational pattern used in funerary steles from the Roman period, although they do have an indigenous influence. Their configuration is not only based on the vertical distribution of the slab, separated into completely divided composite sections, but also the significance of the composition is hierarchically organised from top to bottom; the organisation itself is significant, as it has a story to tell.

The same compositional structure may be seen in carved slabs in open-air situations that have traditionally been identified as belonging to Medieval periods, and which a recent revision of the chronology of Galician rock art has proposed as also belonging to the second Iron Age (Santos 1998, Santos and García 2000). These are natural rocks in a horizontal position with very simple carvings that are usually cruciform. This means that it is even
more remarkable that despite this economy of composition, it is easy to see a vertical distribution in these carvings on the surface of the panel on which they are found, in a series of superimposed horizontal strips with a clearly hierarchical emplacement of motifs from top to bottom. The spectator’s view is now obliged to follow a vertical ‘itinerary’.

**Styles in space: the structural model of style**

We will attempt to apply this same perspective to the group of material culture styles that we have considered, by bringing together different elements of material culture.

To do so, we must widen our field of view and consider the general area to which these elements belong, the stylistic whole to which they correspond. It is obvious that the ceramic categories we are considering (‘penha’, bell-beaker, different types of decorated potter from the Early Bronze Age, and hillfort pottery) are only the local manifestation of wider stylistic regularities with which they are involved in a dialogue that swings in a precarious and contradictory equilibrium between the general and the particular. However, the styles of parietal art we have identified in Galicia belong to much wider representative styles. All of them, including naturalistic rock carvings, are different types of schematic post-Levantine art (documented in the east of the Iberian Peninsula). The similarity between this important stylistic regularity and megalithic carvings and paintings is greater than the similarity it has with rock carvings. Yet neither is it possible to understand them without considering the complementary, albeit inverse, relationship that the rock carvings have with post-Levantine art. Carvings found in cists, in turn, occupy an intermediary position between these two groups.

Neither is schematic art an unvarying and homogenous phenomenon, given its widespread chronological and geographical nature. Instead, it is possible to distinguish different stylistic tendencies and even different styles within it. A recent study (Martínez 1997) proposed an initial stylistic horizon that would correspond in very general terms with the earliest times of the Neolithic, followed by another horizon with greater formal and compositional complexity, corresponding to the Late Neolithic and Chalcolithic, that would reach its end with the appearance of bell-beaker pottery. By taking the licence to reduce the empirical reality in order to make a better analysis of it, and at the risk of over-simplification, it is possible to establish a series of correlations between the arts and decorated pottery (Table 11.7 and Fig. 11.22).

Having made these comparisons, we may now extend this perspective to the remaining series, that is presented by comparing the pattern of movement and vision in rock carvings and bell-beaker pottery. This allows us to see that a manifest regularity appears in all of them, in which the same pattern of movement and vision is seen in ceramic style and artistic representation. We will analyse this point, applying the analytical procedures presented in Criado and Penedo (1989 and 1993) to the different artistic manifestations (Fig. 11.23).

In early Schematic Art, the pattern of organisation used in the panel is the horizontal line; over it are placed schematic and abstract figures that form a single, continuous frieze. The spectator’s vision moves over it in a horizontal direction. There is an earth line, but as it is an abstract representation, it is possible that there may be numerous points of view, or that these remain open. There are no fully enclosed separations, confining motifs or hierarchical elements. In general terms, the space represented is an open scene, and if it is compared with distant Paleolithic art, the most important ‘conquest’ of this style may well be the horizontal line, together with the sequence and the argument. In some ways, this style is very similar to Post-Glacial Levantine Art. Perhaps the main difference is that whereas geometrical motifs are used in early Schematic Art, in Post-Glacial Levantine Art they are naturalistic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS</th>
<th>CERAMIC STYLES (ONLY DECORATED CERAMICS)</th>
<th>ARTISTIC STYLES (IN GALICIA)</th>
<th>ARTISTIC STYLES (GENERAL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Palaeolithic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parietal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epipalaeolithic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Levantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Neolithic</td>
<td>Invisible</td>
<td>Megalithic carvings</td>
<td>Levant. / Schematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Neolithic</td>
<td>Invisible</td>
<td>Megalithic paintings</td>
<td>Schematic 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Neolithic</td>
<td>‘Penha’</td>
<td>Rock carvings</td>
<td>Schematic 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Age</td>
<td>Bell Beaker</td>
<td>Carvings in cists</td>
<td>Post. Schematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Bronze Age</td>
<td>Incised and carved decoration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funerary decoration with accessories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Age</td>
<td>Decorated</td>
<td>Rock carvings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funerary Seals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11.7: Correlations between codes of material culture in Late Prehistory and Protohistory

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Fig. 11.22: Changes in ways of perceiving decoration in the archaeological record of Galicia: Prehistoric and Protohistoric ceramics – parietal art, rock art and architecture.
Fig.11.23: Levantine art and schematic art in the Iberian peninsula. Examples of spatial organization in panel decoration.
These stylistic features are coherent with those seen in the earliest megalithic carvings, and with those seen the invisible and open ceramic style of the Mid Neolithic. Proof of this would be making a formal recognition of the other two phenomena using the same descriptive terms.

