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## ***Celtic Gods of the Iberian Peninsula***

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### **Abstract**

In order to produce a profile of the Celtic deities of Hispania based on the study of votive altars, a rigorous critique of the inscriptions must be implemented, eliminating those that are not reliable due to their poor condition or because they were lost before systematic analysis could be carried out on them. First all the areas in which certain groups of gods were worshipped are located in order to establish a scheme of the way their pantheon functioned. Next groups of theonyms are analyzed to detect possible relationships between them and the areas occupied by the different Hispanic *populi*. Finally, the main characteristics of the different deities are established.

### **Keywords**

Hispania, religion, Celts, gods, Lusitania

### **Introduction**

Studies of the deities of Celtic Hispania have generally been of a different nature than those carried out on the Celtic deities of other Roman provinces such as Gaul, Germania or Britannia. This is due to the nature of the available information. In the first place, there are few iconographic representations recorded in the Iberian Peninsula that can provide information about the typology of the different deities and their attributes and characteristics. North of the Pyrenees, the opposite is true, and there are a numerous sculptural representations of native deities such as the *Matres*, *Epona*, *Sucellus*, *Cernunnos* or *Taranis*. Since the theonyms vary from area to area, the artistic representations of the deities allow us to identify certain gods who may have been known by different names depending on the specific region as well as making it possible to distinguish between the deities found in the various territories.

However, another distinction exists between the available information on the Hispanic

and non-Hispanic deities due to the fact that the *interpretatio* (the practice of syncretic identification of indigenous deities with Roman gods) occurred more intensely north of the Pyrenees, where Roman and Celtic gods were explicitly linked on numerous votive altars.

All of this has allowed us to establish a primary religious profile of the Celtic deities and a model of the way that their pantheon functioned. In Hispania, however, as can be seen in Figure 1, the *interpretatio* only occurred on a few occasions, mainly involving the *Lares* and the *Genii*. Therefore, it has not been possible to obtain many clues about the relationship between the indigenous gods and the main deities of the Roman pantheon. This is also seen in the literary sources, where references by Classical authors to Hispanic deities are scarce. Therefore, to summarize, it is very difficult to establish the exact nature of the religious pantheon of the native communities of the Iberian Peninsula without analyzing the main source of information in depth: the epigraphic evidence.

Despite the shortage of literary sources and the virtual absence of any iconographic evidence (Alfayé 2003: 77 ff.), the amount of epigraphic information on the Hispanic indigenous deities does seem sufficient to provide at least a profile of the religious pantheon in this region. This is because it is most likely that the locations where the ex-votos dedicated to each deity were found can be considered as the original setting of those individual cults, since major cultural exchanges during the centuries prior to the Roman conquest of the Iberian Peninsula and during the Roman occupation did not occur. This can be explained by the fact that extended large-scale movements of native people within Hispania did not take place, as compared to what occurred in other areas of Europe, especially near the borders of the Roman Empire. This allows us to identify the existence of cohesive areas from a cultural point of view and therefore certain belief systems. Only on this basis is it possible to assign to each deity its true significance within its socio-cultural context.

However, in order to identify these cultural areas by means of the study of votive altars and above all to generate an outline of the pantheon in this region, it is necessary to formulate a few solid starting points. In the first place, a rigorous critique of the inscriptions must be established, eliminating those inscriptions that are not reliable due to poor condition or unclear texts, or because the inscriptions were lost before any reliable analysis could be performed on them. Thus, if we want to carry out an adequate synthesis of the religious pantheon of the Hispanic native *populi*, it is advisable to eliminate any compromised inscriptions. Secondly, it

