

Celts and the Castro Culture in the Iberian Peninsula – issues of national identity and Proto-Celtic substratum

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Abstract :

The object of this article is to discuss the presence of the Castro Culture and of Celtic people on the Iberian Peninsula. Currently there are two sides to this debate. On one hand, some consider the “Castro” people as one of the Celtic groups that inhabited this part of Europe, and see their peculiarity as a historically designed trait due to issues of national identity. On the other hand, there are archeologists who – despite not ignoring entirely the usage of the Castro culture for the affirmation of national identity during the nineteenth century (particularly in Portugal) – saw distinctive characteristics in the Northwest of Portugal and Spain which go beyond the use of the past for political reasons. We will examine these questions aiming to decide if there is a common Proto-Celtic substrate, and possible singularities in the Castro Culture.

Keywords : Celts, Castro Culture, national identity, Proto-Celtic substrate

There is marked controversy in the use of the term Celt and the matter of the presence of these people in Europe, especially in Spain. This controversy involves nationalism, debates on the possible existence of invading hordes (populations that would bring with them elements of the Urnfield, Hallstatt, and La Tène cultures), and the possible presence of a Proto-Celtic cultural substrate common to several areas of the Old Continent.

For a long while, the Celts were “invoked” as evidence of European unity, a unity that was later “broken” by the presence of Rome. The claim stated that this unity subsisted and we could find it in the indigenous roots of very different populations. Curiously, these same roots marked difference, rather than unity, at the time of the affirmation of European nationalism, especially during the 19th century.

Such claims, logically, are not free from political and socioeconomic intentions. As declared by Cunliffe (2003: 3), the proclaimed “Celtic heritage has been, and doubtless will continue to be, an alert signal for many political movements”. We can observe this in two different events that had clearly distinct goals. The goal of the 1991 exposition in Venice entitled “The Celts, the Origins of Europe” was to highlight the ideal of the European Union. The 2001 Interceltic Congress, in Rennes, with the theme “History on modern day Celtic countries – a people without memory is a people without culture” had as aim protecting the identity of Atlantic coastal communities against tendencies of “centralization of the European States, particularly those with bases in London, Paris and Madrid” (CUNLIFFE, 2003: 3).

Nationalist issues also become evident when one analyzes the Iberian Peninsula. The people named Gallaecian or Castro inhabited the Northwest and researchers like Silva (2007) see them as a population indigenous to the area. Even though this population might have, in a remote past, marks of Atlantic influence, they built along the centuries peculiar characteristics seen in the habitat (hill-fort settlements, construction of round stone houses, presence of baths) and in a hierarchic social order (with the presence of a warring elite). The funeral rites of this population are still obscure and controversial, since there are no well-defined necropolises. This leads us to wonder if there was a cremation ritual with the posterior deposition of the ashes in the waters, or if they exposed the bodies in platforms for scavenging birds to eat. In the last case, differently from what occurred among the Celtiberians (SILIUS ITALICUS, *Punica*, III, 340-343), such rite was not destined only to the most valorous warriors.

The particularities of the Castro culture notwithstanding, its differentiation from the other peoples of the Iberian Peninsula is seen by researchers like Gonzalez-Ruibal (2006), as a construct related to national identity.² This affected many European countries in the 19th century, that had the intention of creating a pre- or proto-historical past to the

[...] Nation States, and to sustain the bourgeoisie, a group living its moment of glory, with cultural prestige practices. That also explains the archeological frenzy at the end of the century. It was not by chance that Martins Sarmiento, licensed in Law and wealthy rentier, belonged to the upper class of the country. Sarmiento's excavations inaugurate a behavior that would have a long extension in time. They would gather the most outstanding objects and study them with absolute disregard of the context from where they were extracted, searching for Iberian and European parallels. (GONZALEZ-RUIBAL, 2006: 25)

Even though nationalist movements have left their marks in many European countries, the case of the Iberian Peninsula has a singular characteristic. Although the Northwest spans parts of Portugal and Spain,

[...] the area between the rivers Douro and Minho is a substantial part of the Portuguese territory, and one of the first areas that did an exhaustive study of proto-history in this country. It stands in national memory as one of the territories that founded the Kingdom of Portugal, with its capital in Guimaraes, next to Briteiros, the first excavated Castro in the Northwest. Galicia, in its turn, is a small part of Spain that has not contributed in any essential way to the construction of the idea of a Spanish Nation. Archeological investigation there has competed with other, more active and attractive zones, like Andalusia or Meseta. (GONZALEZ-RUIBAL, 2006: 35-36).

