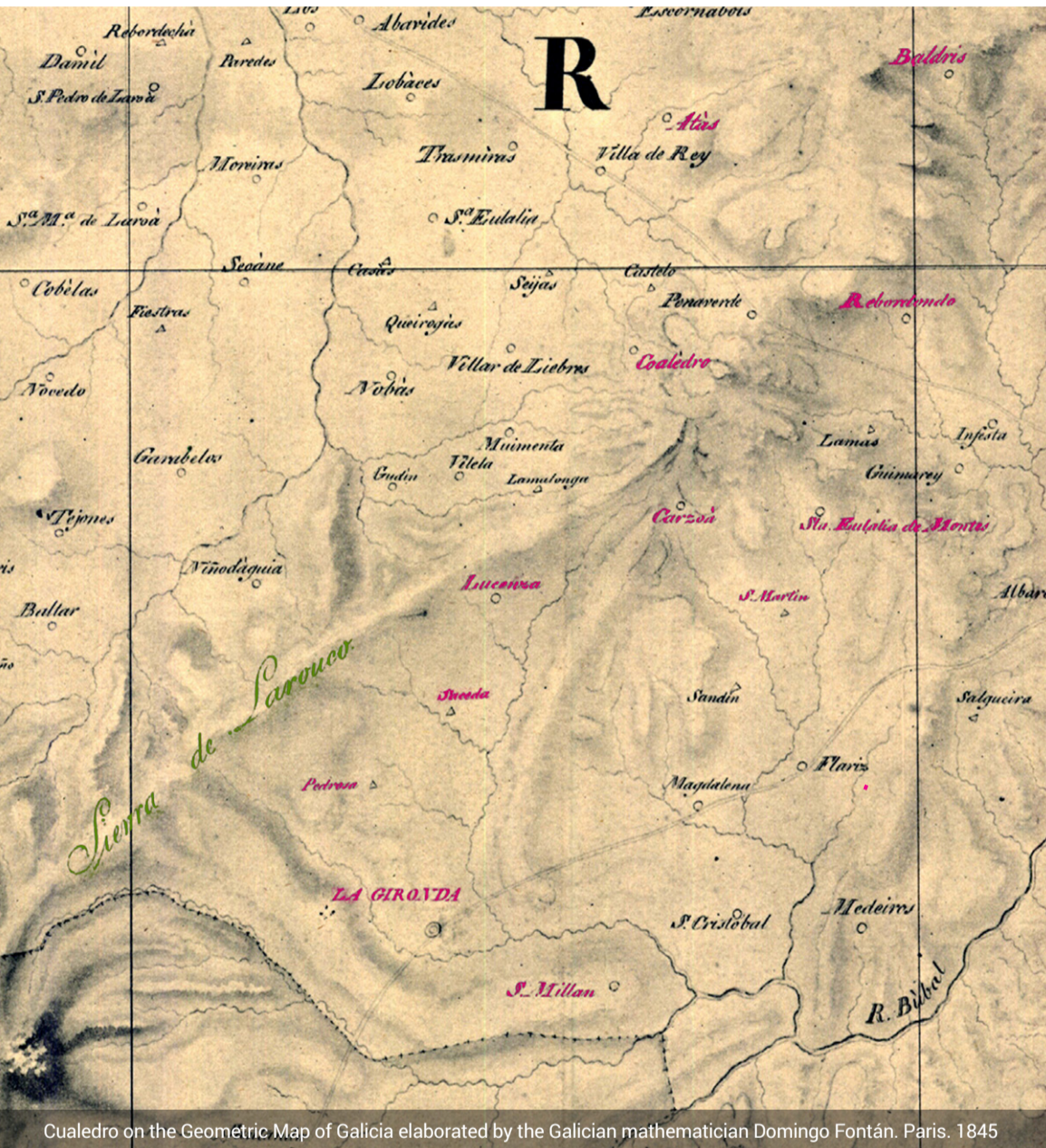


Cualedro

Aos pés do Larouco



Cualedro on the Geometric Map of Galicia elaborated by the Galician mathematician Domingo Fontán. Paris. 1845

The municipality of Cualedro is integrated in the historical region of Monterrei, whose capital is Verín, which belongs to the diocese of Ourense. It covers an area of 117,5 km². The capital is the Villa of Cualedro, situated 840 m above sea level. The term municipality of Cualedro includes a total of twenty singular entities of rural populations in ten parishes, making the dispersed settlements practically nonexistent. Cualedro unveils at the foot of the Serra do Larouco, one of the main natural monuments of the region. Larouco was, in ancient times, an indigenous god, as is shown by various engraved inscriptions found on roman altars. The parishes of A Xironda and San Millao border with Portugal, exactly in the parish of Vilar de Perdizes, in the municipality of Montalegre, which gives them a privileged historical condition based around intense personal and commercial relationships.



The Village of Cualedro

41.990305, -7.594142
The most renowned element of the municipality's capital is the church that dates back to the XVII Century and is situated at the top of the village, where they no longer perform acts of worship.