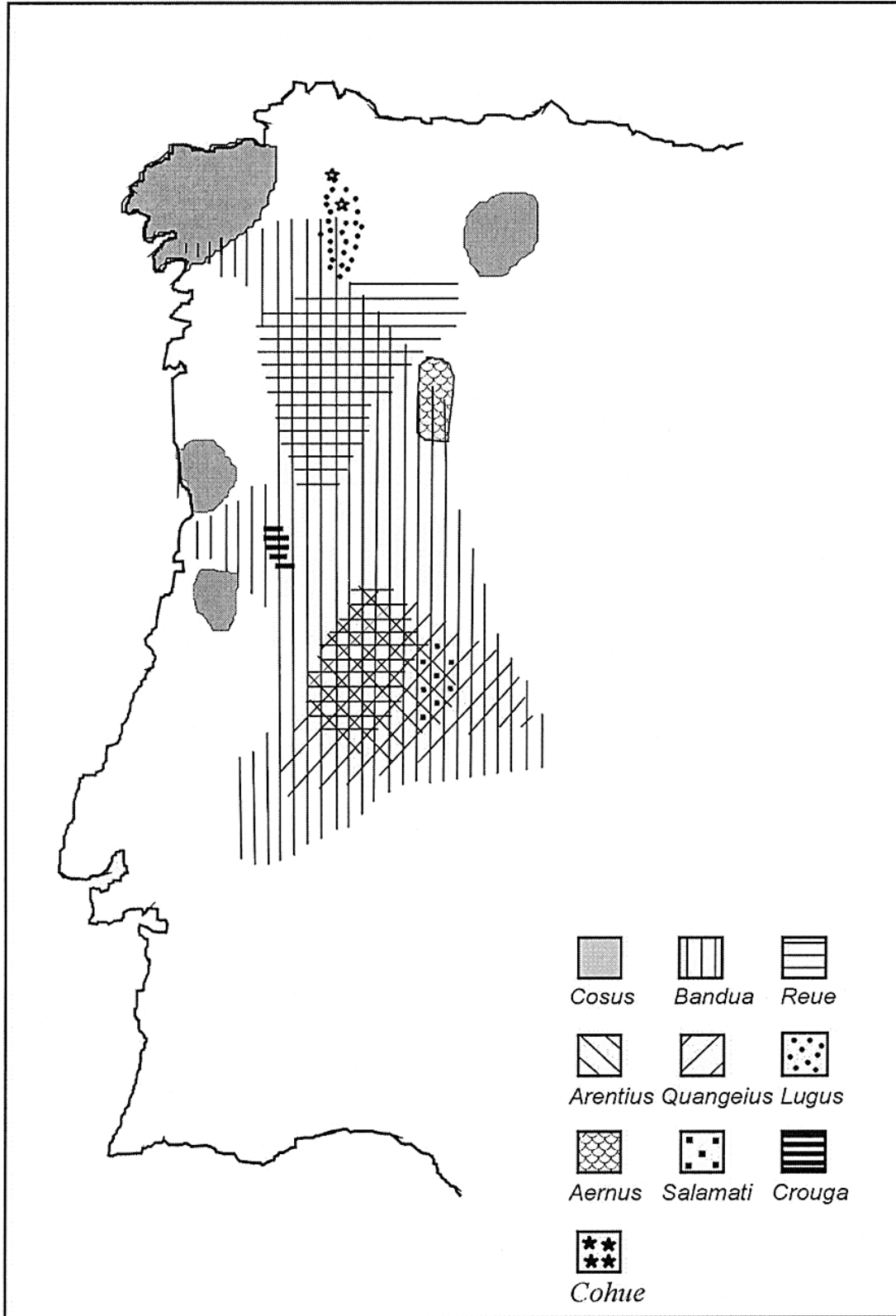


Figure 1. Supra-local masculine theonyms of the *Lusitani* and *Callaeci*.

must be established whether the names that appear in the inscriptions are theonyms or not, since on many occasions the deities were referred to by an epithet whose theonym is unknown; in this case, a number of different appellatives could correspond to the same deity (De Hoz 1986: 35; Olivares 1999a: 277-296; Rivas 1973: 69-73; Untermann 1985: 343-363). Finally, we believe that to establish a model of the Iberian religious pantheon it is necessary to focus mainly on the pan-regional theonyms, that is, those that have been found in more than one place. In this manner, it will be possible to avoid any localisms that could lead to a certain deity being given a different name within a specific community and therefore avoiding any duplication of deities (Bermejo 1978: 348 ff.). The theonyms must subsequently be plotted on a map in order to determine whether there is any territorial correspondence between the different deities or, on the contrary, a complementarity of their cult territories (Alarcão 1990: 146-154).

Once this multi-disciplinary approach has been implemented it should be possible to identify the cultural regions where certain groups of gods were worshipped and from this to create an outline of the pantheon (Olivares 1999a: 283 ff.). By applying this methodology we can avoid simply repeating long established theories and clichés, such as that that the Hispanic native peoples worshipped countless numbers of deities or that no organized pantheon existed among them (Blázquez 1962: 224; Prósper 2002: *passim*).

The regions where several deities coexisted should be approached and studied without relating them, *a priori*, to the territory of a certain people. This is because the location of epigraphic evidence is objective information that should be strictly used at a later date to identify the cultural areas by comparing the data derived from epigraphy to other parameters.

## **The Celtic Pantheon of Hispania**

Based on the approach outlined above, it can be seen that there are some clear theonymic differences between the Lusitanian-Galician area and the eastern area of the Spanish Northern Plateau (Marco 1994: 318). Apart from a few finds of the name of the god *Lugus*, found in the east and also in the west, the theonyms of the two areas are clearly different. To begin with, there is evidence that throughout the Lusitanian-Galician area there are a number of male regional deities (that occasionally are not found in the same territory): *Bandua*, *Arentius*, *Quangeius*, *Reue*, *Crouga*, *Salamati*, *Lugus*, *Aernus*, *Cosus* and *Cohue* and some female deities such as *Nabia*, *Trebaruna*, *Munidis*, *Arentia*, *Erbina*, *Toga*, *Laneana*, *Ataecina* and *Lacipaea* (Olivares

2002a: 27-66). To the east of the Meseta Norte (the Northern Plateau), mainly in the Celtiberian area, there is evidence of regional male deities, *Lugus* and *Aeius* (Solana and Hernández 2000: 186), and two sets of female deities, *Epona* and the *Matres*. Finally, in the northeast of this region, in the Basque area, two more regional male deities, *Larrahi* and *Peremusta*, as well as one female goddess, *Losa*, have been recorded (Olivares 2002a: 111-132). Nevertheless, we have to be aware that many deities worshipped in these regions might not have left any epigraphic evidence behind, so that the religious pantheon could have been far more extensive than the one that can be documented today.

