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MORE THAN ONE MONUMENT AT POZO MORO? NOTES ON IBERIAN ARCHITECTURAL DECORATION

Summary. More than fifty years after the discovery of the first remains from Pozo Moro, new research has begun to question the arrangement, until now agreed upon, of the tower-shaped monument. The recent paper by García Cardiel and Olmos (2021) employs iconography to sketch the possibility that the reliefs and sculptures encountered in said necropolis do not belong to a single monument, but two or more. In this paper we delve into this possibility by studying a fragment of architectural moulding from Pozo Moro, which allows us to conclude the possible existence of a pillar-stele datable between 425–300 BC, when the necropolis was at its floruit. To reach this conclusion special attention is paid to Iberian architectural ornaments, a subject seldom yet studied.

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that the tower-shaped monument of the Iberian necropolis of Pozo Moro (Chinchilla de Montearagón, Albacete) ranks as one of the most important and emblematic Iberian Iron Age buildings. This is mainly due to its architectural and sculptural features, but also to the fact that it was the first Iberian monument to be excavated following an archaeological methodology, which allowed – also for the first time – its stratigraphical dating, its reconstruction, and the interpretation of its role in the necropolis (Almagro-Gorbea 1996). Its discovery marked the start of the study of Iberian funerary monuments, given that it permitted scholars to better understand the numerous decontextualized Iberian architectural elements existing, something that had not yet been analysed in detail.

The tower-shaped monument of Pozo Moro was reconstructed from the two lines of stone blocks along with several other blocks from the two following courses that appeared above a tomb dated to the later sixth century BC or the early fifth century BC (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a; 2009).¹ To these were added the architectural and sculptural fragments found surrounding it. The traditional

¹ Although other authors (Blázquez 1979, 155; Abad and Bendala 1999, 69) suggested that from the style of the reliefs the monument could date to the seventh century BC and that it was reused or that the cremation below is an intrusion produced in a later date.

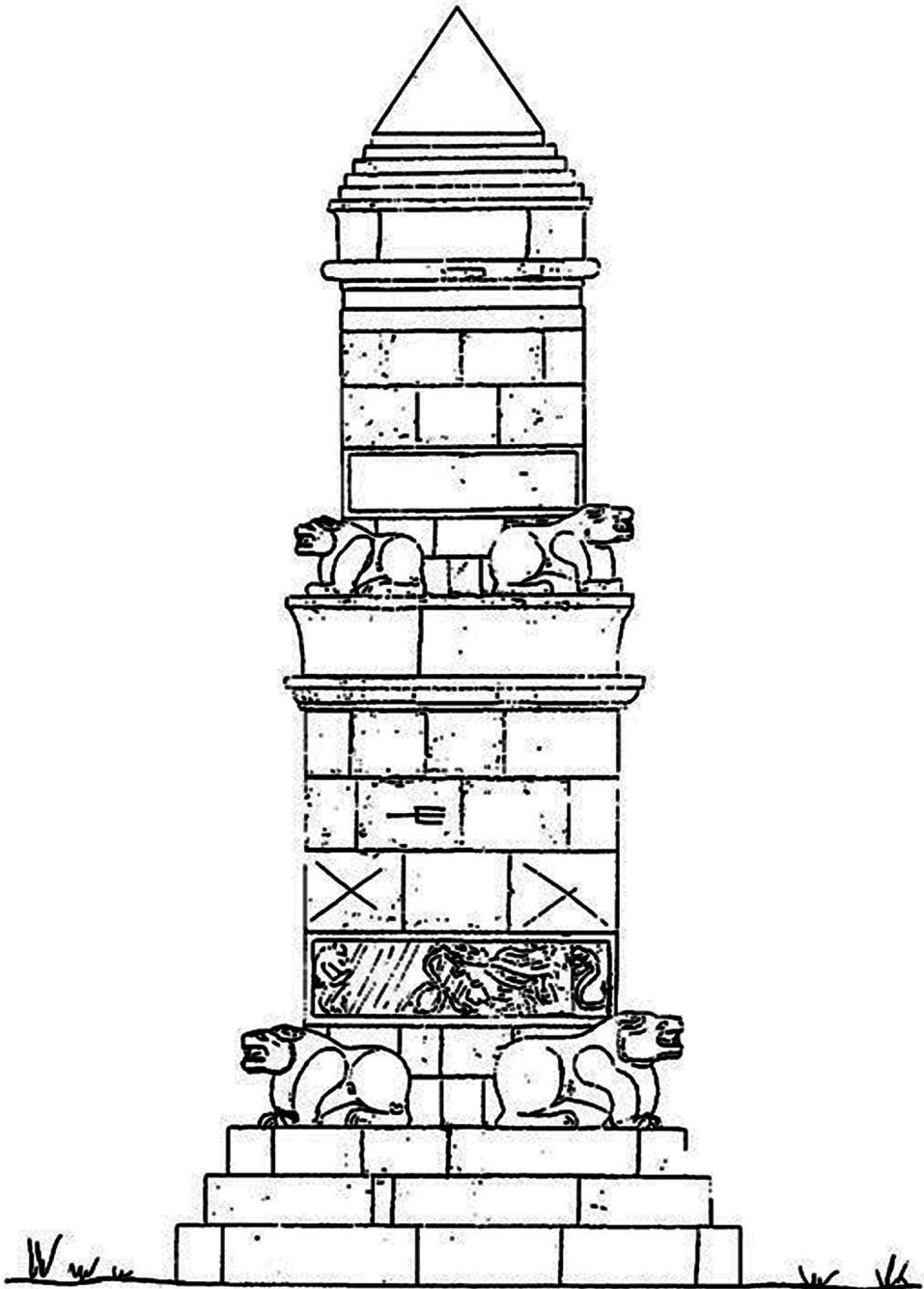


FIGURE 1

Traditional restitution of Pozo Moro tower as a two-storey tower monument (in Almagro-Gorbea 1983a).

and generally accepted restoration (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a; Prieto 2017) proposes that all these fragments formed part of a single tower-shaped funerary monument more than 10 m tall and with a pyramid-shaped top (Fig. 1). It possesses a stepped base and two storeys separated by an Egyptian or gorge cornice, each with lion corner sculptures at their lowest points. The two storeys show a series of scenes in relief that reference the epic cycle of the founding hero with scenes that include his clash with monstrous beings, the theft of the tree of life, the infernal banquet in which he