Therefore, to Gonzalez-Ruibal, "Castro culture" was a concept invented (in the current etymological sense of the word) by Martins Sarmiento with the intention of glorifying Portuguese past. That does not mean the author points to the existence of a "Celtic" culture in place of a "Castro" culture in the Northwest. The region held a variety of ethnic groups that alternated along time and space, and that prevents an association to a single group.

There are, however, researchers who position themselves against the propositions of Gonzalez-Ruibal. To Armando Coelho Ferreira da Silva

[...] Galicia, the Center and North of Portugal offer, in contrast with the Southern area, a structural unit of regional entities impregnated with a deep human content that Strabo noticed (3.3, 5-7) in the description of the peoples that lived from the River Tejo to the Artabro Gulf. This extensive territory spans five traditional regions: Galicia, the lands between the rivers Douro and Minho, Trás os Montes, Beira Litoral and Beira Interior” (SILVA, 2001: 335).

Silva continues to affirm the existence of the Castro Culture in the Northwest of the Peninsula, and it would have a complex idiosyncrasy: over a “deep pre-Indo-European substrate, elements of Celtic influence were accumulated” (2001, p. 335). Logically, such a historical process was not static. During a long period of time that goes from the first millennium BC to the first century AD, the inhabitants of the region were subject to multiple influences (like the Turduli, the Punic, and the Italic).

For the author, the formation of what we define as Castro Culture happened during the transition from the second to the first millennium BC, as seen in their kind of habitat and social organization.

[...] There is, in the stone habitat of the Castro culture, the presence of similar circular plans that could be a traditional indigenous solution, with an ethnographic base. This opposed diffusionist theories that would try to explain their genesis in the southern settlements of the Bronze Age. It is a local tradition that has nothing to do with possible Celtic influences, as has been presumed since the first works of Alexandre Herculano, father of Portuguese historiography, regarding the circular ruins of Citania de Briteiros, for the Celts built using orthogonal criteria (SILVA, 2001: 339).

In the same manner, Bravo (2001: 131), affirms that the dwellings of the peoples of the Northwest did not follow a regular plan, commonly adapting the houses to the available terrain. This fact differentiates this type of urbanism from the one existent in Meseta, where the groups of dwellings (usually rectangular) formed blocks.



Figure 01 –Santa Tegra Castro (Guarda) with circular dwellings inside a plane that does not follow the orthogonal pattern. In: Bravo (2001: 130).



Figure 02 – *Oppidum* of Numancia, with the presence of the orthogonal plan and rectangular dwellings.
In: Yacimiento Celtibero de Numancia (Soria) – <http://www.numanciasoria.es/>

This does not mean there are no Castros in the Northwest with an orthogonal plan. The best-known example is Citania de Sanfins in the city of Paços de Ferreira (the biggest Castro of the Northwest, with 40 hectares), with an urbanization from the first

century AD that – even though it has the presence of structural elements of communal organization that have as reference the family unit – was carefully planned. It had “wide streets separating regular blocks, inside which the family groups settled. These were still the fundamental unit of the settlement, even though in this case they did not superimpose the group space (the settlement as a whole)” (PARCERO and COBAS, 2004: 43).

