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Megalithism and Hypogeism in
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LINKS BETWEEN MEGALITHISM AND HYPOGEISM IN WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN EUROPE: AN APPROACH

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1. Introduction

Formal similarities in plan design and volumetric conception are often noted in megalithic and hypogean monuments of Mediterranean Late Prehistory (Berdichewsky, 1964; Marqués Melero *et al.*, 1992; Montufo Martín *et al.*, this volume). Other kinds of architectural features shared by megalithic and hypogean monuments also exist. They include the use of orthostats in hypogean monuments as a structural element or adornment (Di Fraia, this volume; Lo Schiavo 1980; Manunza 1995; Spanedda 2007). The best examples perhaps are the hypogea of Arles, with megalithic cover-slabs such as La Source, that have underground trapezoidal structures with stairway access and sculpted doors of up to 43 m. Others have side niches, which were often related to the interment of numerous individuals, such as in Bounia (Provence) where, despite their small size, up to 350 cadavers were held (Guilaine 1998).

Moreover, most of the southern Iberian Peninsula's circular tombs with passages (whether or not covered by false domes) are partially hollowed out, and the excavated part of the chamber is covered with orthostatic panels.

In spite of the acknowledged formal relationship between megalithism and hypogeism, distribution maps that indicate the areas where tombs were exclusively hypogean (such as Sardinia) or megalithic (such as Southwestern Iberia) have become obsolete (Cámara Serrano 2001; Cicilloni 1999; Lilliu 1998; Moravetti 1998). Thus, currently, the sole difference between megaliths and hypogea such as rock-cut tombs is the emphasis on the monuments' visibility or concealment.

Thus, the links between hypogeism and megalithism go beyond formal and architectural features and need to be included in the literature on how ideology is formalized within these societies (Aguado Molina, this volume). Such links might also draw upon recent interest in the connections between megalithism and rock art (Bradley 1998; Bueno Ramírez and Balbín Behrmann 2006; O'Connor 2007; Scarre 1998).

Similarities between megaliths and hypogea also are evident in the archetypal reproductions of houses, which are quite complex in some Sardinian cases (Contu 1965; Costaval 2002; Demartis 1992; Solinas 2000; Tanda 1984), and especially in many houses' hypogean or semi-

hypogean character, as in the Iberian case of the Upper Guadalquivir river valley's Late Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements (Liesau *et al.*, 2008; Lizcano Prestel *et al.*, 2005).

The transposition/imitation/inversion of domestic ritual content demonstrates similarities between both kinds of monuments, dolmens and hypogea, even though their primary function is generally funerary. In any case, there is evidence that they have a more complex role in places such as Malta (Anderson y Stoddart 2007; Bonnano 1996; Malone 2007; Stoddart 2007; Stoddart and Malone, this volume), and proposals have been made concerning alternative ritual uses for megaliths (D'Arragon 1996) and other monuments (Tanda 1984). In this respect, the areas surrounding dolmens and rock-cut tombs do imply ceremonial use (Barrett 1990; Cooney 2007; Molina González and Cámara Serrano 2005; Fraser 1983; Mizoguchi 1992), but the presence of passages both in megalithic and hypogean monuments also emphasizes other features such as passage rites, as has been suggested in relation to caves (Skeates 2007; Whitehouse, 1984, 2007). Finally, concealment of the sacred area, which hypogea emphasize, is also a feature of megalithic monuments, where the tumulus serves both as a landmark and as a means of protecting its interior.

Given this data, it is apparent that social differences are very often hidden (rather than exhibited) after funerals, especially in collective burials. Only a detailed study of grave goods can show true social differences. In short, since characteristics of monumentality can provide clues about this masking process, new debate about monumentality is necessary (Cámara Serrano and Afonso Marrero, this volume).

2. Session objectives

Firstly, we attempt to demonstrate that the preponderance of megalithic phenomena in certain areas results from the greater visibility of free-standing (or partially free-standing) monuments and not from cultural differences as some suggest (Hernando Gonzalo 1994; Plantalamor Massanet and Rita 1995; Rita 1987; Solinas 1996).

Secondly, we examine the formal similarities and constructive convergences between tumuli and hypogea and, based on the exhibition or concealment of certain features, attempt to demonstrate whether social reproduction determined their integration within a ritual

system. In this respect, we also consider concealment and the forgetting of the concrete in relation to the destruction/sealing of certain megalithic tombs (Rojo Guerra *et al.*, 2006, 2008) or the integration/concealment of elements (decorative or otherwise) in more recent monuments (Bueno Ramírez and Balbín Behrmann 2008; Kirk 1993). All this must be explained in the context of disintegration of individuality (Bloch 2000) and shows an apparent contradiction with the desire for permanence (Bard 1992; Bradley 1998; Fahlander and Oestigaard, 2008; Trigger 1990) that monumentality or the arrangement of grave goods pursues (Pau, this volume). Although these ideas are not exempt of problems (Aamont 2006:152, 164; Fahlander and Oestigaard, 2008:7; Katz 2007:172, 172 n. 22; Miari 2006:49; Petitti *et al.*, 2006:64).

The masking of social differentiation appears to be related more to hypogean sepulchers since they do not serve as free-standing referents designed to commemorate the presence of certain ancestors and, in fact, they do not even present exterior architectonic differences, other than facades or steles, or differences in grave goods. Furthermore, in some cases of more elaborate hypogea, collectivism came to affect a large part of the interred community of a single group in an unarticulated way (Stoddart and Malone, this volume). This masking dissolved through the funerary movement of grave goods to such an extent that we have found it necessary to point out that differences in wealth are more evident in artificial caves than megaliths (Cámara Serrano 2001; Montufo Martín *et al.*, this volume) and these differences become newly apparent with any reopening of the sepulcher.