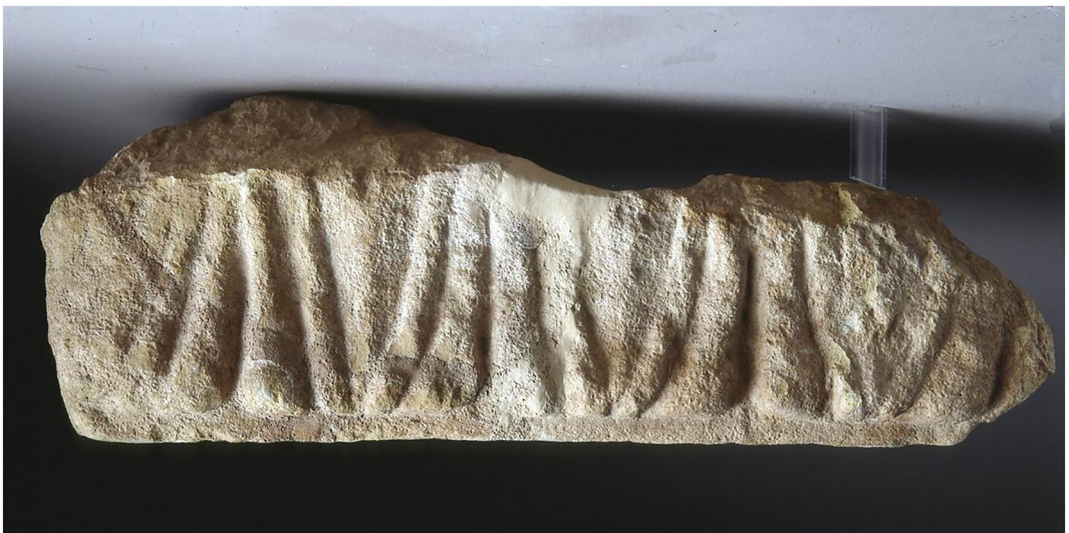
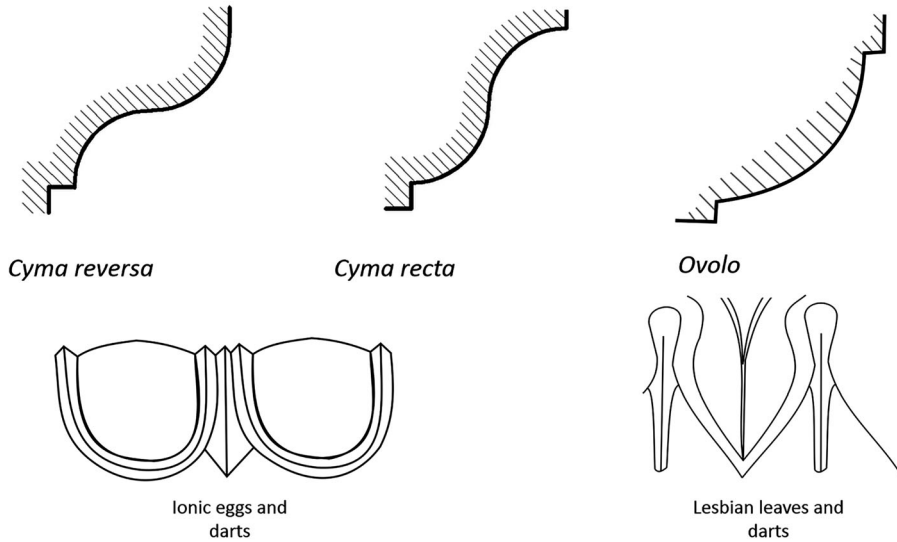


FIGURE 2

Architectural mouldings and ornaments mentioned in the text. The studied piece (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Inv. 1979/104/1973/2054) (Photography: Museo Arqueológico Nacional).

achieves immortality by being swallowed by an underworld deity, and, finally, the sexual encounter with the female deity (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a; López Pardo 2006).

Given this importance, the monument has been and continues to be the object of many articles and monographs. The most recent of these is a paper published by García Cardiel and Olmos in the issue 40.3 of this very journal. Through a detailed iconographic study of the reliefs, they concluded that there was the possibility that instead of one two-storey monument, there were in fact two monuments, each of one storey. The first of these, christened 'Monument A' would be made up by the first storey of the monument in its current iteration, and the second, 'Monument B', would belong to a later date and answer to a style and iconography influenced by the Greek world.

My satisfaction and concurrence on reading this paper arose as, in the research carried out within the Research Project HAR-2017-82806-P and more specifically a PhD thesis, the conclusion that there was more than one monument in Pozo Moro had also been reached. This point was not arrived at from an iconographic study such as that of García Cardiel and Olmos, but from an architectural study, in particular of the non-figurative decoration present in the monument and above all, a little-studied piece (Fig. 2 bottom). This fragment gave the opportunity to expand upon something suggested in the cited work of García Cardiel and Olmos (2021), as it reveals the existence of a monument of a type and time-frame that differs from that of the sixth-century tower-shaped monument(s) currently proposed.

Discovering this common conclusion arrived at by both the iconographic research of García Cardiel and Olmos and our own work on mouldings and architectural decoration is the reason this paper was written, with the intention of reaching a double objective. The first is to serve as a response to and extension of the excellent work of said authors, thereby contributing towards the consolidation of an enormously fruitful line of research – the iconographic and architectural revision of Pozo Moro. Although until now it has been reconstructed as a single monument, there is the growing possibility that there were in fact many structures erected over an extended period of time in the necropolis. Our second objective is to shed some light on Iberian architectural mouldings and decorations, through the analysis of the features of the particular piece studied here. Though this is a matter that has attracted much attention from authors in other regions of the Mediterranean, in the Iberian world deeper studies on architectural mouldings and the non-figurative motifs carved upon them are lacking.