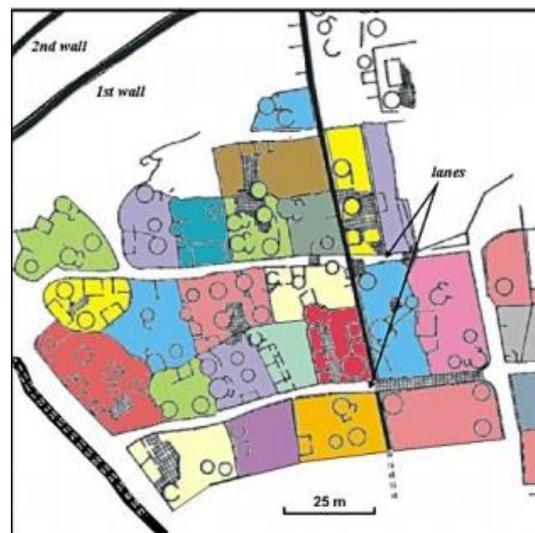


Figure 03 – Citania of Sanfins – orthogonal plan, with indication of the walls and avenues, and with the presence of round dwellings. In Parcero and Cobas, 2004: 44

Therefore, even if in the proto-historical phase (marked by Roman influence) the settlements in Sanfins (Paços de Ferreira), Briteiros (Guimaraes) and Monte-Mozinho (Penafiel) followed an orthogonal plan and had rectangular constructions, the round stone dwellings continued to be more frequent. In the case of Santa Tegra Castro, it is important to highlight that – even during the main period of occupation (first half of the first century AD) – the Castro’s plan was not orthogonal.

Another important point is the use of stone. To Silva (2001: 339-340), circular stone constructions from Castro de Terroso (Povoa de Varzim) – dated through radiocarbon as belonging to the 7th and 6th centuries BC – refute the theses that older dwellings were built with perishable material. It is interesting to observe that, when analyzing the Castro culture’s baths or saunas, the author considers them as thermal edifices of indigenous origin (with no Hellenic or Roman influence). The first

constructions of the kind were made of perishable material and later, in the proto-urban period (first century BC to the middle of the first century AD), built with stone.

We can find in Castros from the Asturias regions, however, baths built in stone with dating prior to Roman contact. The best known is Chao Samartin Castro (Asturias). This thermal construction was built around the fourth or third century BC (PARCERO AND COBAS, 2004: 46), as indicated by the high concentration on the oldest stratigraphic levels of indigenous ceramics, dating from pre-Roman periods (fourth to second centuries BC). According to Villa-Valdés (2012: 25)

[...] the bath was built in the beginning of the 4th century BC, inside the fortification. ... The plans of the building show that there were four different rooms, similar to the resorts that form the Portuguese *Pedras Formosas* (atrium, antechamber, chamber and furnace), and generally have been found in other Asturian monuments.

The good conservation of this bath made possible the correlation of its structure to the stone baths in the Asturian Castros of Pendia and Coaña (5th or 4th century BC), and allowed us to verify they shared similar architecture. To Villa-Valdés (2000: 97), the surprising dimensional similarity that the original plans of the buildings show demonstrate fidelity to an established pattern and the use of a same unit of measurement.



Figure 04 – Sauna of Chao Samartín. In <http://www.castrosdeasturias.es/castros/62/16/la-visita-al-castro>



Figure 05 - Sauna of Chao Samartín. In <http://www.castrosdeasturias.es/castros/62/16/la-visita-al-castro>

This makes us question why, in the Portuguese Castros, there would be a construction with perishable material and later, in the proto-historical period, constructions made of stone. Would regional peculiarities (social or geographical) be enough to explain why in the Portuguese Castros the baths were placed away from the settlement and a first construction would be done with perishable materials, while in the Asturian Castros they were located at the entrance and built in stone? There are no answers to these questions yet. We can observe singular characteristics in some Castros where, even after Roman presence, there was no reorganization of the inhabited area based on the adoption of the orthogonal plan (Santa Tegra Castro). In the Citanias of Sanfins and Briteiros, the ordination inside the orthogonal plan did not determine the inclusion of the baths inside the inhabited area (what was common in the Roman world)³. Anyhow, the presence of baths in the Asturias between 5th and 4th centuries BC confirms this kind of construction was not due to contact with Romans or Hellenics.