As predicted, not all of these deities coincide in the same territories. Therefore, to establish an adjusted outline of the pantheon, we must locate the areas in which certain groups of gods were worshipped. In order to do this we need a territory in which the information is particularly clear, providing us with a general basis for comparison. This territory is the central-eastern area of Lusitania, covering approximately the regions of Beira Baixa in Portugal, and northern Extremadura in Spain. We will examine this area in more detail below.

In the Beira Baixa area, 80% of the inscriptions that mention male theonyms were strictly dedicated to only four gods: *Bandua*, *Arentius*, *Quangeius* and *Reue*. Furthermore, these are the only gods that are non-local (Olivares 2002a: 27-31, Figure 1), while the rest are local deities, appellatives without theonyms, or unclear inscriptions. As for the female deities, the picture does not vary much, since just five regional goddesses appear: *Trebaruna*, *Arentia*, *Munidis*, *Erbina* and *Laneana* (ibid: 31-32, Figure 2). This pattern largely continues in the area north of the Tagus River in the Extremadura region, although evidence is found there in various locations of another female deity, *Nabia*, though not in any areas coinciding with territories where evidence for the other goddesses has been found. Furthermore, the possible appellative *Salama* also appears, although this is more probably an allusive appellative of the Jálama mountain found in this region (Melena 1985: 475 ff.) (Figure 1).

To review: it is in the Lusitanian-Galician regions that 1) the largest number of indigenous deities in the whole of the Iberian Peninsula are found, and 2) there is a considerable amount of reliable evidence indicating that the religious pantheon of this area compares to that represented by the epigraphic material. Therefore, we can discard those models proposing a fragmented and disorganised pre-Roman pantheon since the number of deities occurring together is similar to that found in other Celtic *populi* in the rest of Europe and other ancient civilizations.

In the remaining Hispanic regions the information is not so clear, because a lot of the inscriptions found are difficult to read or interpret, and there are many inscriptions in which the various deities are only cited by an appellative. Nevertheless, these regions do not reflect the possible religious pantheon in the same way, and they do not show the same cohesion as that found in the Lusitanian-Galician region.

Some of the main deities found in the Beira Baixa region and in the Extremadura, such as *Bandua*, *Reue* and *Nabia*, also appear in the north of Lusitania, distributed throughout the interior of Portugal and into the interior of present day Galicia in Spain. Two regional deities that have been found in this large area do not occur in the region discussed previously. They are *Crouga*, in the area around Viseu, and *Aernus*, in the Bragança area (Olivares 2002b: 68 ff.).

The diffusion of *Bandua*, *Reue* and *Nabia* throughout the whole of the northern interior area shows a certain cultural continuity with the central Lusitanian area, as we will see later when we relate the theonyms to ethnic groups. However, we must take into consideration that other deities recorded extensively in the Beira Baixa area and in Extremadura such as *Arentius*, *Quangeius*, *Trebaruna* and *Arentia*, are not found in these northern territories. This shows that certain differences existed between the pantheons of these two areas, even if the reasons for this are still unknown. However, these differences seem to be very important, since there are also linguistic differences between the theonyms *Bandua* and *Nabia* in the inscriptions found to the south and to the north of the Duero River, a fact that indicates certain cultural differences (Pedrero 1999: 537-538).

The second region where we can see a certain (though less clear) cohesion regarding theonyms is the Atlantic coastal area, from the region of Aveiro in Portugal to Galicia in Spain (Figure 2). This uniformity is firstly due to the fact that the theonyms found in great numbers in the interior do not appear here, and secondly because of the large number of dedications to *Cosus* found all along the coastal area. This male deity is the only one that has a regional distribution in this region and it coincides exactly with references to the goddess *Nabia* in the area around *Bracara Augusta*. It is possible that the existence of only two regional deities in this region is due to the large number of unidentifiable votive offerings as well as to the existence of other dedications in which only the appellatives are cited without the respective theonym. It could also be that the inscriptions are dedicated to the *Lares* or *Genii* accompanied by local native appellatives, as more inscriptions of this type have been found in this region than anywhere else