AN UNUSUAL ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENT

The piece to be studied here is, appearance-wise, perhaps the least attractive of the numerous architectural and sculptural remains recovered in Pozo Moro (Fig. 2). In the Pozo Moro excavations, the two fragments that fitted together were recovered in different grid-squares of the excavation, as is indicated by the numbers on its surface: 5E6 and 5D (Prieto 2017, 427). The specimen is currently preserved in the National Archaeological Museum,² with the inventory number 1979/104/1973/2054. It is carved from the calcareous sandstone typical of Pozo Moro,

² Unfortunately the piece is located in the Museum storage at Alcalá de Henares, currently closed to researchers due to a lack of personnel. This has meant that it we have not been able to carry out a direct study, but only through the photographs and information given by the Museum, for which we thank Alicia Rodero and Esperanza Manso.

measuring only 15 cm in height, 46.5 cm in width and 13 cm in depth. Far from the heroes, monsters and other characters that appear in the other blocks of the monument (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a; Olmos 1996), this piece appears decorated with a series of Lesbian leaves in an inverted position. Morphologically, these leaves are pointed and present the characteristic central ridge. They have a thick rim of a semicircular section, and they alternate with very wide darts. The darts are of a flaring shape and at their centres have a pronounced groove running their whole length.

Even without being able to draw and analyse its profile, one can see in the photograph that the whole decorated surface itself is moulded, offering a slightly concave profile, perhaps similar to a *cyma recta* or *cavetto* moulding.

To now the piece has been studied but slightly: Almagro-Gorbea (1983a, 207) pointed out that it formed part of a moulding of lotus flowers and rosettes that would top the structure as possible *acroteria*,³ but offers no more information on its position in the monument, nor does he represent this feature in the various graphical restitutions. Years later, in a new attempt at reconstruction, Prieto (2017, 427) placed the block in a vertical position, as he misidentified the Lesbian leaves as a visualization of the roars⁴ or flames emerging from the heads of monsters in other blocks of the monument. The moulding and decoration of the piece enables the rejection of this proposal. Rather it is precisely these last two factors that lead one to identify this fragment as an Iberian adaptation of an Eastern Greek architectural decoration known as the Lesbian *cyma* (see below). The presence of these architectural ornaments in Pozo Moro is no trivial matter, as it opens up new and interesting perspectives regarding the reconstruction and chronology of the tower-shaped monument that once stood here.

THE LESBIAN CYMA IN IBERIAN CULTURE. PARALLELS

Greek influence on Iberian sculpture and architecture has been without doubt one of the most discussed topics in the historiography of this discipline. The works dealing with this matter are so many that summarizing them is a practically impossible task. Therefore it will suffice to point out here that this topic was already being addressed in pioneering works such as those by Carpenter (1925) or García Bellido (1936; 1940–41; 1948), but also by more recent works that have continued to delve into the subject, such as those by Chapa (1982; 1986; 2009; 2020) or Almagro-Gorbea *et al.* (2015; 2021), among others. The importance of the Greek world in the development of Iberian sculpture and monumental architecture is undeniable and fundamental in certain aspects of the latter, as shown by the Redován (Alicante) griffin or the Agost (Alicante) sphinx (Chapa 1986, 115 and 121), among many others sculptures.

³ ‘Molduras de lotos y rosetas que podrían corresponder a acróteras o figuras que decoraban la coronación del edificio’ / *Lotus and rosette mouldings that could correspond to acroteria or figures that decorated the crown of the building* (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a, 207).

⁴ ‘Rugidos’ de los distintos monstruos observables en los lados Sur y Norte del friso del monumento. De este modo se deduciría la presencia de, al menos, otras cuatro cabezas de monstruos en alguna de las escenas talladas en bajorrelieve’ / ‘Roars’ of the different monsters observable on the South and North sides of the frieze of the monument. In this way, the presence of at least four other monster heads in one of the scenes carved in bas-relief could be deduced (Prieto 2017, 427).

Within the wide repertoire of Greek architectural decorations, one of the most typical is the so-called Lesbian *cyma*, an object of study for many authors (Shoe 1936; Raubitschek 1950, 14–16; Ganzert 1983; Altekamp 1991). The Lesbian *cyma* is formed by a *cyma reversa* moulding on which a series of Lesbian leaves or eggs are carved in relief, characterized by their pointed morphology and central incision (Fig. 2, top). Although the precedents of this decoration can be traced to the eastern leaf-crown decoration of seventh century BC column bases and capitals (Ganzert 1983, 127; Martin 1974), its diffusion and general use throughout the Mediterranean began in the sixth century BC with the spread of Ionian architecture. In this century it would start to appear in mainland Greece (Altekamp 1991, 88–93), but also in the Western Mediterranean, for example in *Magna Graecia* and Sicily (Shoe 1952, 23; Barletta 1983; Parra and Giacone 2013; Fino 2021). The development of this decoration would not be limited to the Archaic period: it would continue to evolve and produce new variants such as the *Ieronian cyma* in Sicily during the third century BC (Campagna 2017, 205–10).

Taking into account this geographical and chronological dispersion, as well as the weight of Greek influence in the south and south-east of the Iberian peninsular, it is no surprise that this decoration can be found in the architectural output of the Iberian world. A series of pieces can be considered as adaptations of the Lesbian *cyma*, but it is also frequent to find series of Lesbian leaves without this moulding or even as isolated leaves appearing as motifs inserted into complex phytomorphic compositions, as in an example from Corral de Saus (Izquierdo 2000, 273).