A common aspect of Asturian and Portuguese baths refer to ritual, even though there are differences related to their placement. As mentioned, most Portuguese baths were placed away from the settlements and the ones in Asturias placed next to their entrance. In the Asturias, they realized the rite in a secluded spot of the acropolis⁴

(isolated with trenches and palisades). That is because “the access door, the path just before the entrance into the urban area, the great assembly lodge, and the bath composed the repeated scenography of these settlements as the proper place for celebration, reunion, and the invitation to any representation acts the ceremonial protocol of the community might require”. Regarding the Portuguese baths, even with the differences in the group of constructions and geographic positionings, the greater number of researchers (Silva, Almagro-Gorbea) affirms the correlation between the Castro baths and the warrior initiation rituals in which water⁵ and fire would be elements of metamorphosis and renovation (like in the Asturian baths).

Even with the differences between the Portuguese and Asturian baths, they are one of the characteristic cultural traces of the Northeastern Iberian Peninsula, along with other elements: elevated habitat, circular stone cabins, and unknown funeral rites. These characteristics might not be enough to differentiate the “Castro people” from “Celtic people”, but currently seem to be far from simply a Portuguese nationalist construction (although it is undeniable that, in the 19th century, the preoccupation with the formation of national identity had impregnated archeological studies). There are divergent positions even on the presence of the Celts in Europe, ranging from Celtoscepticism to Pan-Celtic positions. Such positions interlink with issues of identity/nationality, as was mentioned in the beginning of this article.

In this sense, Zapatero (2001: 73) alerts to the fact that, in the 21st century, the “Celts” are the result “of a long and complex intellectual bricolage work, whose authors – at least from the two last centuries – have forgotten the construction process itself”. For the author, the positions inside academy can be reduced to three categories. First, traditional Celtic scholars who defend the “Celts” as they were described by Greek and Roman writers and correlate the Celts with La Tène culture, possessing the same art, religion, and social organization. Second, critical scholars who do not accept the simple correlation of Celt = La Tène and believe that the Classic texts, Linguistics, and Archeology can trace a Celtic reality that is diverse through time and space. Third, the fully skeptical scholars, who believe the Celts were a construction of Antiquity, of Renaissance scholars, and current researchers.

We will assume the second position, since the correlation of textual sources, material evidence, and linguistic data make evident that the Celts were a historical reality, but we cannot always associate their presence in a location to the La Tène

culture. Cunliffe (1997: 133) says that “when considering the problem of the Iberian Peninsula, it is necessary to dissociate the material La Tène culture from the concept of “Celt”, and when we do this, the nature and the significance of the Celtic language inevitably emerge”.

In the analysis of the Celtic presence in the Iberian Peninsula, the non-correlation of the region with good part of the archeological documentation found in Hallstatt and La Tène cultures has caused, for years, its exclusion from the academic debate about Celts in the European continent. Overcoming this issue requires us to take into consideration the cultural and ethnic aspects of the populations who inhabited the region of Hispania.

The roots of the Peninsular Celtic world would lay, therefore, in a Proto-Celt substrate, maintained in the peninsular west and spread, during the transition of the Bronze Age into the Iron Age, from the Atlantic regions to the Meseta plateau. Such phenomenon could be attested by the presence of ideological elements (initiation rites of warriors), material findings and archeological structures (votive deposits of weapons in water, construction of stone buildings for inhabitation), and common linguistic evidence (anthroponyms and toponyms) in several areas, that point to an Indo-European substract (ALMAGRO-GORBEA, 1992: 8).

This Indo-European substract is also mentioned by Silva (2013: 25):

[...] 4- The area considered as belonging to the Callaeci, according to the proper designation of a minor ethnic group of the right bank of River Douro (Tranoy 1977), which extended, with Romanization, to Galiza (which adopted the onomastics) and Trás-os-Montes. It has as characteristics a proto-historic culture of complex idiosyncrasy, where, to a pre-Indo-European background was added a powerful Indo-European linguistic substract. It is found in the main entities of the current geographic scenario (in special hydronyms and oronyms), and elements of Celtic nature (in particular, ethnonyms e anthroponyms). It is more visible to the North, of Turduli origin, more established in Beira Litoral, South of River Douro, documented in numerous information from Classical, historical and epigraphic sources.