Constructed as a single rectangular nave and covered with a ceramic tiled gabled roof, four in the presbytery, was built with masonry dry stone walls. The facade is topped with a belfry that houses two bells. Facing this is a beautiful double spouted water fountain and a wash place that has, as a main feature, two facing exedras to assist the collection of water for the water carriers on both sides of the glass.



The Ice Well of Serra do Larouco

41.950813, -7.640442
The "casas da neve" or ice wells are constructions that are built in order to obtain ice from the snow collected during the winter to be consumed during the summer. The ice well that we have here is an oval shape with a depth of three metres that was dug out of the rock and from which, leads a ten metre long channel from where the melted ice can be extracted. The "neveira" (Ice Well), which used to have a roof that has long since disappeared, belonged to the House of Monterrei during the XVI and XVII centuries, as proved by a coat of arms found in its interior.

The ice wells were built by monasteries, cathedral chapters, cities and feudal lords in mountain ranges. They were used, above all for the conservation of provisions, to cool down drinks and food and also for medicinal purposes.

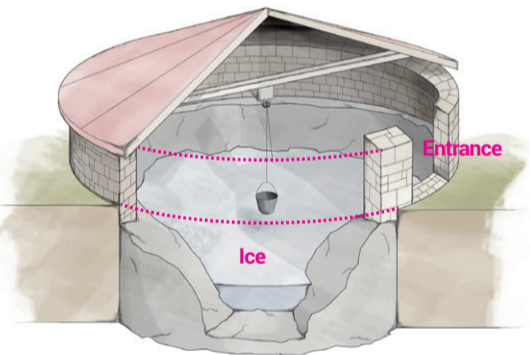


Diagram of an ice well dug out of the rock



A Pena Muller

41.946575, -7.643690
The Serra do Larouco (1.538 msnm) is, without doubt, the most extraordinary natural monument in the region of de Cualedro. A natural dividing border between the regions of Monterrei and A Limia, O Larouco is a mountain range common to Galicia and Portugal that possess an exceptional landscape, natural and cultural values. If we start the ascent from the village of Lucenza, one of its natural corridors, you will find the area of land where the Ice Well is situated and just after this, a series of monumental granite structures that have been shaped by the elements. Wind, sun, snow and rain have managed to reshape the horizon with a series of natural batholiths with whimsical shapes, some of which have a figurative aspect: a dromedary, a rooster, a dog and some say even a wolf.

But between all of those, there is one that stands out and it is called Pena Muller, a natural granite outcrop of notable height with a profile that gives the impression of the silhouette of a woman – a piece of abstract in reality – that was carved out over time by the contingent chiselling of the elements. In the decade of the 1980s the Festa do Larouco, was celebrated at the foot of the Pena Muller and was promoted by a group of enthusiasts from both sides of the "raia". Always initiated with the sound of the bagpipe, the acts included a symbolic offering to the God Larouco, with the words of Rodríguez Colmenero, "principal recipient that was of the religious and cult faiths of the surrounding areas on the arrival on Christianity".