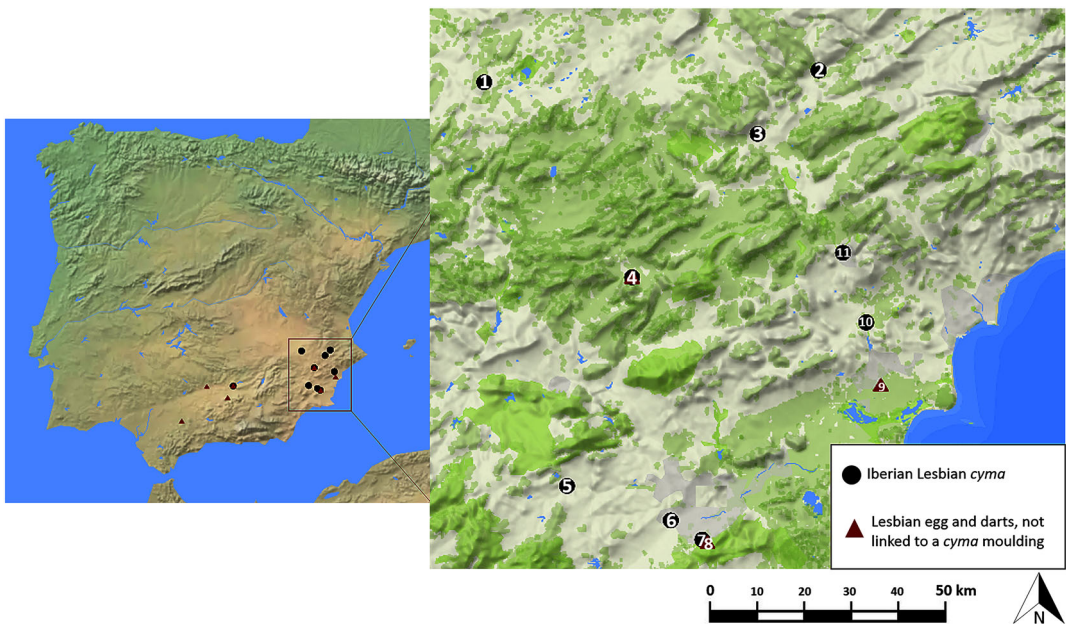


FIGURE 3

Dispersion of Iberian Lesbian *cymae* and lesbian leaves and darts not linked to a *cyma* moulding, with emphasis in the Iberian south-east: 1- Pozo Moro (Chinchilla de Montearagón, Albacete); 2- Corral de Saus (Mogente, Valencia); 3- Los capuchinos.(Caudete, Albacete); 4- El Prado (Jumilla, Murcia); 5- El Cigarralejo (Mula, Murcia); 6- Cabezo del Agua Salada (Alcantarilla, Murcia); 7- Cabecico del Tesoro (Verdolay, Murcia); 8-La Luz (Verdolay, Murcia); 9- La Alcudia (Elche, Alicante); 10- Monforte de El Cid (Elche Alicante); 11- El Monastil (Elda, Alicante).

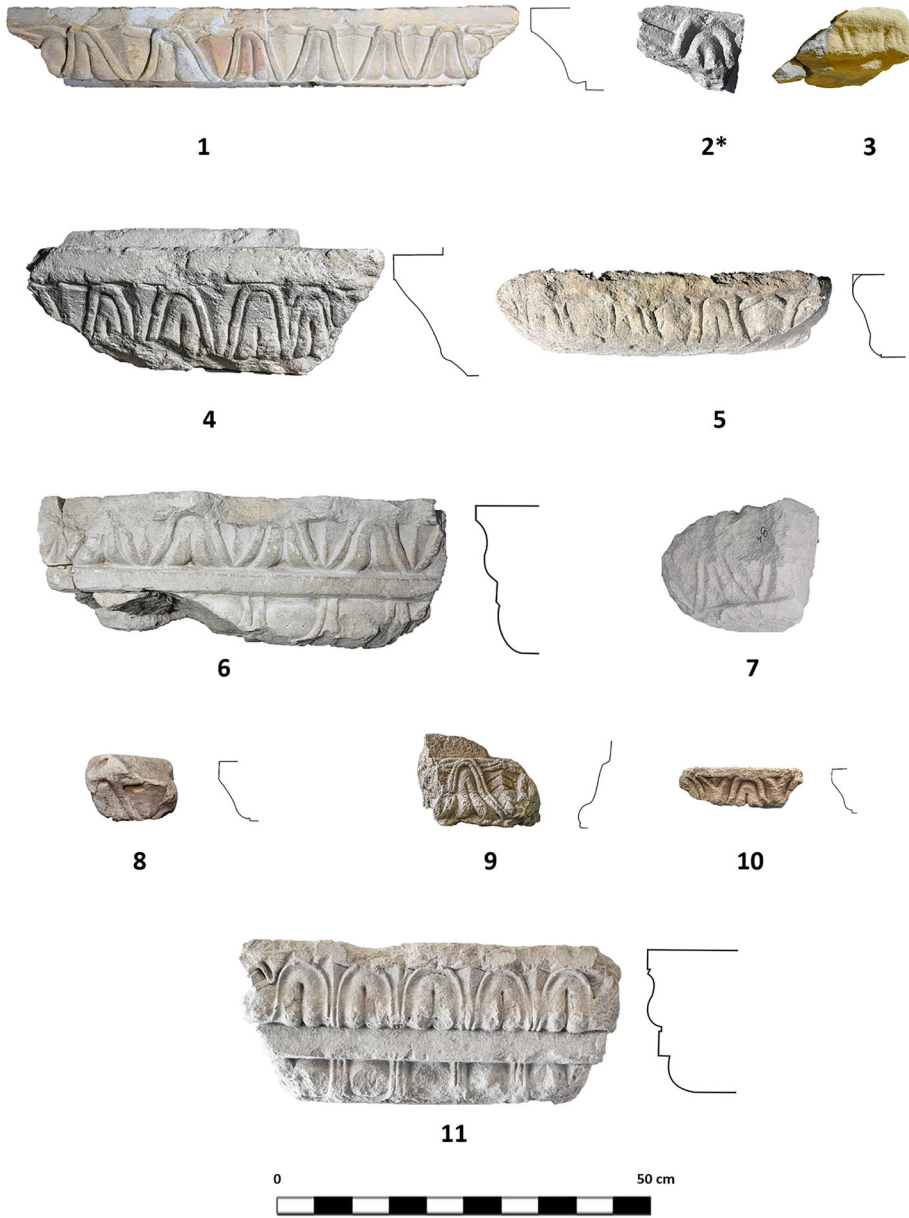


FIGURE 4

Parallels to the piece studied. Mentioned and numbered in Table 1 in Supporting Information (Pictures and drawings: Author; number 2: Aparicio 2007).