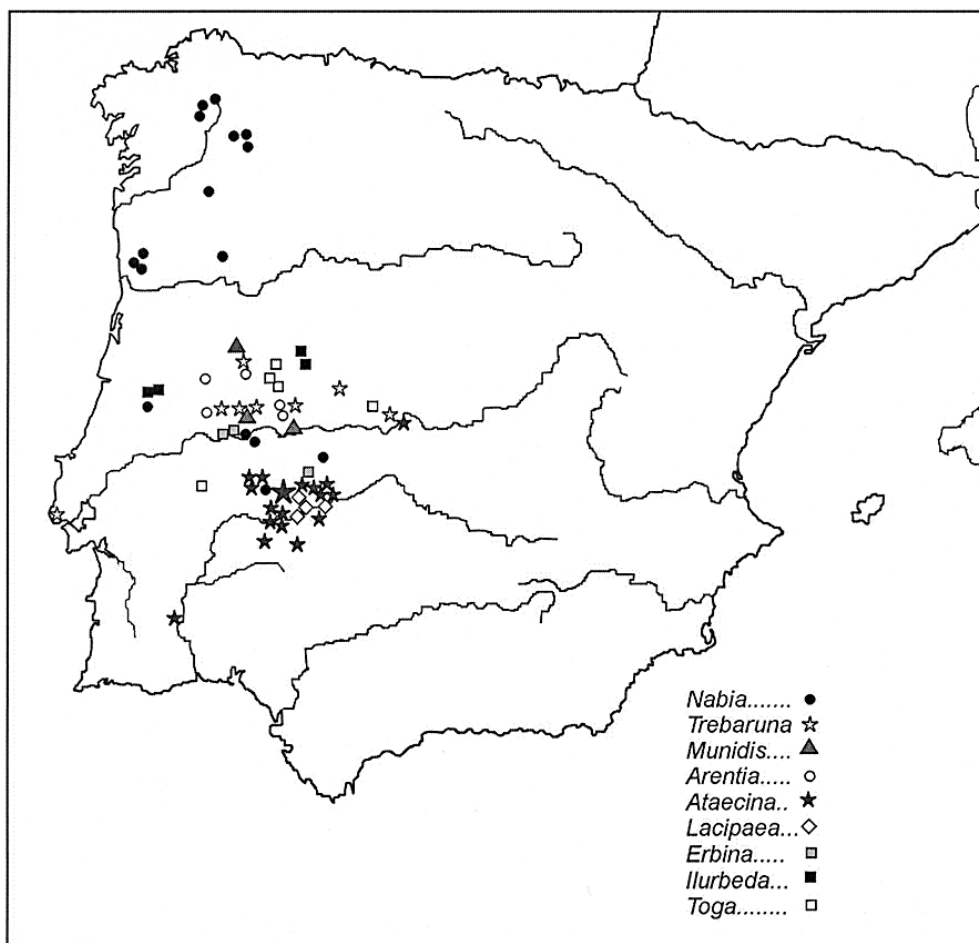


Figure 2. Supra-local feminine theonyms of the *Lusitani*, *Callaeci* and *Vettones*.

in the whole of the Iberian Peninsula (Olivares 2002a: 80 ff.). In addition, evidence of *Cosus* is lacking in the whole of the interior part of Portugal and Galicia, whereas the god reappears more frequently in the area of El Bierzo, in the province of León, even if the reason for this is still unknown.

In the Lugo River basin in Galicia (the small region that coincides with the northern limit of the area where the theonyms *Bandua*, *Reue* and *Nabia* appear), two regional deities have been found: *Cohue* and *Lugus*. These deities partially coincide with the Lusitanian ones and they probably do not form part of the same religious pantheon, given that there is no evidence for them in the rest of the area where the Lusitanian theonyms are found.

The final area of western Hispania where a certain specificity with respect to theonyms can be seen is the area located to the east of the Beira Baixa and Extremadura regions, which, as we will see, corresponds to the region of the *Vettones*. The eastern limit of the Lusitanian theonyms stretches north of the Spanish Sistema Central (Central Mountain System) up to the



modern-day border between Portugal and Spain and to the south of this mountain range approximately to the area of the town of *Capera*. From this line marked by the Lusitanian theonyms eastward the existence of two different female deities is attested: *Toga* and *Ilurbeda* (Olivares 2002a: 36 and 57-59).

We have already stated that in the eastern part of the northern Meseta of Spain there are significant differences in theonyms found in comparison with the Lusitanian-Galician area. In this part of Spain three different regions can be identified. In the first of these, the distinctive Celtiberian area defined by Lorrio (1999: 312), there is evidence of four regional theonyms: *Lug*, *Aeius*, *Epona* and the *Matres*. However, there is also some evidence of these deities along the Cantabrian and Asturian regions as far as the Galician region, with the exception of the Vaccean territory. *Epona*, *Lugus* and the *Matres* have also been recorded in different locations in Gallia and Germania, indicating that from a religious point of view, the Celtiberian communities show perhaps a stronger religious identity than most of Celtic Europe.

The territory in which these three theonyms are found is quite extensive; it spans the provinces of Burgos, the south of Alava, Soria, the Rioja region, Segovia, Guadalajara, Cuenca and part of Teruel. However, the majority of the denominations of the deities in this region are one-word names, which means that we cannot be sure of their theonymical character. Furthermore, the majority also appear to be local deities. Thus, a clear profile of the religious pantheon does not emerge, and the scheme of the pantheon is vaguer here than that obtained in the Lusitanian-Galician region.

The territory that corresponds to the modern province of Valladolid and parts of Zamora and Palencia stands out particularly because is practically devoid of any epigraphic dedications to local native gods. Apart from the three inscriptions dedicated to the *Duillae* found in Palencia, there are only the inscriptions found in the mountainous area located in the north of this province, which is outside the area inhabited by this local people. To the east of this territory, from a north-south line that extends to the province of Burgos near Briviesca to Clunia, and from there to Segovia (on the border with the Celtiberians), only the indigenous gods mentioned above have been found. The uniformity found in this Vaccean territory is somewhat puzzling, as it is a large region that extends to the modern day provinces of León, Zamora and Salamanca, where there is no material evidence.