Wayside shrine of A Xironda

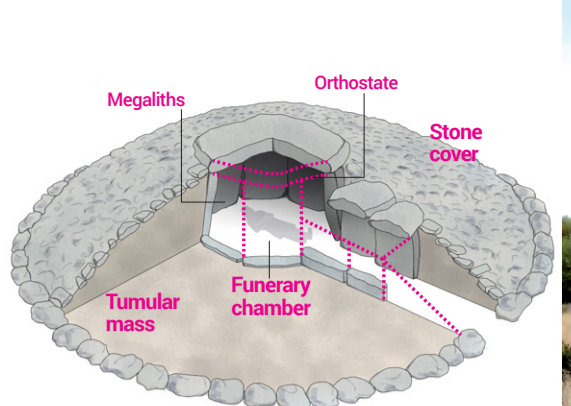
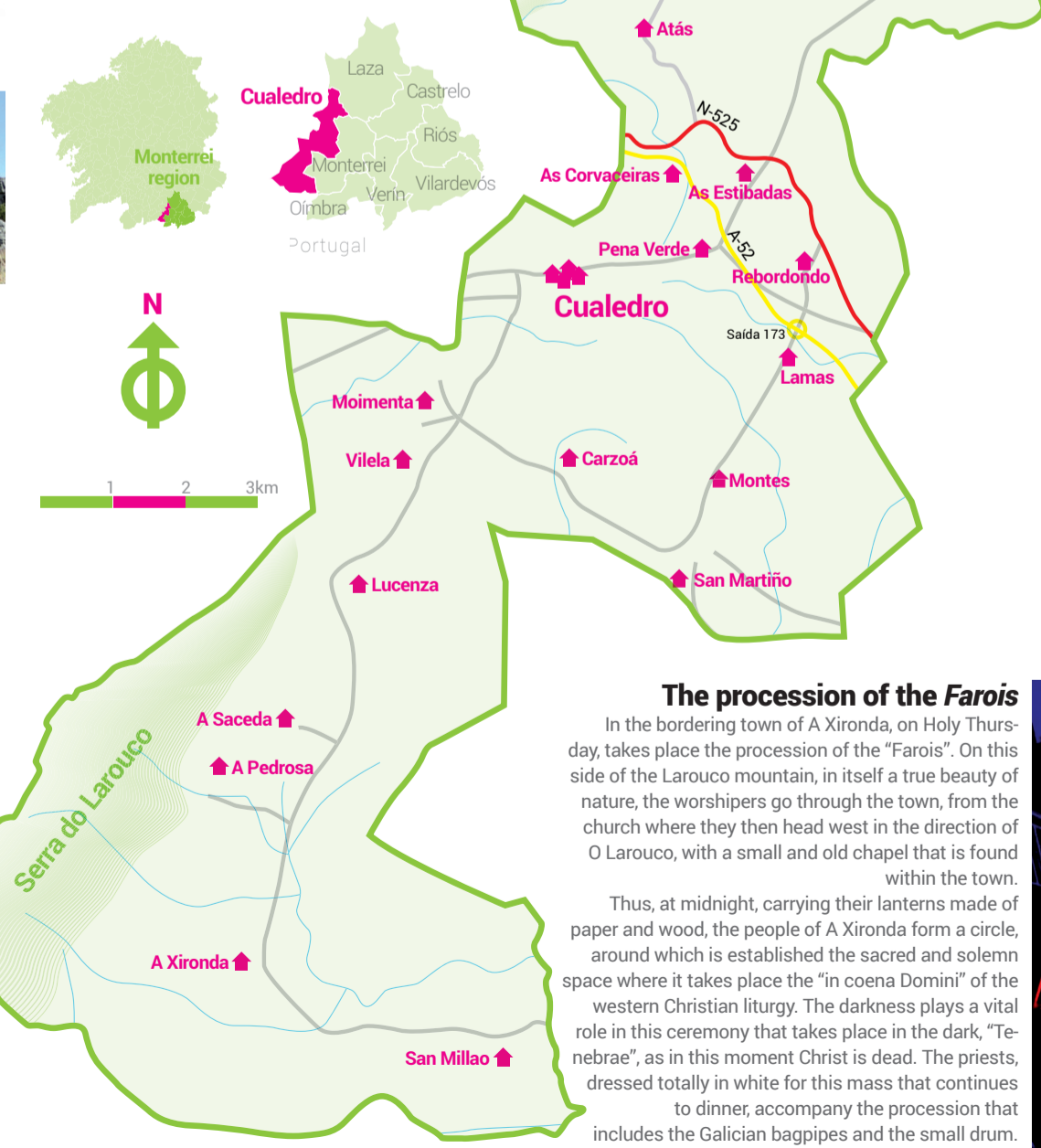
41.899800, -7.637526
The mirle village of A Xironda has multiple attractions. In its proximities, is situated the fort of "Cidá de Grou", an Iron Age site that is administratively situated in Portugal, but it offers its best observation point from the Galicia side.

Densely populated in the past thanks to its frontier and villa status, A Xironda is a compact village that possesses a magnificent bread baking oven which makes Porticado bread (similar to that of A Saceda) that serves as an example of the magnificent popular architecture of this region.

The oven that takes a rectangular form and has a communal use, stands out for the buttresses that reinforce the thick load bearing walls that sustains its splendid granite roof. A Xironda, which was under the control of the distant Monastery of Melón during the Middle Ages, boasts an elegant parish church and an extraordinary wayside shrine ("peto de ánimas") of baroque style, exquisitely carved resembling a noble house erected by intermediaries in the centre of the village. Under the image of the Virgin of Carmen, where they hang several scapulars, the souls of sinners are consumed by the purifying fire of, between others, a bishop and the pope himself, identified with the mitre and the tiara.



Communal oven of A Xironda



O Madorriño

41.928477, -7.612283
Madorriño is diminutive of medorra or madorra (of the lat. meta, conical heap), a voice used throughout Galicia to refer to the burial mounds built during the Neolithic period and also part of the Bronze Age as collective burial chambers.

The medorra is an isolated funeral monument situated on a wide plain, making also a dividing line between Lucenza and A Saceda, just at the edge of the road that links this last place with that of A Madanela (region of Monterrei), and was used as a visual and dividing frontier many centuries ago. The burial mound, as shown by Rodríguez Colmenero, the first person to study it, takes the shape of a truncated cone that is 1,5 m in height and 15 metres in diameter.

It shows clear signs of being despoiled, as it has already lost the top slab and, in its place, currently visible, is a ditch partially blocked off from where emerge the heads of three of the supports or orthostates that form part of the granite chamber that originally served to take the weight of a top slab.