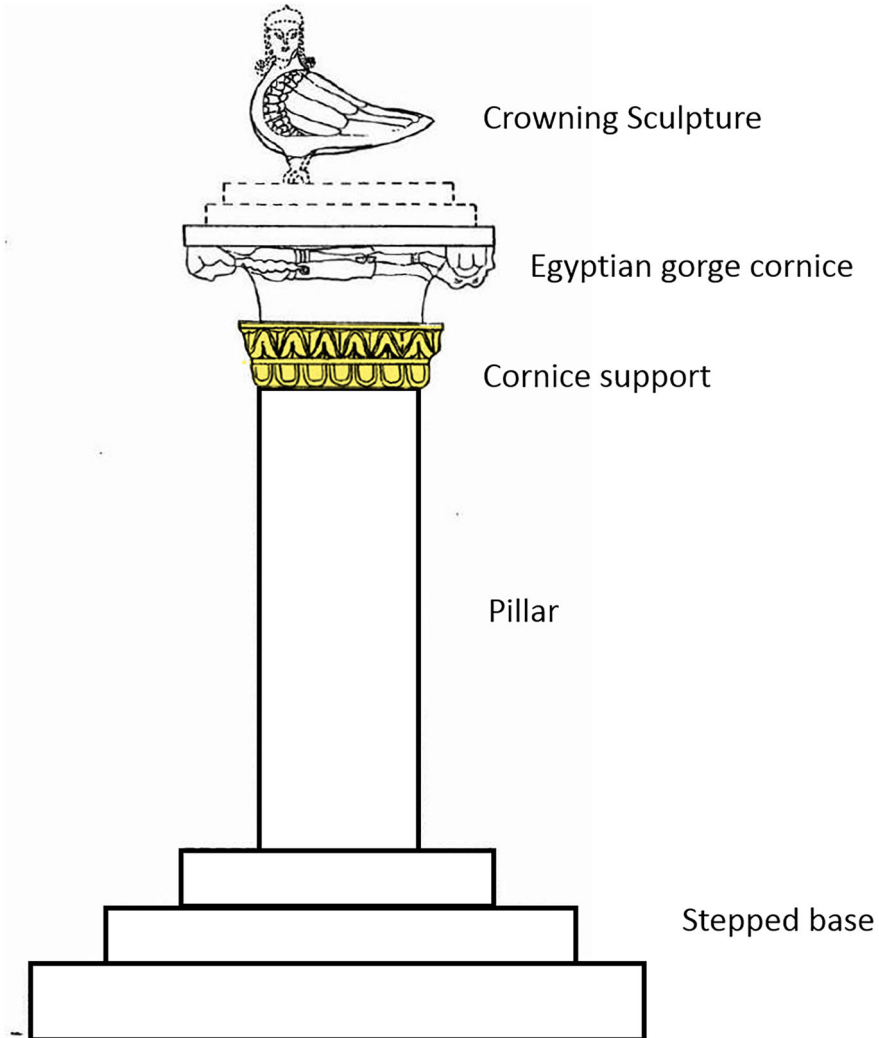


FIGURE 5

Iberian pillar-stele scheme, based on the 'damitas' pillar-stele from Corral de Saus (Mogente, Valencia), indicating the different parts of these monuments. The position of the cornice supporting block is outlined (Drawing adapted from Almagro-Gorbea 1983a).

As can be seen in the map here presented, this decoration appears in the Iberian world wherever sculptural remains have been found,⁵ ranging from the Iberian south-east to Upper Andalusia (Fig. 3). However, it is in the first of these regions where occurs the greatest concentration of these adaptations of the Lesbian *cyma*, that is, the union of moulding and

⁵ On the areas of the Iberian world where sculpture is concentrated, see Sanmartí 2007.

decoration, and it is also the area where the most direct parallels for the Pozo Moro specimen are located.

We are referring to a series of pieces (Fig. 4) whose details are collected in Table 1 presented in the Supporting Information. They share common architectural and morphological features, such as size, which is always between 5 and 20 cm in height and 50–70 cm in width. All of them are moulded with profiles similar to the *cyma recta* and they show a lower supporting surface set further back into the block as a small fillet. In addition, many of them (Nos. 1, 4, 5 and 6) exhibit a hole with a diameter between 10–15 cm running through the entire piece, which would have served to introduce the bolt that would hold these architectural elements together (Chapa and Izquierdo 2012, 252).

These features indicate that they all perform the same architectural function. By their dimensions, all of them belong to pillar-stele type monuments, the most common type in the Iberian



FIGURE 6
Details of the lotus flowers in the corners of the blocks studied. (Photography: Author).

world (Almagro-Gorbea 1983b). These low, square-shaped blocks are the dividing element between the body of the monument and its top or capital. They are found always on top of the pillar and they serve as a support for the cornice of the Egyptian or gorge type topping these structures (Fig. 5), as indicated by the incised guidelines in the upper part of some examples (Nos. 1 and 6). This architectural function can be corroborated in the best-preserved pillar-steles such as that of 'las damitas' of Corral de Saus (Mogente, Valencia) (Almagro-Gorbea 1987, 222) or the one found in El Prado (Jumilla, Murcia) (Lillo 1990, 143).⁶

Iconographically, these pieces are quite homogenous, as they present Lesbian leaves in an inverted position, with a pointed shape and a central groove made by incision. These alternate with darts, also inverted, of great width and with a flared shape, presenting a marked longitudinal edge, becoming lotus flowers in the case of No. 10. Finally, the presence of flowers or palmettes in the corners (Nos. 1, 2, 5 and 11) (Fig. 6) should be pointed out. Because no direct study of the piece was possible and thus one cannot be certain for the Pozo Moro specimen, it is plausible that near its left end are relief motifs that do not resemble leaves or darts and so could be the side petals of a flower/palmette.

More parallels could be added that, even though being neither architecturally nor in dimensions similar, may yet be relevant to this study. One of these is the cornice of the pillar-stele of Arenero del Vinalopó (Monforte del Cid, Alicante) (Almagro-Gorbea and Ramos 1986, 49–50; Prados 2007, 88), where these Lesbian leaves appear on the upper fillet of the Egyptian or gorge, moulded with a *cyma reversa*. Another specimen comes from La Alcuia (Elche, Alicante), which shows an identical decoration, but with a straight profile, thus differing from those of the pieces we are studying (Izquierdo 2000, 152). We must also mention the recent finding in Caudete (Albacete) of a pillar-stele type monument decorated on all sides with false door mouldings framed by a square of leaves that are stylistically identical to those we have been studying (Almagro-Gorbea *et al.* 2015, 72).