Another area of the northern Meseta in which a marked identity is seen is the province of

Navarra, where theonyms of Basque origin appear. In the southwest of Pamplona, there is a small territory where two regional theonyms, *Losa* or *Loxa*, with four dedications, and *Larraia*, with two, have been recorded. In the eastern part of this province another god appears, probably the regional deity: *Peremusta*, represented by two inscriptions found in locations rather near each other. The rest of the deities found in the Navarra region are recorded in only one location.

## **Deities and Ethnic Groups**

Once those areas in which there is evidence for a coherent group of theonyms have been established, we must analyze these regions with the intention of discovering whether any relationships exist between these groups of theonyms and the areas occupied by the different Hispanic *populi*. First of all we will concentrate on the area inhabited by the *Lusitani*.

Studying the culture of this people is problematic because of the difficulty of defining their territory, since in many cases the ancient writers simply wrote that the Lusitanians inhabited the Roman province of Lusitania. However, some writers have provided evidence showing that the *Lusitani* probably also occupied part of the territory later called *Callaecia*. According to Strabo, Lusitania was bordered in the south by the Tagus River, in the west and north by the Atlantic Ocean and in the east by the area occupied by several *populi* listed from south to north as the *Carpetani*, *Vettones*, *Vaccei* and *Callaeci*. Furthermore, Strabo also specified that some earlier writers had referred to the Galician people as Lusitanians (*Geografia* 3, 4, 3). According to Strabo, the reason some Lusitanians in the northwestern region of Hispania were referred to as Galician is that they were the most difficult *populi* to conquer (*Geografia* 3, 4, 2). Finally, Strabo insisted again on changing the name of these *populi* when he confirmed that one of the Consular Governor's legates in Hispania Ulterior controlled the territory located to the north of the Duero River whose people were previously called Lusitanian but during his rule were referred to as Galician (*Geografia* 3, 4, 20).

According to Pereira, *Callaecia* had certain distinctive features that were recognized by the Romans, who "separated those areas which had a certain number of characteristics (archaeological, linguistic and others that we don't know of) and wove them together to create distinct areas" (Pereira 1984: 280-281). Nevertheless, despite this specificity, *Callaecia* as a large territory was created by the Romans and probably did not exist before the conquest (Sayas 1999: 190).

In the opinion of Ciprés, Strabo offers us the principal clues regarding the location of the Galician and Lusitanian territories before the creation of the Roman province, when these territories would have extended from the Tajo River to the Cantabrian coast (Ciprés 1993: 69 ff.). Ciprés accepts that the Lusitanian territory extended beyond the Duero River to the north up to the Bay of Biscay. Later on, the term *Lusitani* would come to be used for the groups of towns within the borders of the province created by *Augustus*, which had its northern limit at the Duero River. The people that inhabited the area north of this river would from then on be called *Callaeci*.

The territory that was without doubt inhabited by the *Lusitani* corresponds approximately with the area where various inscriptions in the Lusitanian language have been found (Figure 3): in Lamas de Moledo, located in Castro Daire, Viseu (Untermann 1997: 750-754), Cabeço das Fraguas, located in an elevated area in the district of Pousafoles, Sabugal, Guarda, and in Arroyo



Figure 3. Lusitanian deities and the territories of the *Vettones* and southwestern *Celtici*.

de la Luz, Cáceres (ibid.: 747-750; Almagro-Gorbea et al. 1999: 167-173), that is to say, from the area of Cáceres in Spain to the Beira Alta and Beira Baixa area of Portugal, including the Sierra de la Estrella. In turn, this region incorporates all of the Lusitanian *ciuitates* that appear in the inscription from the Alcántara bridge (*CIL* II 760), and it is also the centre of the province created by Rome (Alarcão 1988: 4, 1992: 59; Tovar 1985: 230 ff. and 252).

All of these factors allow us without doubt to classify this area as Lusitanian and the other evidence that reveals the characteristics of this territory, specifically the indigenous theonyms, can also be considered as belonging to the culture of these *populi*. Furthermore, there is another outstanding fact: the theonymic group made up of the gods *Bandua*, *Reue*, *Arentius-Arentia*, *Quangeius*, *Munidis*, *Trebaruna*, *Laneana* and *Nabia* that is found in the heart of Lusitania disappears almost completely outside the boundary with the Vettonian area. A different group of theonyms appears in this area, as we have already seen above (Olivares 2001: 59 ff.), and there are practically no exceptions to this, apart from one dubious dedication to *Trebaruna* found in Talavera la Vieja (*CIL* II 5347) in which only part of the possible theonym appears in the first line of the inscription, and another offering to the same goddess found in *Capera* (near Oliva de Plasencia). *Capera* was, according to Ptolemy, a Vettonian town, although it was located very near the Lusitanian frontier (*AE* 1967, 197). The rest of the inscriptions with theonyms are distributed throughout central Lusitania and are always found close to the border, never going beyond it. Even so, these are exceptional cases when keeping in mind the large number of inscriptions that exist in the Lusitanian territory. This information enables us to support the theory that some groups of theonyms can be related to a specific cultural area. In this case, we can confirm that the group of theonyms mentioned above is Lusitanian, and that they are also specific to these *populi*.