The ethnography also gives us valuable information about this burial chamber. And so, the people of A Saceda tell that the mouros, the ancestors of the Galicians, threw a hammer from the church of Dos Mouros (an elevation situated on the Larouco mountain range) until the fort of A Cidá da Saceda; from there its inhabitants would throw it towards O Madorriño, where it would be collected by the mouros that inhabited this settlement, to be next thrown in the direction of the fort of A Cidá de San Millao.

Municipality of Cualedro



The Lama of A Saceda

41.929773, -7.631330
"Lama" is a Galician synonym for the word mud or clay soil that describes a "land dedicated to meadows" or "marsh land". But in the south east of Galicia they also identify the communal meadows as a place where people used to take their cattle to graze.

In Ourense the lands that take the name of A Lama are sometimes rented to private individuals. Here, in the village of A Saceda, there is a flood prone area dedicated to seeding and private land that in old times was seen as a surplus area known as divided areas.

Consequently the "lamas" of Ourense were and still are of great interest to the rural economy of Galicia. The fresh grass is the main product from this area, and from here the farmers and countryside workers of the village of A Saceda and, probably during the prehistoric and the Romanisation, the inhabitants of the fort of A Cidá, would have had this area of land as a basic reference for feeding their cattle.

This is an area of great interest for the reproduction of amphibians, among which is the Iberian spadefoot toad, the European tree frog and the Iberian Frog, classed as endangered species. Also present are the Green frog, the common frog, the Iberian painted frog, the common salamander, or common newt and the green newt.

In Lama da Saceda you can also find the Eurasian stone-curler, a species of bird that has been classed as an endangered species. If we talk about flora, of great interest is the atlantic humid heather, which is a species included as a habitat of priority interest; it is also relevant the enormous amount of different species of orchid.



The Roman Site of Saint Martha

41.941552, -7.610739
The site situated 1,5 km to the south east of Lucenza (in the parish of its namesake) was the object of archaeological excavation carried out by A. Rodríguez Colmenero who discovered diverse painted roman walls. According to the excavator, three levels of occupation can be identified: a pre-Roman level, relating to the end of the Bronze Age, another Roman level from the 1st century A.D. and also another dating from the Roman empire of the III and IV A.D. centuries.

The walls that were uncovered in the 1970s were divided horizontally by means of a continuous line and pieces of broken ceramics (mostly fragments of tile) that enable us to distinguish the original walls from those that were reconstructed by the restorers.

At the foot of the site is erected the Chapel of Saint Martha, a small rectangular building that holds inside a fragment of what could be a roman milestone positioned above a bronze sculpture from the VI century and dedicated to a devout named Vermudus.



The church of Santa Baia de Montes

41.964987, -7.554935
The parochial church, of baroque style, has masonry walls and a rectangular floor with presbytery; on the facade there is a lintel door with moulding on the lintel and on the lower part of the doorposts; a small bell gable crowns the whole.

In the temple a magnificent sundial stands out, but above all, the remains of a roman intersection, visible on the imposts of the cemetery door and also on the tower that has a bell tower.

Here, our attention is strongly attracted to a reused semi circular fragment of tympanum in which a cross in high relief was carved, which appears to be from Malta, situated between a crescent and a galana flower.

At the foot of the parish temple, a magnificent rectory house that still conserves a window at the side of its access doorway, shaped to enable the use of fire arms from the inside. Its construction was encouraged by the Jesuits; evidence of this is an inscription ("commissioned by IHS") carved into one of its walls. The Jesuits ruled during the XVI century the famous college of Monterrei, which was built on the site that today is occupied by a Parador hotel.



Water mills of As Mercedes

42.063261, -7.542403
As Mercedes is the traditional centre situated more to the north of the municipality of Cualedro. Here can be found two unequal water streams, the pool of Mercedes and the river of Baldriz. In the latter, we can find a beautiful route perfectly set up, accessible for everyone, made up of five rectangular mills and with a unique millstone with a slate roof, a specific gem from this part of the region.



Zarramanculleiro

The main figure of the carnival is the Zarramanculleiro, a character similar to the mask (cigarrón) of Verín or the mask of Laza that can be distinguished fundamentally by means of each mask that always appears decorated with floral images. The first appearance is on the 5th of January (The Magi Fair) and in the Carnival on Sunday and Tuesday.



Miliarios de Lamas

41.982239, -7.540390
This concerns two milestones without epigraphy - without engraved information - which form part of the secondary roman road that connects the great roman city of Chaves (Portugal) with Xinzo da Limia. This route of communication followed a path similar to the current A-52 dual carriageway, and could have been a stage of a long distance roman road that connected Aquae Flaviae (Chaves) with Iria Flavia (Padrón), crossing the valleys of the Támeiga, Bóbal, the plain of A Limia, the valley of Arnoia and the area of the Miño.

Those two examples were uncovered during the construction works of this infrastructure in the 1990s, some 150 m from where today they are displayed. The milestones were cylindrical markers that showed the distances in miles along the communication paths (some of which were paved or cobbled) constructed during the roman occupation (I-V century A.D.).