Such substract would not be restricted to linguistic elements, also influencing the worldview (the idea of symmetry between the macrocosm and microcosm), and consequently the structure and organization of the Castro society (Silva, 2013). Thus, one notices that – both in the Northwest of the Peninsula and on the other regions that encompass it – the researchers point out the Indo-European and posterior Proto-Celtic

substrate as the components that allow them to explain the cultural similarities between several peoples that inhabited Hispania.

In the academic sphere, the emphasis in the Proto-Celtic substrate can derive from the fact that Spain has tried to affirm in the last decades that, even though there is little archeological material related to La Tène culture in the Iberian Peninsula, Celtic presence is verifiable. It could be verified through similar archeological objects found in several regions (warrior statues with torcs, biglobular daggers, stone buildings), through toponyms (suffixes of locations ending in *briga*, for instance, *Segobriga*) and anthroponyms (names like *Ambatus*), and through texts of authors from Antiquity, like Avienus (*Ora Maritima*)⁶, Herodotus (*Histories*)⁷, and Polybius (*Histories*)⁸.

Almagro-Gorbea (2001: 103), affirms that

[...] during Late Bronze Age, in the beginning of the first millennium BC, in the West and in the northern half of the Iberian Peninsula, there was an Indo-European cultural substratum that was older than, but not different from, the Celtic cultures of the Iron Age. That allows us to understand better the origin and the characteristics of the Celts in the Iberian Peninsula. Such substratum can be considered “Proto-Celtic”, for its characteristic features are Celtic, even if more archaic than the ones in Central Europe, since they do not originate from Atlantic traditions initiated in the Bell Beaker period. That would explain the affinities of the Atlantic Celtic world, from the British Isles to the Iberian Peninsula, whose origin and characteristics could not be explained by Celtic invasions coming from Central Europe.

This archaic substratum would have been slowly absorbed from its origins and would expand progressively from the Iberian System⁹ the Celtiberian culture from the 4th century BC. That would explain the mentioned cultural proximity of all Celtic populations in the Iberian Peninsula, like Carpetani, Vaccei, Vettones, Lusitani, Gallaeci, Astures, Cantabri, etc., over which is evident the growing expansion of the Celtiberian¹⁰”.

This leads most Spanish researchers to consider Castro culture (also called Gallaecian) as one of the groups with Celtic characteristics, since such substratum would be deeply archaic and would explain the cultural similarity of the different populations that inhabited the Iberian Peninsula. The emphasis on the existence of a common substratum also aims to refute old theories¹¹ of an invasion of Celtic populations in Spain, which are currently unheeded because there is no correspondence between the supposed invading hordes and the archeological objects found in the region.

For Almagro-Gorbea (2001: 110-111), the peculiarities existent in Galicia are caused by a process where the growing Celtiberian influence in the Iberian Peninsula

happened at a slower rate in this region. Thus, it is possible to observe in the Castro culture the use of torcs and weapons similar to those of the Celtiberians, even though their funeral rites (still very little known) do not follow the Celtiberian pattern of burial of ashes in urns deposited in necropolises.



Figure 06 – Biglobular daggers found in the Celtiberian necropolis of Carratiermes (Montejo de Tiermes, Soria, 2nd century BC). In: Lorrio (2001: 196).