Hence, keeping in mind the evidence confirming that the Lusitanian territory extended beyond the Duero River to the north, it could well be that the *Lusitani* inhabited the whole territory that extended north to the centre of the *Callaecia* territory. However, as we have seen earlier, there are differences between the specific theonyms of the southern and the northern sides of the Duero River, which lead us to believe that cultural differences did exist in the Lusitanian territory.

As for the territory inhabited by the Vettones (Alvarez-Sanchís 1999: 324-325; Roldán 1968-69: 104; Sayas and López 1991: 79 ff.), the information available at the moment is not

conclusive and is in some cases rather confusing. However, in our opinion, the evidence does allow us to put forward the hypothesis that some specific theonyms of this group of people exist. The theonym that we consider with most certainty as being of Vettonian origin is *Toga*. There is evidence of this deity in the northernmost area of the province of Cáceres, in Valverde del Fresno (Figuerola 1985: n. 49; *AE* 1985, 539), in S. Martín del Trevejo (*CIL* II 801) and in Martiago, Salamanca (*AE* 1955, 235). While the first two were found in the heart of the Sierra de Gata, near the mountainous border between the provinces of Cáceres and Salamanca, but also on the Lusitanian-Vettonian border, this third find shifts the cultural horizon of *Toga* toward the area of Salamanca, which is clearly more Vettonian in character. From here on, the information becomes more confusing, although it does point in the same direction. Another inscription to this goddess, in the form *Tocae*, was found in Torremenga, Cáceres (Blázquez 1975: 173), that is to say, in the centre of the Vettonian territory.

This hypothesis is quite plausible if we take into account two other inscriptions from Talavera de la Reina, Toledo, and Avila. The first one, found 25 kilometres north of *Caesarobriga* (Talavera de la Reina) contains the dative form *Togoti* (Fita 1882: 253). This town was probably located in the eastern part of the Vettonian area (González-Conde 1986: 88 ff.) and so the cult of *Toga* and its possible partner would have extended over the whole area occupied by these *populi*. Today, however, the whereabouts of this inscription are unknown. The second inscription, which has also been lost, is also dubious. It was found in Avila and the only reference visible is to the deity *deo To[...]* (*CIL* II 5861; Knapp 1992: 11-12, n. 3). The six inscriptions shown so far of the gods *Toga* and *Togo* appear clearly to be in the Vettonian area, far from the area where the Lusitanian gods were worshipped. The main problem with this evidence is that three of the inscriptions are now missing.

The second regional theonym recorded in this area is *Ilurbeda*, although the lack of information relating to this goddess raises some difficulties since there are only two recorded finds in the Vettonian area and furthermore another two have been found in Lusitania. However, the fact that the two Lusitanian inscriptions appeared next to a mine on what may have been small altars suggests that the individuals who erected them were Vettonian emigrants.

Once the Lusitanian (although we insist that some differences on either side of the Duero River do exist), and the Vettonian theonymic areas have been defined, the rest of the theonymic and cultural areas which can be defined in western Hispania present more of a problem. The first

problem area is the Atlantic coastal region that extends from the centre of Portugal to Galicia.

The theonym that characterizes this area is *Cosus*, which does not appear in Galicia's interior except for a recently recorded find in the western part of the province of Orense. This deity has not been recorded in the same areas where *Bandua*, *Reue* and *Nabia* occur but, as indicated previously, the deity is found again in the region of El Bierzo, León, where none of the three gods mentioned above appear. From the theonymical point of view, the disparities that exist between the coast and the interior are sufficient to suggest that some ethnic-cultural differences existed between these two areas. Since to a certain extent these differences agree with the statements made by some Classical writers, we must briefly search the literary sources to find the causes of these disparities.

Pomponius Mela provides a description of the *populi* living on the western coast (from the south to the north), concentrating on their ethnic character. He mentions the *Turduli* to the south of the Duero River, and later, without being absolutely clear whether he is referring to the coast north of the Duero or to the whole coast from the mouth of the Tajo to the Celtic Promontory, he states that all the *populi* are Celtic, except for the *Grovii*. He names some of the *populi* that inhabited the area north of the Duero River as the *Praesamarci*, *Supertamarici* and *Neri* and finally, he writes about the *Artabri*, specifying that they are also Celts (Mela 3, 1, 8-11 and 3, 1, 12). In the coastal territories where these peoples lived, there is a lot of evidence for the god *Cosus*.

Even if there are no other sources to prove the presence of Celts in the area between the Tajo and Duero Rivers, the existence of Celtic communities in the northwestern part of Hispania is indicated by Strabo, who locates them near the territory of the *Artabri*, who inhabited the area around the *Nerius* headland (*Geografia* 3, 3, 5). Pliny also confirms the presence of Celts in the *Conventus Lucensis* (*Nat.*, 3, 4, 28). In another passage, Pliny identifies the names of some of these *populi* of Celtic origin who inhabited the coastal strip: the *Celtici Nerii* and the *Celtici Praestamarci* (*Nat.* 4, 34, 111). Pliny also rejects the identification of the *Grovii* as Celtic, considering them to have a Greek origin.