Romanic and rectory of Atás

42.021751, -7.571446
On roman temple walls it's not uncommon to find sexual depictions etched into the stone. Together with images of medieval warriors, horoscopes, different types of animals - real or fantasy, hunting scenes, farmers, musicians or dancers, the sexual scenes seem to be a strange iconography to use for decorating a roman church in the middle ages.

On one of the lateral facades of Saint Mary of Atás we can see, among other images, an erect penis of imprecise meaning: a warning against lust? A survival of prophylactic value that the penis possessed?; a representation of the normal? (in that period families used to sleep in a single room)...

During the middle ages, Atás was under the jurisdiction of Celanova. It has conserved the extraordinary rectory house, the main civil building of Atás that used to be an independent monastery from the central house. The Benedictine monks contributed to the economic and technological advances of work in the countryside, establishing methods of collective exploitation of irrigation infrastructures, such as that of Caño de Chamusíños.

The XVIII-XIX century rectory house, boasts walls of dry stonework, square floors around a patio that closes with solid ashlars and a doorway with cornice and rounded off with a cross and pyramids, with sloping gabled roof, mounted at an angle and exterior stone steps.



Stone cross and chapel of A Saúde, in Atás

42.018064, -7.559852
The stone cross of A Saúde that dates from the XIX century constructed on rock, has a rustic pedestal and cylindrical shaft with grooves, capital with two bodies and a rectangular cross with crucifix. The Hermit of A Saúde, XVII-XIX century, formed by dry stone walls and rectangular in plan, has a door with lintel on the façade, over a small rustic bell gable with architraves starting around the arch and topped with a stone cross.

Forts

In the municipal district of Cualedro there are a total of seven documented fortified settlements dating from the Iron Age. These include the settlements of Dos Mallos, A Cidá de Montes, A Cidá de Carzoá, Montecelo, the church of Dos Mouros, the fort of Saceda and the Cidá de San Millao.



In all of those it is frequent the finding of roman ceramics and hand mills. All of the known forts/ settlements are found based on hillocks at a height of between 700 and 850 m. To date the only excavations that have taken place are of the A Saceda settlements (between 1982 and 1988, carried out by Rodríguez Colmenero and Covadonga Carreño) and San Millao (between 1953 and 1955, by López Cuevillas and Taboada Chivite, and between 1982-1983, by Rodríguez González and Fariña Busto). In the clearing of the Dos Mouros church they carried out explorations that produced damaging results. Currently it is not possible, as a

consequence, to establish an exact dating of the periods of occupation from the remains, and this makes the analysis of the distribution of the population on what is now the current municipality of Cualedro. The entirety of the explorations are located in the 2/3 parts of the mid south of the council, which coincides with territory that has the best use for agriculture and herding, besides being the best communicated as it is situated between the main natural passages. The analysis of the historic infrastructure indicates that the main roman roads towards the south east were most probably built on top of pre-existing routes, given the proximity

of its route to the findings from the Iron Age. This strategic location leads us to suppose the existence of imported commercial activity and /or the exportation of minerals (mainly of tin/pewter) and the fluid relations with the regional neighbouring towns. This assumption is confirmed because of the mention of the town of the Bibalos, which inhabited this area during the 1st Millennium B.C, such as is verified by the renowned Pedrao dos Povos from the bridge of Chaves, going down in history for approving a pact of good neighbourly stability between the Romans and a series of indigenous towns.