Figure 07 – Gold torcs from the Treasure of Foxados (Pontevedra, Iron Age). In: <http://www.museo.depo.gal/coleccion/seculo.xx/ga.03010002.html>



Figure 08 – Statue of Gallaecian warrior from Castro de Outeiro Lesenho wearing torc, shield, and biglobular dagger (1st century BC) In: Silva (2007: 260, Est.CXX).¹²

The progressive “Celtiberization” was interrupted by Roman conquest. This process would have been still incipient in Galicia, and this, to Almagro-Gorbea (2001: 111), shows its complexity. Lorrio (2001: 197) also points out, when talking about the Castro culture, that this “Celtiberization” never became complete, as shown by the fact that the territory kept away from the funerary manifestations particular to the Arevaci environment¹³”. Following the same line of thought, to Lorrio and Zapatero (2004: 226) “the strong continuity we can observe in Castro culture left little space for external influences originated from Meseta, the area from which the Celtic elements would presumably have come”.

However, there are researchers who argue that the Celtic influence occurred first in the Northwest of the Peninsula. Gamito (2005: 575) and Silva (2001: 340) talk of the existence of Celtic populations in Southern Iberian Peninsula, who migrated north running from the Carthaginian invasion. Even though they disagree on the period when this happened (to Gamito the arrival of the Celts happened around the 4th or 3rd century BC, and to Silva it happened in 500 BC), both agree that there was a movement of Celtic populations towards the Northwest. They also agree that Strabo’s (Geography, III, 3, 5) and Pliny the Elder’s (Natural History, III, 3, 10) accounts corroborate the issue of migration. Alberro (2008: 1017) goes even farther, affirming that the Proto-Celtic substrate would have occurred initially in the Northwest of the Peninsula, and from there it would have expanded to the other areas, including the Meseta region. For the author, there would be a cultural substratum with origins in the Atlantic Bronze Age in the Northwest of the Iberian Peninsula, which had already assimilated ideological and linguistic traits, such as the use of the Proto-Celtic or Celtic language and the existence of Castros with round dwellings (like in Britain and in Ireland).

Following this same line of thought of Atlantic influxes, Cunliffe (2003: 18) defends *long term* as an explanation of sociocultural similarities found among inhabitants of the coastal regions of the Atlantic Ocean. Contact, and the following cultural interrelations, would have happened since pre-history. The existence of navigable fluvial networks would help avoid the isolation of inner regions and make multiple influences possible between several areas. Such phenomenon would elucidate, for instance, the origin of linguistic similarities found in the populations of Gaul, of the Western part of the Iberian Peninsula, of Brittany, and of Ireland.

However, it is still not possible to verify if the Proto-Celtic substrate originated in the Northwest and spread to the inner regions of the Iberian Peninsula. We cannot determine if the Celtic influence occurred from the central zones to the coastal zones (if we highlight the role of the Celtiberians and consider this population as bearers of the elements considered “Celtic”)¹⁴. It is not possible to verify if such substrate would have developed concomitantly (but not homogeneously) in coastal and interior regions. What we can verify when we examine archeological documentation is that the Castro population kept great part of its idiosyncrasies (as attested by the presence of baths prior to Roman presence), and that it was subject to Atlantic influences that go back to pre-historical times. The Proto-Celtic influences in the area are verified in a moment in time that was prior to the contact with the Celtiberians, whose archeological findings are more frequent in the Northwest after the 2nd and 1st centuries BC.

The Proto-Celtic substrate would actually have been the main factor of connection of several peoples with distinctive traces without making them uniform. We must remember that cultures are not static and that the Castro, the Celtiberian, Vettones, Turdetani and all the other peoples of the Iberian Peninsula along history suffered the most varied kinds of influence from the contact with the Punic, the Greek, and the Italic.

The Iberian Peninsula is immensely complex. The research done, in the last decades, by archeologists, linguists, and classicists have contributed more and more to its knowledge. Evidently, this does not mean there is a search for absolute truths about Celts and Castros, but a search for plausible explanations for cultural similarities and differences. This search takes into consideration the historical conditionings connected to issues of national identities, and the undeniable peculiarities found among the inhabitants of each location.

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² Martins Sarmiento made his first excavations in the Portuguese Northwest, especially in Citánias de Briteiros (1875), and Citánias de Sabroso (1878).