These pieces allow us to follow the transformations undergone by the Lesbian *cyma* in its adaptation to Iberian architecture. The first of these involves the moulding of these blocks: in the Greek world this decoration will be associated exclusively⁷ with the *cyma reversa* from the end of the sixth century BC. In Iberian architecture this decoration is regularly carved on *cyma recta* mouldings, which have a very open profile that is, on occasions, similar to a *cavetto* moulding. In some cases it is carved on a *cyma reversa*, but in such blocks it always appeared inverted, that is, with the convex part of the moulding pointing downward.

This relates to another of the features these Lesbian *cyma* possess in the Iberian world: the inversion of the leaf motif. In the blocks that support the cornice, the leaves and darts always appear upwards. This is a feature typical of this *cyma* in the Iberian world that is not common in Greek and Mediterranean architecture.

⁶ In this case the Egyptian or gorge blocks have been considered traditionally to belong to the base of the monument, though several authors (Castelo 1995, 317; Izquierdo 2000, 106) do point out that it should be placed as the cornice of the monument.

⁷ Although in the Greek Archaic world there are pieces with a Lesbian leaf associated with the *ovolo* moulding or the semi-rounded one (Martin 1974; Des Courtils 1998, 495–7).

Geographical distribution

As has already been observed, these Iberian adaptations of the Lesbian *cyma* are especially concentrated in the Iberian south-east, but if we focus on the more direct parallels for the Pozo Moro piece, as collected in Table 1, a very specific distribution can be observed. A large number of these specimens are grouped around the area occupied today by the city of Murcia, being found in Cabecico del Tesoro (Murcia), El Cigarralejo (Mula) and Cabezo del Agua Salada (Alcantarilla). The remaining pieces appear on an axis that starts with Murcia and runs north-east; following the communication routes of the Segura basin, the Ramblas del Judío and el Moro (García Cano 2002, 5), the line reaches Jumilla (Murcia) where is found the El Prado specimen. From there, one continues along the Montesa corridor to the Corral de Saus necropolis (Mogente, Valencia). Caudete (Albacete) is located at an intermediate point on this communication route; here is located the aforementioned pillar-stele decorated with Lesbian leave frames.

The distribution of these pieces coincides with an area in which a rather specific pillar-stele model is developed, termed by Almagro-Gorbea (1987, 214) as the ‘Corral de Saus type’. This type is characterized by their pillars, which can sometimes be decorated with horsemen (Chapa and Izquierdo 2012, 252), but also by the blocks placed between the pillar and the cornice. These are independent pieces generally decorated with phytomorphic motifs (Izquierdo 2000, 380–1) as well as with Ionic eggs and Lesbian leaves such as those studied here. Lastly, another typical feature of these monuments are the Egyptian or gorge cornices bearing human decorations in high relief (Almagro-Gorbea 1987, 228; García Cano 1994, 189–90).

Evidence of this type of pillar has been located in these very sites: Cigarralejo (Mula, Murcia), Cabecico del Tesoro (Verdolay, Murcia), Coimbra del Barranco Ancho (Jumilla, Murcia) and of course, Corral de Saus (Mogente, Valencia). This highly localized geographic dispersion, and the dimensional and stylistic similarities that exist between the pieces, have motivated several authors to propose the existence of a sculptural workshop covering this area and producing this kind of material (García Cano 1994, 193–4; Chapa and Izquierdo 2012), while some others (Almagro-Gorbea 1987, 228; Izquierdo 2000, 311) have proposed that they do not belong to a single workshop but to a network that gave rise to a shared regional model of a pillar-stele.

Be that as it may, it appears to be clear that the piece from Pozo Moro must be related to the development of said models and decorations, not only because of the enormous architectural and iconographic similarity between them, but also because it is located within the dispersion area of this type of pieces. In this sense, it is worth remembering not only the proximity of Pozo Moro to this area, but also the excellent communications with the Murcian region through the ancient road now represented in the current royal road from Cartagena to Cuenca (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a, 181).

Chronology

One of the most complex questions to answer is that of chronology, because, as with other sculptural pieces from the Iberian world, these blocks appear either out of context, scattered on the floor of the necropolis or, in a best case scenario, reused in later graves, offering an *ante quem* date. One cannot aspire therefore to provide an exact date for each of these pieces, and dates based on stylistic criteria may be erroneous due to the persistence of some motives and features. As such, it has been decided here to propose for each of the pieces a span of years: between the oldest possible chronology, marked by the oldest tombs of the necropolis in which they appear, and the most recent, marked by the more recent tombs or the dates the pieces were reused.

By placing this information in a graph (Fig. 7), it can be confirmed that where the pieces possess a reliable context, they gravitate towards the first half of the fourth century BC. Such is the case in El Cigarralejo, a necropolis where no grave goods date prior to 400 BC (Page and García Cano 1994, 157). There, the reuse dates, not only of these pieces but of all the architectural pieces and sculptures, congregate in the first half of the fourth century BC (García Cano 1994, 193). The same circumstance applies to Cabecico del Tesoro (Quesada 1989; Page and García Cano 1994, 54), where piece No. 8 also offers a reliable date that likewise points to this period.

More complex is the date of monuments such as El Prado, reused in a trough at the end of the third century BC (Lillo 1990, 143). But since it was not linked to a necropolis, the time that could have elapsed between its construction and its reuse is unknown. Traditionally, basing themselves on style, authors have dated this specimen to the mid or late fifth century BC (Lillo 1990, 157). A similar problem occurs at Corral de Saus, where the pieces appear with no stratigraphic context in the surroundings of the necropolis. Only one (No. 6) is reused in a later tomb, the date of which is debated, though the archaeological documentation provided by Izquierdo (2000, 157) seems sufficient to place it at the end of the third century BC. However, as this last author (Izquierdo 2000, 157 ff.) saw, there are no grave goods before 400 BC in this necropolis and all the sculptural and architectural pieces used later were reemployed in tomb structures belonging to the second phase of the necropolis, in the third and second centuries BC (Izquierdo 2000, 331). In other words, this information seems to point to the fourth century BC as the date when these sculptural expressions were developed, coinciding with the first phase of this cemetery that, according to the material evidence, ends a little beyond the middle of that century.