Stone Wine Presses

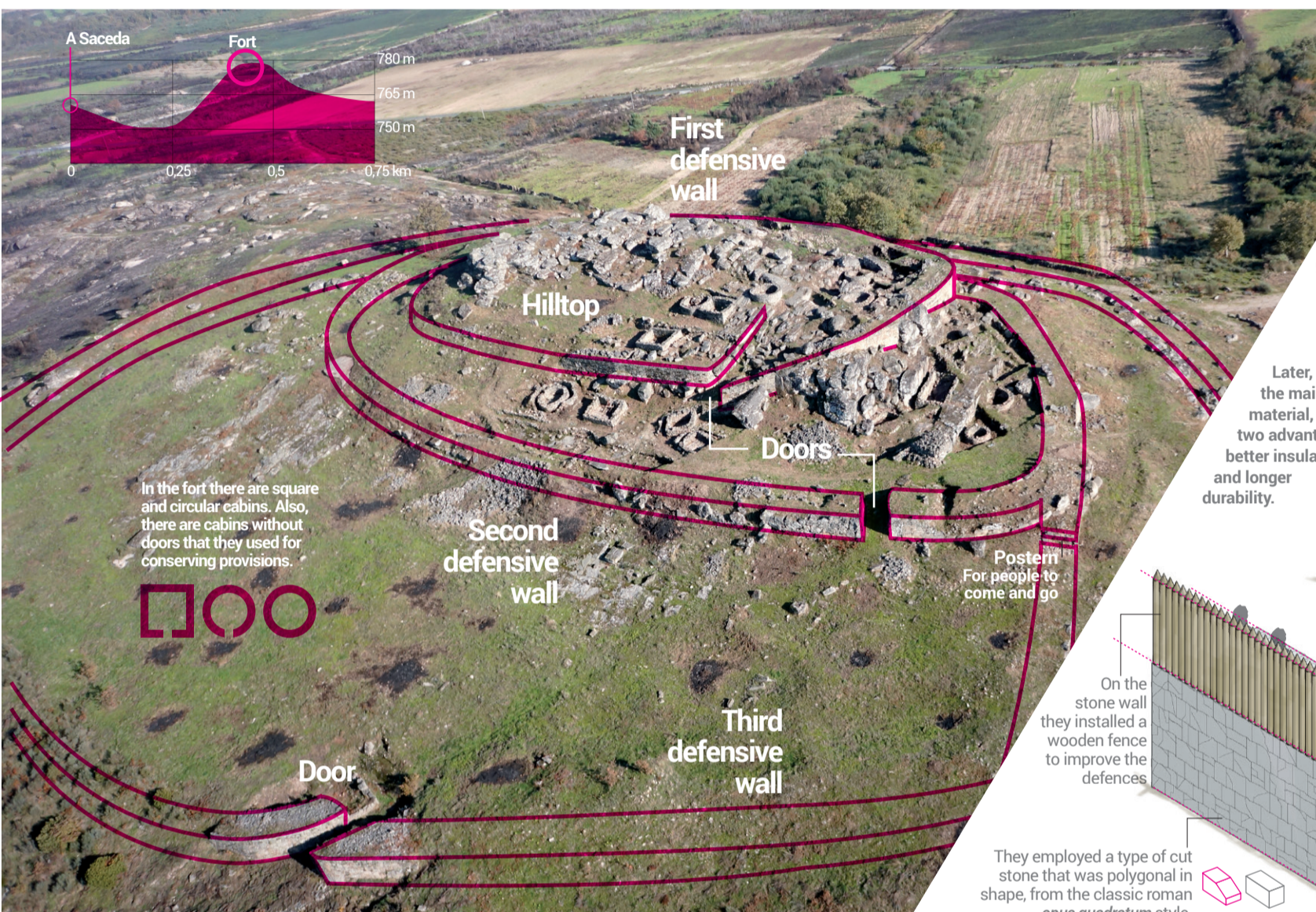
Stone wine presses ("lagares rupes-tres") are manmade structures, in general, not very well known and very simple, relating with the most archaic ways of wine making.

Without exact dating, the studies that have been made until now suggest a medieval origin, when small winery-groves made wine between the vines and not in the wineries, as has been happening since the XVII and XVIII centuries.



The Cidá da Saceda

41.930768, -7.627044

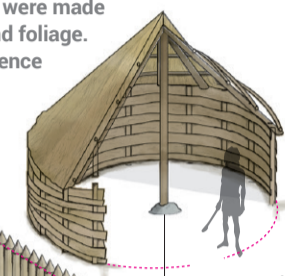


In the fort there are square and circular cabins. Also, there are cabins without doors that they used for conserving provisions.



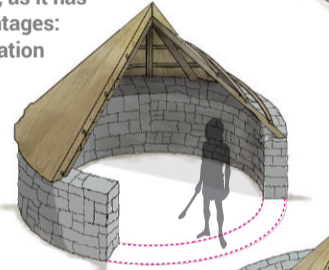
Technical evolution

The first huts were made from wood and foliage. They used a fence to protect the fortification



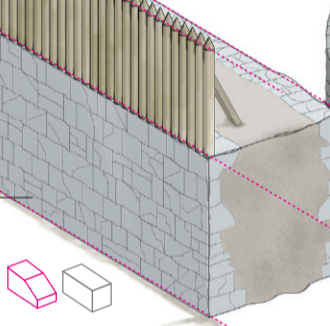
An embedded trunk in a stone supported the structure of the roof

Later, stone became the main building material, as it has two advantages: better insulation and longer durability.



Some constructions have a second stone ring, and also an insulation system that channelled the rain water.

On the stone wall they installed a wooden fence to improve the defences



They employed a type of cut stone that was polygonal in shape, from the classic roman opus quadratum style.

ASome of the huts had a paved floor that was slightly raised from the level of the ground in order to insulate better the dwelling.

access at the foot of the second enclosure.

The fort pre dominates the dwellings of the circular floor, but also has those of square and rectangular form.

In the opinion of some investigators, the fort of Saceda shows clear indications of hierarchy and centrality in the territory; from there they used to boast of the condition of the oppidum or what is known nowadays as a regional capital of the Bronze Age. With its three enclosures, the quality of its defences together with the size and organisation of the space proves that A Saceda is not a typical Iron Age fortification, but rather a fundamental central place that enables us to understand what the region was like during the prehistoric period.