³ Logically, one must keep in mind that hydrographic issues could have interfered in the location of the thermal buildings. The Portuguese baths were located next to watercourses and springs, and that could explain their location being separate from the living areas, while the ones in the Asturias region followed schemes where there was little use of running water. This only partly explains, however, this issue of location, since in the Asturias region the baths could also have been built near watercourses. The choice, therefore, must have followed criteria connected to sociocultural issues, since the Asturian baths are located next to the entrance of the Castros and, consequently, might have acted symbolically (along with the other constructions present in the so-called Asturian “acropolises”) as an access “door” to the community. They would have been particularly important as buildings where warriors went through a process of initiation and/or “regeneration” and “rebirth” after battle.

⁴ The best known is Chao Samartín (800 BC).

⁵ To Villa-Valdés (2012), the ritualistic importance of the water element in the Asturian settlements, along with the cult of aquatic divinities, is evident because of the existence of granite pillars next to rivers near the Castros of Pendia and Coana.

⁶ According to Lorrio and Zapatero (2005: 178), when we analyze textual sources, we see that the first mention of Celts appears in the Latin poem *Ora Maritima* by Avienus. Even the author wrote the poem in the 4th century AD, it mentions a Massiliote Periplus of the 6th century BC and is based in ancient sources of unknown authors (among them a supposed Massiliote sailor), and some other writers the author mentions as inspiration: Hecataeus of Miletus, Hellanicus of Lesbos, Phileas of Athens, Scylax of Caryanda, Pausimaco of Samos, Damastes of Sigeion, Bacoris of Rodes, Euctemon of Athens, Cleon of Sicily, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Thucydides. Even if there is controversy about the described locations, a part of the poem (128-135) is traditionally considered the oldest registry of Celts in textual sources. The work places the Celts beyond the Oestrimni Islands, of uncertain location.

⁷ It is “credited to Herodotus (2, 33.3; 4, 49.3) the first sure reference of Celts in the Iberian Peninsula, and the oldest evidence of the ethnonym *Keltoi*. In the 5th century BC, Herodotus indicated the source of the River Istros (currently known as the Danube) as the land of the Celtic people, a land that extended beyond the Pillars of Hercules. They were neighbors to the Conii, the most western of all peoples” (Lorrio e Zapatero, 2004: 178).

⁸ The work of Polybius is particularly important, because the first textual mention of Celtiberia appears in the narrative of the siege to Sagunto (3, 17). Along his work, Celtiberia appears with prominence in the narrative of the Celtiberian Wars (Polybius 35, 2), with Roman victory happening in 133 BC, after the siege to the city of Numancia.

⁹ Chain of mountains that divides Central Meseta from Spain and from the rest of the Iberian Peninsula.

¹⁰ Among the several peoples of the Iberian Peninsula, the Celtiberians are the best known. That is probably due to their bigger presence in historical sources and to the information gathered from entombments, like the Sorian necropolises of Numancia, La Mercadera, and Carratiermes. For Almagro-Gorbea (2001) this people would be responsible for the “Celtiberization” of the Iberian Peninsula.

¹¹ With relation to invasionist theories, we highlight the book by Bosch-Gimpera - *Two Celtic Waves in Spain*. Oxford: University Press, 1939.

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¹³ One of the Pre-Roman peoples ethnically identified as Celtiberian is the one placed geographically between the Iberian System and River Douro Valley.

¹⁴ In this case, the influence of the Celtiberians would be seen as the most determinant for the gradual “Celtification” of the Iberian Peninsula. Lorrio (2001: 188), for instance, while affirming that we cannot link the presence of population from the Urnfield Culture to a “Celtification” of the Peninsula (since we can verify the existence of groups of this culture among the Iberians, who had a non-Indo-European language, also says we must not underestimate the possibility their infiltration in Oriental Meseta during the last centuries of the first millennium BC might bring with it an Indo-European language preceding the language of the Celtiberians. We can say there is no contradiction between both affirmations, since we are not considering the existence of invading hordes which determined a cultural change, but are examining the importance of the influence of groups from the Urnfield Culture (originated in Central Europe and arriving at the Peninsula after crossing the Pyrenees), in the Oriental Meseta region.