In summary, we have seen that certain communities of the northwest coast, specifically the *Artabri* (Mela), *Nerii* (Mela and Pliny) and *Praestamarci* (Mela and Pliny) are considered Celtic by some Classical authors. Furthermore, we have epigraphic evidence that another of the *populi* included among the Celtic communities by Mela, the *Supertamarici*, was also Celtic. We

also have four funerary inscriptions in which the deceased is described as *Celticus Supertamaricus* (*CIL* II 5081 and 5667; *AE* 1976, 286; García Martínez 1999: 413-417). This information indicates that there was a certain cultural continuity in the whole of the coastal region extending from the Galician Rias Altas (Northern Coast) to the Rias Bajas (Southern Coast), meaning that the communities that inhabited this area were Celtic, and that they worshipped the god *Cosus*. However, we are not able to establish the ethnic character of the communities that inhabited the region of El Bierzo, León, where evidence of this god has also been found. Therefore, while there are indications that *Cosus* was a god of these groups of people described as Celts, we are still not sure that the deity was specific to these peoples.

While we are not completely certain whether cultural cohesion existed in the whole of the coastal area where *Cosus* was worshipped, we can without a doubt confirm that cultural uniformity existed amongst the *Zoelae*. In this territory another regional theonym, *Aernus*, appears and three inscriptions of this deity have been recorded. The first inscription was found in Castro de Avelãs, Bragança (*CIL* II 2606) dedicated by the *ordo Zoelarum*, which indicates that this god was probably the protector of the *Zoelae* (Tranoy 1981: 296; Le Roux 1992-1993: 179-180). The second inscription was also found in Castro de Avelãs (*CIL* II 2607), while the third one was found in Malta, Macedo de Cavaleiros, also in Bragança (Alves 1909: 184-186).

The area inhabited by these people was probably the Portuguese region of Bragança, extending eastward from there to the Tierra de Aliste, in the Spanish province of Zamora as well as to the area of Miranda do Douro (López Cuevillas 1989 [1953]: 76-77; Tranoy 1981: 52). Important evidence supporting this interpretation is the discovery of a dedication to the god *Aernus*, by the *ordo Zoelarum*, near Bragança. The *Zoelae* were probably included in the *Conuentus Asturum*, because the hospitality *tabula* of the *Zoelae* was found in the capital, Astorga, and also because in two inscriptions found in the cities of León and Arganza (in the province of León) two individuals declared themselves as being *Zoelae* (*CIL* II 5684; Mangas and Vidal 1987: 192 ff.; Tranoy 1981: 52). In addition, we know from the *Tabula* of Astorga that the first pact was made in a town called *Curunda*. This town could be the one mentioned in a fragmentary inscription found in a small settlement near Rabanales (Zamora), in which the letters *CVR* can be read (Tranoy 1981: 52).

In addition to the *Tabula* of Astorga (27 BC) in which the cultural specificity of the *Zoela* is documented, given that they are described as a *gens* (*gens Zoelarum*) composed of several

*gentilitates*, certain material evidence has been found in this territory that confirms its cultural identity. Firstly there are, from a formalist view, very characteristic inscriptions, mainly the stelae decorated with suns and representations of animals (Tranoy 1981: 349). Secondly, although there are remains of zoomorphic sculptures (bulls and boars) over large regions of the western part of the Iberian Peninsula, those found in the region of Trás-os-Montes and Zamora show a uniformity that clearly stands out (Alvarez-Sanchís 1999: 260 ff.). Finally, there are also a number of anthroponyms that are specific to this territory (Albertos 1985: 257) and since the epigraphic evidence for *Aernus* is scarce, their concentration in a reduced territory in association with the aspects of material culture mentioned above seems to indicate a homogeneity in the cultural area of the *zoelae* (Olivares 2002b: 68 ff.).

The last region in which a concentration of a group of theonyms can be identified is the eastern region of the Spanish northern Meseta (Figure 4). The regional deities found here are, as we have seen, *Lugus*, *Aeius*, the *Matres* and *Epona*. The evidence for these is concentrated in the



Figure 4. Epigraphic evidence for *Lug*, the *Matres*, *Epona* and the boundaries of Celtiberian territory.



modern provinces of Soria, Guadalajara, Cuenca, Segovia, Burgos, the La Rioja region and Teruel. This region coincides quite closely with the area that is considered by most recent studies to be Celtiberian (Lorrio 1997: 54, 2000: 162). However, we must remember the three Galician inscriptions to *Lugus* and the fact that *Epona* has also been recorded in an inscription from Mount Bernorio, Palencia. From this it can be concluded that although the inscriptions of these three deities are clearly concentrated in Celtiberia, the relatively small amount of data does not permit us to confirm the exclusive existence of their cults in the Celtiberian territory.