It is one of Galicia's best conserved settlements and also one of the few to have been declared of cultural interest (the highest level of protection by law) in the province of Ourense. The settlement of Saceda, situated in front of its namesake village, was built in the middle of the plain, on an elevation that permits a great visual control of the area. It consists of a fortified village that presents slight influences on the roman world due to the commercial contacts, but not to direct roman influence. The settlement is located on top of a hillock at an altitude of 800 metres, to the south of the Serra do Larouco, in the peneplains between the hollow of Verín, in the area of the River Tâmega. Throughout history this region was a strategic area

situated in a central place of the Bracarense convent of the roman Gallaecia (Roman name for Galicia) with its capital in Braga, delimited over a geographic area that previously already had its own cultural peculiarities, product of a tradition that came from the Bronze Age or the first Iron Age. This site has a great monumental value for the structures and gathering characteristics similar to those of the region, besides being the one that provides the oldest chronology between those studied in the area until now. Its occupation spans from the IV century B.C to the 1st century A.D, the moment in that it was abandoned by its inhabitants who moved to the neighbouring settlement of A Cidá de San Millao for reasons that are still ignored. La Cidá da Saceda possesses three

habitable enclosures orientated towards the North West, each one surrounded by a wall that marks out its perimeter, proving that since its foundation it has quadrupled in size. Why? The high quality of the surrounding farming lands along with its strategic location at the end of a natural commercial route can explain such a big expansion.

Its monumental walls, besides serving as protection, acted as containment of the land. The upper enclosed area, the acropolis, presents an oval floor and is circled by walls built from bonding interlayer polygonal between big blocks of natural granite. Besides this, the fort possesses two other monumental sculptures and a postern that only allows you

Surprising discoveries

On this site they found ceramic materials and an important collection of metal artefacts. Its chronology dates from the VI century B.C to the 1st century A.D, with a light reoccupation in the V century of that period.

In the fortified settlement they found a surprising amount of high quality iron utensils that has no comparison with those found at any other Galician settlement: metallurgical tongs, two falcata swords and several falcata blades, the handle of a dagger of antennas, etc. These pieces demonstrate the importance of the metalworking trade during the Iron Age, a profession of enormous importance that produced fundamental utensils and weapons for the community, tools that guaranteed their survival through physical protection and daily work. To these pieces we have to add uncommon elements to be found in the settlements, such as three silver coins (two from the I century B.C. and another from the I century A.D), ceramics (next to the entrance door of the third enclosure were discovered, materials from a potters workshop, something of which is very rare to find in Galician settlements) and the remains of various decorated belt buckles, also a bronze necklace that proves the high acquisitive power and the status of its inhabitants.



The Cidá de San Millao

41.904719, -7.607475

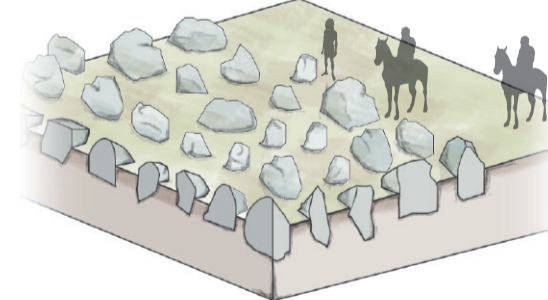


It is located in the parish of San Millao, making a border between Galicia and Portugal, on the banks of the River Castro, where they built a watermill that has long since lost its roof. The fortified settlement of cidá, dominated by the natives, stands out for its imposing defences in the form of walls that surround the whole site. This fortified village, dating from the 1st century B.C to the II century A.D, consists of a main site and two secondary enclosures- situated on the east and west section- that are outlined by a thick dry stone wall principally polygonal. Its monumental walls remind us of other

nearby monumental fortifications such as in Cidá da Saceda or the Muro do Búbal (Espinho; Oimbra). In the southeast section of the site there are located two entrances that open consecutively in one of the secondary enclosures, and afterwards in the main one. The first one of the doors connects with the river, accessed by means of a ramp that is attached to the wall.

The defence of this settlement was made possible with the use of a moat- nowadays very modified- that runs along part of its perimeter, mainly along the flanks that lacked natural defences.

The most singular element of defence of this fortified settlement is the field of vertical driven in stones (today partially fallen) that are found in the northeast and east sections. This system of defence, documented in very few Galicia settlements, was designed to effectively fight off the attacks of the "infantry" and of the "cavalry".