In this respect, in numerous zones of Italy where the predominance of artificial caves (or simple cist pits) indicates a greater concern for concealment, differences, in the case of the Chalcolithic period, are especially relevant with respect to grave goods (Shennan 1982) and not only due to reasons of sex and age as some suggest (Barfield 1983, 1986; De Marinis and Pedrotti 1997:265). Even though these differences are present one finds, for instance, masculine tombs without arms (Cazzella 2006:98-101; Miari 1995:379-380), and there are differences in the presence of adornments (Carboni 2002:237, 260-261). In fact, as early as the Chalcolithic period, at least in Rinaldone, one can speak of the ideology of emulation and even of warrior grave goods (Angelis 1997:402; Cocchi Genick 2006:110).

Thirdly, we have discussed whether the two kinds of monuments (and partially excavated ones) are combined based on objectives pursued in different parts of the territory (Spanedda, this volume). This issue relates to different hypotheses about the meaning of formal differences in architectonic items, as can be seen in the archaeological studies of certain areas (Cooney 1999; Galilea Martínez 1981, 1997; Fernández Vega y Pérez 1989; Hernando Gonzalo 1994; Kaelas 1981; Sanahuja

Yll *et al.*, 1995), and generates ongoing discussion among researchers of areas where rock-cut tombs are the main funerary monuments.

For instance, research in specific zones of the Italian peninsula such as Campania or Abruzzi offer data about an oppositional model between artificial cave necropolises in the valleys (Dottarelli, 1986:273-274, 1990:306-307) and tombs that are dispersed and sometimes in pits in high zones (Bailo Modesti 1988:321; Radi 1988:376). In these cases, even in the area of Rinaldone, interpretation varies from the opposition between social formations (Cocchi Genick 1985:70, 1998:361; Negroni Catacchio 1988:355) to differences between the center and periphery of the same political structure, without ruling out. In this case, the possibility of a conquest-based expansion from the core would also explain the peripheral pits greater wealth in weapons (Cocchi Genick and Grifoni Cremonesi 1988:346; Grifoni Cremonesi 1989:93). Other interpretations refer to alliances which implied women exchanges (Dottarelli 1990:307). Other cases, such as that of Lazio, have been explained in chronological terms or in relation to the expansion of different facies (Carboni 2002:286-291).

In other areas as well, where megalithism is more evident, the point of view that emphasizes territorial compartmentalization has led to interpretations that tend to isolate plains areas from mountainous ones as independent units that correspond to opposing communities (Aguayo *et al.*, 1989-90; Andrés Rupérez 1990, 2000; Bergh 1987; Fernández Vega and Pérez 1989; Galán and Martín 1991-92; Jarman 1982; Martín Córdoba and Recio 1999-2000; Nocete Calvo *et al.*, 2005; Oliveira 1997). Although integrationist approaches are not lacking (Artelius 1999; Barnatt 1998; Cámara Serrano 2001; Gonçalves 2008; Oliveira 2003; Rincón 1998; Tilley 2004; Scarre 2007).

Fourthly, this book attempts to investigate the role that settlements surrounding necropolises have played in the evolution of megalithic and hypogean graves and their relationship to the development of collective burial ritual (Montufo *et al.*, this volume) through consideration of collective burial ritual as a means of masking social differences (Arteaga Matute 1993, 2001; Cámara Serrano 2001:236; Chambon 2000:273; García Sanjuán 2000:174; Nocete Calvo 2001:97). The intention here is to explore the relationship between collectivism and concealment (Stoddart and Malone, this volume) in relation to other forms of non-funerary ritualism.

In the Sardinian case (Spanedda 2007, this volume; Pau this volume), it appears that *Domus de Janas* necropolises are situated near the most important villages or those with a longer occupation (Foddai 1994-95:171-180; Trump 1984:517), although sometimes they have not been located because they have hypogean structures (Spanedda 2007).

Finally, an examination of why certain simple hypogean structures lasted until the Bronze Age (Melis 1998, 2003), which is the case for tombs dug inside settlements in Southeastern Iberia (Lull Santiago 1983; Molina González and Cámara Serrano 2004), is beyond the scope of this study.

3. Session themes

The subjects addressed in the session and compiled in this volume can be reduced to five central themes:

- The exploration of formal and constructive similarities between megalithic and hypogean graves based on the analysis of specific case studies (Loi; Di Fraia).
- A territorial analysis that explores the existence of territorial inclusion/exclusion in relation to both phenomena and the actual role of the tombs and their tomb-type in territorial control (Montufo *et al.*; Spanedda).
- The relationship between the two phenomena and their co-evolution in relation to settlement patterns (Stoddart and Malone; Gonçalves; Loi). In this respect, ritual monuments can be understood only in relation to domestic sites.
- The chronology, including origins, of both phenomena (Gonçalves; Pau; Loi; Stoddart and Malone).
- A theoretical analysis of the functions of both types of manifestations and their relationship to contemporary rituals (Aguado; Gonçalves; Stoddart and Malone). Reference sometimes is made to differences in function (Stoddart and Malone) and in other cases the authors prefer to discuss the relationship between chronological differences (and the coexistence thereof) and their social implications (Gonçalves). In this respect, the fundamental change/opposition does not appear to be constructed/not constructed, as another article proposes (Aguado), but is rather often a shift from the constructed to the category of “concealed” (Gonçalves; Montufo *et al.*). As we argue at the end of this work (Cámara and Afonso), what is important here is setting the stage for social struggle.

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