In short, from the graph and taking into account these data on the archaeological contexts and the development of the sculptures, it can be pointed out that pieces of this type are found mainly in the fourth century BC, more specifically towards its first half. This fact is important

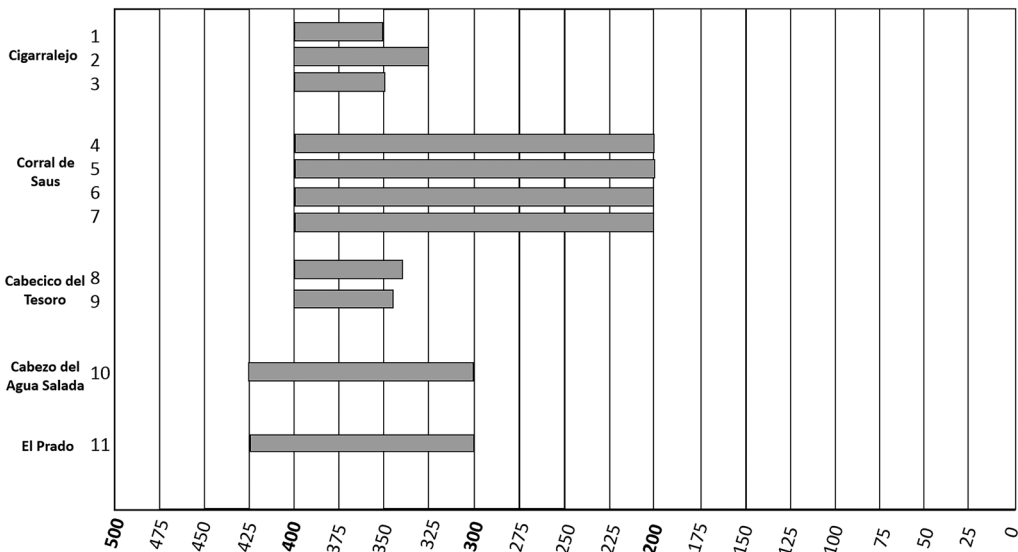


FIGURE 7
Chronological dispersion of the pieces listed in Table 1 in Supporting Information.

because there are authors who, based on stylistic criteria, have argued that these decorations are due to sixth century BC Phokaian influence in the Iberian peninsula (Almagro-Gorbea 1987, 21; Almagro-Gorbea *et al.* 2015, 72), believing some monuments such as the pillar-stele of ‘Las damitas’ of Corral de Saus to belong to this period. On the other hand, authors such as Prados (2007, 88; 2011, 194) attribute the existence of these decorations in the Iberian world to the influence of the Punic-Hellenistic presence in the south and south-east of the peninsula, lowering the chronology of some of these buildings to the end of the fourth or even to the third centuries BC.

As these style-based dates differ from the conclusions emerging from the archaeological context, it seems that the best explanation is that the development of this architectural decoration in the south-east does indeed emerge from Greek influence. But not in the Phokaian horizon of the sixth and fifth centuries BC (Almagro-Gorbea *et al.* 2021), but in the intense contact that occurred from the middle of the fifth century BC and during the first half of the following century. This contact can be seen in the increase of Greek ceramic imports (García Cano and Blázquez 2017), the use of Greek metrological units and architectural planning in sites such as La Picola (Moret and Badie 1998) and above all, the development of Greco-Iberian writing at this time (De Hoz 2009, 33–3).

These influences also leave their mark on Iberian visual arts. To take one example, the most direct parallels for the frontal scene of the pillar-stele of Coimbra del Barranco Ancho, well dated in the middle of the fourth century BC (García Cano 1994, 181–2), should not be sought in Greek Archaism, but in the farewell scenes present in steles dating from around 400–350 BC (García Cano 1994, 187).⁸ This influence in the visual arts also allows us to better explain the decorations we are dealing with, since although they have their origin in the Archaic Ionian world and are distributed throughout the Mediterranean from the sixth century BC onwards, these mouldings and motives were widely developed during the Classic and Hellenistic periods (Ganzert 1983; Altekamp 1991).

In fact, the Lesbian *cyma* examples from the Greek world that are most similar to those described here date to the end of the fifth century BC and the beginning of the fourth century BC. Perhaps the best known example of all is the Erechtheion (421–406 BC), where we see *antae capitals* with a combination of an upper Lesbian *cyma* with a lower Ionic *cyma*, terminating at the corners with inverted flowers or palmettes (Altekamp 1991, 64–5). It is this very combination of decorations that is adapted and replicated by the Iberians in the specimens of El Prado and Corral de Saus. The Erechtheion example also bears flowers, a motif used to deal with the corners: the very same detail, as seen, that is found in many pieces in the series.

Lastly, it is significant that the Iberian Lesbian leaves always possess well-defined edges and a convex surface between. This last detail is typical of the Greek mainland and, most importantly, it is only found in Greek architecture from the end of the fifth century BC onwards. This morphological novelty is, in fact, introduced in the Erechtheion (Ganzert 1983, 160), and is the type found in Pozo Moro. As such, it suggests that the chronology of our piece cannot be prior to the end of the fifth century BC, and therefore does not belong to any rebuilt monument dating to the end of the sixth century BC.

⁸ In fact, it is rather significant that, as with the Greek steles in this period, in the case of the specimen from Coimbra del Barranco Ancho the figures also transcend the mouldings that frame them (García Cano 1994, 187).

WHERE DOES THIS PIECE BELONG: A PILLAR-STELE IN POZO MORO?

As we have seen, the initial proposal of Almagro-Gorbea (1983a, 207) was not at all conclusive, and that of Prieto (2017, 427) is now less plausible after considering all the direct parallels that indicate the correct position of the stone block was horizontal and not vertical as this author suggested. It is therefore necessary to reflect on a series of proposals for the restoration of the piece. The first naturally is can this piece be integrated into the traditionally restored tower-shaped monument? In that case, it could function not as a sculptural finish but as the block that would most likely support the other blocks crowning the structure.