In the second Schematic Art style, there are two outstanding formal innovations. Firstly, within the horizontal sequence, segments or compartment appear, that are generally marked by natural features (such as fissures and cracks), and by straight vertical lines. It is possible that these lines appeared at a later date, and would have been a strategy for confinement from more primitive times. We are therefore presented with a horizontal sequence that is no longer a continuous frieze, and has instead changed into a frieze with metopes. These segments contain differentiated directions, and create a discourse based on difference; this would appear to be confirmed by the fact that in some examples they contain only schematic representations of male figures, and in the opposite segment, representations of female figures.

In order to fully comprehend this composition, it is necessary to move around it horizontally, concentrating on the successive 'snapshots' that form the individual segments. This movement becomes circular in a megalithic chamber, or around a penhita-type vessel. The remaining attributes of these elements, together with the combination of movement and vertical contemplation they impose, are the same in both megalithic carvings and paintings, and as a result of the closeness of the previous naturalist approach, it is possible to see schematic naturalist motifs, including axes, idols including 'The Thing', and human figures.

Secondly, at a time which best corresponds to Macroschematic Art, more friezes and horizontal and parallel strips were superimposed over the horizontal sequence. In fact, the composition tends to be pyramidal, with a vertical alignment with stepped motifs of a clearly hierarchical value, as indicated by the fact that the size of the superimposed schematic human figures is increasingly larger, and that they are less in number.

The space of the composition, with the exception of the lines that faintly define each segment, or the division into 'compartments' that is implicitly contained within the superimposition of horizontal strips, is still generally an open space. However, the spectator's view now moves in a completely different direction, combining horizontal movement with vertical movement. It is only possible to appreciate the composition as a whole through a continuous horizontal movement, that stops at each scene or metope and continues vertically.

In Post Schematic Art, represented by carvings in cists and most of the open-air Galician rock carvings, these last tendencies are strengthened. As we mentioned in section 4.1, although horizontal lines are of basic importance in forming the representation, movement in a vertical direction is even more important for its global organisation. In order to appreciate a bell-beaker vessel, it is enough to look at it in a vertical direction; there is no need to do so horizontally, as the decoration is uniformly repeated over the whole vessel. The spectator therefore adopts a static position, and there is no longer any horizontal or circular movement, and instead the movement is from bottom to top and vice-versa, possibly with a profound symbolic significance. In metaphorical terms, it could be said that the spectator is impelled by the representation to reproduce a gesture of respect and reverence, although we do not know to what extent this consideration has any transcultural value; it would be necessary to contemplate an anthropology of body language.

It may be considered that the visual route needed to be followed by spectators contemplating a rock carving is quite different from this, as there are superimposed horizontal lines in the panel, and it has to be parsed in both directions. Despite the fact that in our opinion this would be nothing more than a variety of the previous type of movement, as the content of rock carvings are mainly perceived vertically and not horizontally (see Criado and Santos 2000), in fact this is not really the case. As we have discussed in this paper, what characterises space in Galician rock art panels from the Bronze Age is their organisational using an oblique axis, which summarises and balances horizontal and vertical movement, and makes it unnecessary to contemplate the surface of the panel in two different directions. However, by looking at it obliquely, it is possible to contemplate the panel as a whole.

This is best seen in the representation of perspective, which in this type of art is represented in a very economical manner, using figures situated in a slightly oblique direction with regard to the 'earth line', which gives them a sense of movement and gracefulness, and causes the spectator's gaze to glide over them, as if they were moving (Vázquez Rozas 1997). Furthermore, in the few cases in which the perspective used to represent an animal is visible, it is possible to see how they are situated obliquely, facing towards the top or the bottom of the panel (the best example is a representation of a deer in Campo das Cuñas [Santos 1998]).

Style and temporality: ceramics, representation and landscape: the sense of space, once again.

