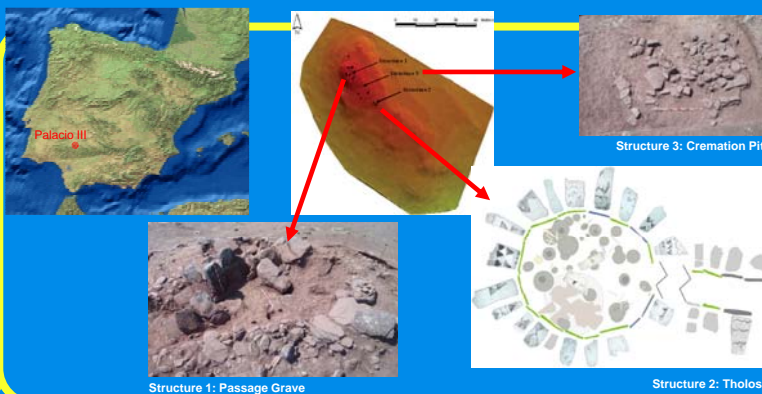


THE HOARD OF PALACIO III MEGALITHIC COMPLEX (SEVILLE)

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INTRODUCTION

The excavations carried out by the Universities of Seville and Southampton in the funerary complex of Palacio III uncovered a set of artifacts, described initially as 'hoard' given its location on the site (under one of the orthostats) and the potential value attributed to them. It is the only deposit documented in primary position, and their typologies suggest a chronology of the First Iron Age. Thus, the deposition of this hoard in the oldest structure of the funerary complex is a clear evidence of the reutilization of chalcolithic funerary structures during the Iron Age and generates several issues both technological, social and cultural.



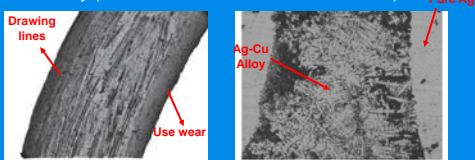
The Megalithic Complex is located in the area of Almaden de la Plata, Seville, where other settlements and megalithic structures have been documented. The Palacio III complex consists of three structures: a passage grave of 5 m long, the oldest structure of the site; a Chalcolithic tholos with a circular chamber of 2.5 m diameter and a 2 m corridor where over 150 artifacts were recovered; and between these two structures a quadrangular cremation pit dated to 980-660 cal BCE (1sigma) (García-Sanjuán, 2005). The 'hoard' was found under one of the dolmen orthostats

THE SITE

I. METAL ARTEFACTS

SILVER RINGS

Made by drawing silver wire (note the longitudinal striations, which appear partially worn on the inner side as a consequence of use), and soldered with a eutectic copper-silver alloy (note the dendritic structure of the weld)

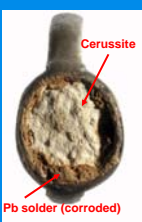


SILVER SEAL RING

Made from a silver strip soldered to the bezel, which is made of twisted silver wires. The silver used for the ring is quite pure, and a copper-silver alloy was used for the soldering. The bezel appears heavily worn.

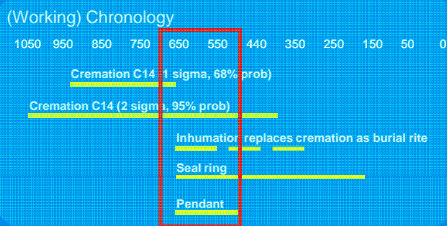


The stone seal is heavily weathered but appears to be made of cerussite (PbCO₃), coarsely soldered to the bezel using metallic lead. Does the different solder material indicate a different craftsman? Does the 'sunken' appearance of the cerussite indicate that there was another stone on top?



	C	O	Pb
Seal Stone	6.1	20.4	73.5
Cerussite	4.5	18.0	77.5

THE HOARD



Chemical Compositions of Silver Artefacts

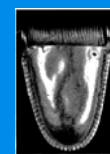
	Cu	Ag	Au	Pb
Circular Ring 3	1.7	97.5	0.7	nd
Circular Ring 4	1.1	97.4	1.5	nd
Seal Ring: Bezel	2.0	97.4	nd	0.6
Seal Ring: Strip	1.8	98.2	nd	nd
Pendant: Suspension tube	1.2	98.8	tr	nd
Pendant: Flap	0.4	99.6	tr	nd
Pendant: Wire	0.4	99.2	0.4	nd
Pendant: Wire	0.4	99.3	0.3	nd

SEM-EDS data in wt%.

DIFFERENT TRACES...

DIFFERENT PROVENANCES?

...WAITING FOR LIA RESULTS



Aliseda 6th BC



Palacio III

SILVER PENDANT

The pendant was rather fragmented, but its typology resembles that of Orientalising period gold pendants such as that recovered in Aliseda. Like in Aliseda, the wires were decorated using an anvil. A copper-silver alloy was used for the solder. It is possible that this pendant was used together with the amber beads, making a necklace.



Silver wire showing the anvil marks

OTHER METALS

A bronze needle with 8% tin and two very corroded small iron rods.

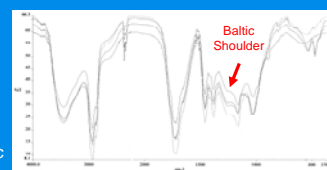


II. AMBER BEADS

A dozen barrel beads made of amber were recovered. FTIR spectra of four samples show a plane band between 1250 and 1180 cm⁻¹ followed by an absorption peak between 1160 and 1150 cm⁻¹. According to Beck et al, this is the characteristic 'Baltic shoulder' that confirms the Baltic origin of the raw materials.



Baltic amber. Beck et al. 60s



FTIR analyses showed the Baltic origin of the amber of Palacio III

DISCUSSION

This research poses several socio-economic questions...

1. TRADITION 'VERSUS' INNOVATION

Continuity in the use of sacred space as seen in the reutilisation of chalcolithic structures

Versus

Innovation in the use of grave goods (metal rather than stone, and Orientalising style) and funerary practices (cremation rather than inhumation)

2. WHO PLACED THERE

Indigenous elites who used foreign artefacts and Orientalizing styles as a form of emulation

Versus

Foreign elites appropriating old funerary structures as a form of acculturation?

3. LONG DISTANCE TRADE

(Cornelian or Baltic Amber)

What are the routes and exchange systems behind the diversity of materials present at Palacio III?



Amber routes. Kristiansen, 2003

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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