Nonetheless, this restitution is made problematic by architectural criteria, for, as pointed out, this type of block is always located supporting Egyptian or gorge cornices. In the current restitutions proposed for the monument (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a, 191–2; Prieto 2017, 65), said structure has only two courses with blocks of this type and each already has an associated support, different in moulding, decoration and size to the one studied here. Also, if our piece was placed at the top of the structure, and thus located 10 m off the ground, its low height (15 cm) would make it difficult for it to be fully visible.

From a stylistic and iconographic perspective, it presents a problem that was already detected by García Cardiel and Olmos (2021): the fully Greek style of this piece does not belong in a monument with a markedly Orientalizing style and iconography. In fact, it is quite significant that the blocks placed below the building's first Egyptian or gorge cornice presents an *ovolo* moulding with clear Ionic roots. Nonetheless, far from being decorated with the eggs and darts of an Ionic *cyma*, it is decorated with the Orientalizing motif that is the twisted rope pattern.

And finally, from an archaeological perspective, we know that the remains of the lower level or 'Monument A' appeared exactly in position when the tower fell to the north-east. However, the two fragments that together constitute our piece were found to the south of the monument, in grids 5E and 5D-6 (Alcalá 2003, 31),⁹ according to the numbering written on them (Prieto 2017, 427). The blocks that would constitute the 'Monument B' as proposed by García Cardiel and Olmos (2021) likewise appeared scattered throughout the necropolis, far from the aforementioned accumulation of 'Monument A' blocks.

Therefore, given that they seemingly did not form part of the traditionally rebuilt monument, there is a need to consider other possibilities. The first is that this piece was the block supporting the cornice of the so-called 'Monument B'. The piece in question would fit better in this monument with clear Greek roots, visible in its stylistic and iconographic program and of a slightly later date than 'Monument A' (García Cardiel and Olmos 2021). Even though, due to a lack of data, an architectural restoration of this second building has not been offered, the most logical view is that it was a second tower-shaped monument, as suggested by the large size of its blocks and a second pebble floor documented in the necropolis (Alcalá 2003, 71), similar to the one encountered beneath the tower-shaped monument. In this possible monument, the studied piece could function as the cornice supporting block upon which the Egyptian or gorge would sit at the top of the building.

⁹ This number seems to match that of the tomb (Alcalá 2003, 333), perhaps indicating its reuse in the latter. It is remarkable that pieces that do not belong to the 'monument A', but to a different building, tend to appear in this manner, reused in tombs (García Cardiel and Olmos 2021, 252). This cannot be resolved here due to lack of data on this piece. In any case, the tomb 5D-6 is Iberian, but we cannot be precise in its date because it offers insufficient material and stratigraphical information (Alcalá 2003, 213).

The existence of Egyptian or gorge blocks that due to size fit badly in the traditional two-storey monument described by Almagro-Gorbea (1983a, 207) further seem to point in that direction.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that absolutely none of the direct parallels for the piece we have studied belong to tower-shaped type monuments: they belong to pillar-steles. Thus emerges the possibility that in Pozo Moro there was a monument of this type, in which our piece served as the block supporting the Egyptian or gorge cornice as typically found in pillar-stele monuments.

We must take into account here that, according to the exhaustive study carried out by Alcalá (2003), the heyday of Pozo Moro took place between the years 425 and 300 BC, when it became a great Iberian cremation necropolis with tomb structures and grave goods similar to those found in the south-eastern Iberian world. This period coincides with the timeframe to which the pillar-steles that present this type of blocks belong, which also develop in a geographical area very close to this site, as already seen. It does not thus seem an outrageous idea that, when in the fourth century BC Pozo Moro became a great necropolis, one of the individuals buried there marked his tomb with a pillar-stele, just as was happening in many other Iberian necropolises in the south-east such as Cigarralejo, Cabecico del Tesoro or Corral de Saus. Said monument would follow the architectural and stylistic trends of the south-east region in the fourth century BC and would incorporate this typical architectural ornaments inspired by the Lesbian *cyma*.

In addition, within the set of pieces that are fitted with great difficulty into the Pozo Moro monuments, there exist some fragments belonging to freestanding sculptures, such as a ‘bicha or caprid’, part of the face of a feline or the head of a possible horse (Almagro-Gorbea 1983a, 207). It is worth considering the possibility, albeit only as a preliminary hypothesis, that these zoomorphic sculptural remains could be part of the sculptures that usually top off the pillar-stele type monuments (Almagro-Gorbea 1983b).

CONCLUSIONS

Following the line of research on Pozo Moro initiated by García Cardiel and Olmos (2021), in this paper the study of one the least known pieces recovered during the excavations of the necropolis has been considered in detail. This block does not appear to fit into the traditionally restored two-story monument, nor does it fit with the Orientalizing style and iconography of the recently christened ‘Monument A’. Due to its style and influences, it may have belonged to ‘Monument B’ and its markedly Hellenizing nature, but following the investigation of the direct parallels, architecture and chronology, the most likely hypothesis is that it could have been an architectural moulding of a pillar-stele.

This study therefore contributes to changing the current conception of the architectural landscape of Pozo Moro, since far from there being a single monument from the beginning of the fifth century BC, there would have been several monuments of different typologies in the necropolis that arose around it. This is precisely what happens in the other necropolises scrutinized above.

Concurrently, in this work is emphasized the need for a better and closer study of architectural decorations of the Iberian world, as occurs in the case of other Mediterranean cultures. To date, the works referring to these decorations have focused on the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations, but studies like this present one make it clear that a careful analysis of the mouldings and the non-figurative motifs that adorn them, adopted by the Iberians from the Mediterranean and adapted to their own architectural culture, can offer interesting perspectives. The correct evaluation of these not only offers information on the style of the pieces, the exogenous

influences and their chronological and stylistic development, but also leads us to further essential concerns, like reconsidering the restitution of many monuments, even those as much studied as Pozo Moro.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of the article.

Table S1. Parallels to features of the studied piece: Iberian adaptations of the Lesbian *cyma*