In summing up our examination of patterns of movement and vision (fig. 11.22) within the codes of material culture (ceramics, parietal art and others) we may conclude that:

1. In the Neolithic and Megalithic periods, a sense of perception started to appear that moved horizontally over an open, neutral or homogenous space;
2. At the end of the Neolithic period, this horizontal perception extended until it became a circular view taking in a space that was divided horizontally, and was attracted to places of special relevance;
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>1. Landscape</th>
<th>Material Styles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Thought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EARLY NEOLITHIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Hunter/ Gatherer</td>
<td>TYPE: Non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Late Wild</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic and funerary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(&quot;Naturalisation of Culture&quot;)</td>
<td>SUBJECTS: Naturalist, curves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION: In frontal panels, zonal, no borders, no subdivision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: No vision axis, horizontal view from several points of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID NEOLITHIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Monumental</td>
<td>TYPE: Monumental and non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cultivation of Nature</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic and funerary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS: Naturalist, curves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION:</td>
<td>Frontal panels, zonal, no borders, no subdivision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: No vision axis, horizontal view from several points of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATE NEOLITHIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Peasant</td>
<td>TYPE: Monumental and non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Intensification</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic and funerary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS: Curved and linear elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION: Composition in decorative friezes. Subdivided decoration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: Horizontal vision axis, horizontal view, numerous points of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRONZE AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Domesticated</td>
<td>TYPE: Monumental and non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Domestication of Nature</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic and funerary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS: Geometric decoration with straight lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION: Composition in horizontal and oblique bands. Subdivided decoration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: Vertical vision axis, oblique view, single point of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRON AGE I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Domesticated</td>
<td>TYPE: Non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Domesticating cultural rationality</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS: Linear geometric elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION: Composition in bands, borders, horizontal situation. Non-enclosed, or enclosed by inflections in its morphology. Opposition between the decorated and non-decorated part of the piece</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: Static, with a single point of view</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IRON AGE II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Divided</td>
<td>TYPE: Monumental and non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Construction of a completely artificial environment</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS: Curved and linear geometric elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION: Composition in bands, borders, straight lines, metopes and 'medallions'. Horizontal and vertical situation. Clearly subdivided decoration. Decoration subdivides the piece as a whole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: mixed and vertical, with different points of view</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATE IRON AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. State</td>
<td>TYPE: Monumental and non-monumental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exploitation</td>
<td>CONTEXT: Domestic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECTS: Curved and linear geometric elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION: Composition, borders, straight lines, metopes and 'medallions'. Horizontal and vertical situation. No subdivision of decoration. No subdivision of the piece as a whole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READING: Static and vertical, with one or more points of view</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 11.8: Correspondences between styles of material culture, models of landscape and types of socio-cultural rationality towards the environment

3. In the Bronze Age, this vision became more oblique, and through a foreshortened view drawn from static points, involved a segmented space, in which vertical and hierarchical divisions may be seen. By the Iron Age, perception had changed to a vertical and static view over a space that was clearly enclosed and pyramidal, within which the viewer's gaze moves from bottom to top. It is possible to take these observations even further, because in reality the way of looking at the ceramics and artistic representation of each period is the same as the way of looking at the landscape, and constructing the architecture from each period. By reasoning from the codes of spatial representation that we have discovered behind the cultural landscapes of late prehistory, we may risk a theoretical conclusion of succession and change in the styles of material culture, from ceramics to the landscape. This makes it possible to define the ideal generic model of the system of spatial representation that was shared by material culture, landscape and thought.

This summary is shown in table 11.8; in order to make it easier to compare with the specific ideal model of ceramic styles, it has been organised in the same way as table 11.5.

Here it is important to explore several points in detail. If this model is correct, this is not because it is generally so, but instead because particular details from each ceramic style that may appear to be minimal are concordant with the model and make it possible to specify and interpret (or shed light upon) some partial details. We would emphasise that this scheme is theoretical; it does not aim to predict the specific features of ceramic styles, but instead to define the abstract models to which they may have responded; the fact that this actually occurred would have depended on other factors, at least including the
following two:

Interconnection and equilibrium with other expressions of material culture, and with other cultural surroundings.

Chronological rhythm; concordance is not always necessary between all of the empirical expressions of the same cultural style: some environments may anticipate others, and previous change in some of them may even prepare or open the way to a real cultural change17.

The first problem, instead of being a difficulty that limits work to the point where it is impossible to continue, proposes the need to consider other areas of material culture apart from ceramics at the same time, in order to see if the theoretical model of style was implanted in a similar or different fashion. This is what we have tried to do here, by making an analysis of parietal art.

The second problem calls for flexible schemes of periodisation to be used, in which it is possible to superimpose mobile dynamics for each periodised cultural situation (a theoretical principle upon which we will attempt to construct an alternative model of periodisation in Galician Prehistory [see Criado et al. 2000]). We should not expect that the rhythm of changes in thought is the same as in cultural systems, beliefs and rites, types of landscape, social dynamics, strategies for land use and production technologies. For this reason, the chrono-cultural references that we have included in our model should not be considered as absolute and with a fixed chronology, but instead as a cultural undercurrent.

Acknowledgements
The authors would like to offer their thanks, as always, to their colleagues at the Archaeology Laboratory of the Instituto de Estudios Gallegos del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, for offering a working environment and constant exchange of information that has greatly helped the investigations detailed in this paper. We would particularly like to thank Manuel Santos Estévez for his work with Rock Art, and Anxo Rodríguez Paz, who drew and composed several of the figures.

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