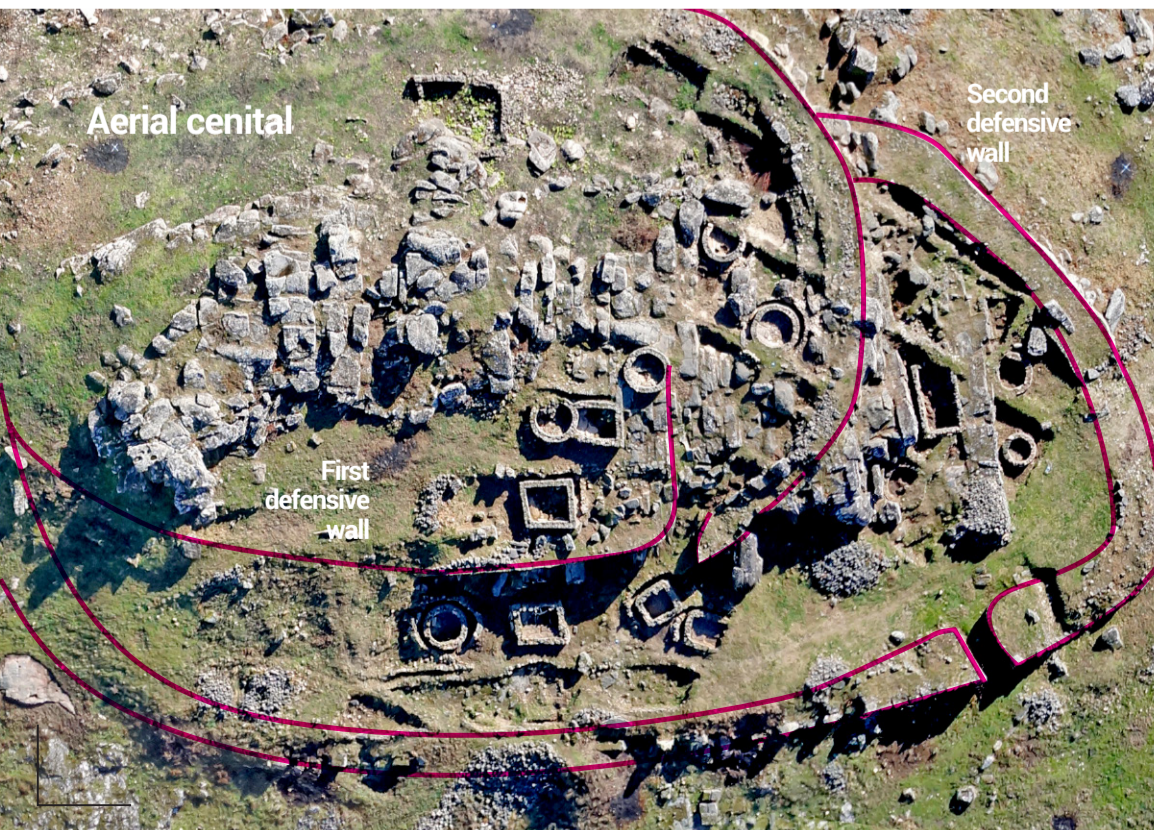
The driven in stones were positioned along the flanks that had unstable natural defences.

The Phalera

Found by chance in the settlement by some hunters, is a quadrangular bronze plaque with four circular shackles, joined by means of four pairs of arches in the form of a lock that served to pass through the straps. In the central part, the disc takes an anthropomorphist form, decorated with a feminine figurehead with simple lines, with a hairstyle resembling large longitudinal waves and touched by a veil. The function of this piece seems to be related with the complex world of military award decorations and must date back to the IV century A.D.



Aerial cenital



Winepress of O Trugán

41.889656, -7.589562

The region of D.O. Monterrei possesses, until now, the largest number of winepresses in all of Galicia, far from that of any other winemaking area. The winepresses seem to be mostly of a universal shape- for example that of O Trugán-, but there also exist some spectacular sets that include two or even three examples, as in the case of the winepresses of A Baira (also in San Millao). The one of O Trugán is the only incomplete example in the region. It was excavated on a granite outcrop, taking an irregular shape that emerges approximately 1 m from the ground.

The winepress is situated in a setting of batholiths, from where different parts that go together look to adapt to the natural morphology of the outcrop. The calcatorium or main basin appears to be not perforated; this indicates that it has no way off permitting the grape juice to pour in to the distribution point, and this is evidence that it was not finished.



Winepresses da Baira

41.888619, -7.593328

Lagar 1: 41.887896, -7.593499

Lagar 2: 41.887691, -7.592629

Lagar 3: 41.887183, -7.592504

Exceptional group of three compressed winepresses situated on a plain that proceeds to a smooth slope with a flood land. The winepresses were made on a series of granite outcrops that are situated at ground level, without standing out amongst the scenery, for that reason there could have been more examples than those documented until now.



Winepress of San Martiño

41.951709, -7.560833

A winepress excavated on a natural granite outcrop that protrudes about 1 m from the ground at its highest point. The winepress that belongs to the foot trampling type presents a main basin that received the surplus of the no longer existent vertical trellis system. The area where the grapes were crushed by foot has a channel that allowed for the grape juice to be poured through an imperfect semicircular shaped opening hole.



Winepress of A Pedrosa

41.922289, -7.645206

This winepress, situated on private land, which was excavated on a granite outcrop, rises slightly above the ground and can only be visited with the authorisation of the owner. The wine press, apparently of the stepping kind, allows us to visualize a calcatorium or main basin (the dimensions are 1,30 m x 1,30 x 0,12 m in depth) lacks any kind of perforation around its edge, which apparently shows us that it had no way of channelling the grape juice through an opening hole.