### **The Gods of Celtic Hispania**

Since, as has been explained above, the clearest outline of the native religious pantheon of the Iberian Peninsula appears in the central-eastern area of Lusitania, we can consider this the most suitable area to begin the description of the characteristics of the different deities. This is because an overall view of these gods would allow us to establish with more precision the different features of the pantheon's structure.

We begin with *Bandua*, one of the main deities worshipped in this area whose cult also extended to *Callaecia*. *Bandua* is the most traditional version of her name although Pedrero (1997: 540) has recently proposed that the name was more likely *Bandu* (see also Prósper [2002: 268]). We must stress that this deity has not been recorded in any towns with evidence for a high degree of Romanization. Altars to *Bandua* are located a certain distance from these towns and, in several cases, in small fortified enclaves such as the Castro do Mau Vizinho, Sul and S. Pedro do Sul, Viseu, which is dedicated to *Bandua Oce...* (García 1991: n. 27). Other examples include three altars dedicated to *Bandua Roudaeco* found near the settlement of Villavieja, Trujillo, Cáceres, an altar from Eirás, San Amaro, Orense in the area around the settlements of Eirás and A Cibdá very near San Ciprián de Lás; (Beltrán 1975-76: n. 59, 60 and 61); two finds from the castle of Vila da Feira, Arlindo de Sousa, Aveiro (Sousa 1947: 52 ff.) and an altar found in a possible *uicus* on the hill of Murqueira, Esmolfe, Penalva do Castelo, Viseu (Alarcão 1988: 307). Associated with these locations is the fact that several of their appellatives refer to these types of settlements through the suffix *-briga*. Examples are *Etobrico* (Ferreira et al. 1976: 139-142; Encarnação 1976: 142-146); *Brialeacui* (Almeida 1965: 24-25); *Isibraiegui*, recorded on several altars in Bemposta, Penamacor, Castelo Branco (Albertos and Bento 1975: 1208; Almeida 1965: 19-22, 31, n. 1; Leitão and Barata 1980: 632-633) and in Freixo de Numão, Vila Nova de Foz

Côa, Guarda, (Coixão and Encarnação 1997: 4, n. 3); *Longobricu*, which has been recorded in the area of Longroiva, Meda, Guarda, and from which the town derives its name (Curado 1985: n. 44); *Virubrico* or *Verubrico* (Lorenzo and Bouza 1965: 153-154, n. 84; Taboada 1949: 55 ff.); *Veigebraeago*, found in Rairiz de Veiga, Orense, from which the name of the modern town may be derived (Lorenzo and Bouza, *ibid.*: 154-155, n. 85) and *Lansbricae*, from Santa Eugenia de Eirás, S. Amaro, Orense (Rivas 1973: 85-91). This last altar was found near two settlements, one of which was in San Ciprián de Las. According to Rivas, the relationship between this toponym and the epithet *Lansbricae* could be reinforced by the reference in a document from 1458 to this place as *Laans* (Rivas 1973: 91). Other appellatives of this type are *Saisabro*, from Maranhão, Avís, Evora (Encarnação and Correia 1994: n. 206); *Malunrico* or *Malunbrico* (Ramírez Sádaba 1993: 428-429), or *Aetiobrigo*, found in Codesedo, Sarreaus, Orense.

In addition to the appellatives that derive from a toponym with the suffix - *briga*, there are other epithets of *Bandua* that refer to population centres. *Roudaeco*, recorded in an inscription found in Casar de Cáceres, refers to a *uicus Rouda* (Encarnação 1976: 144) that was probably located around the convergence of the Tozo and Almonte Rivers where, as we have seen before, three inscriptions dedicated to *Bandua Roudaeco* were found. In another inscription from Sul, S. Pedro do Sul, Viseu (Vasconcelos 1905: 316) only part of the appellative remains, *Oce...*, which Encarnação interpreted as reading *Ocel(ensi)* or *Ocel(aeco)* (1987: 20) and which could refer to a toponym, as several toponyms take this root. Inscribed on a silver patera (of unknown origin) (Blanco 1959: 458 ff.), the appellative *Araugel...* is visible, which could refer to a *castellum Araocelum* (located in the region of Viseu), if its interpretation is based on an inscription found in S. Cosmado, Mangualde, in which various *castellani Araocelenses* are referred to (Alarcão 1989: 307 ff.; Albertos 1985: 472).

To the ten epithets that directly mention towns with the suffix -*briga* mentioned above we must add another three that allude to Lusitanian urban settlements. In addition to these thirteen epithets, we know of another ten probable ones whose meaning is unknown: *Apolosego*, with its alternative forms, *Arbariaico*, *Bolecco*, *Cadiego*, *Oilienaico*, *Picio*, *Tatibeaicui*, *Tueraeo*, *Velugo Toiraeco* and *Vortiaecio* (with all its alternative forms). Therefore, from a total of 23 epithets of the god *Bandua*, 56.5% are derived from names of ancient places, but this percentage decreases to 43.5% if the three most dubious appellatives linked to population centres, *Oce...*, *Saisabro* and *Malunrico*, are excluded. This figure is, in our opinion, highly significant and it can be used to

make comparisons with some other areas.

Therefore, we can establish that in the Lusitanian-Galician territory, *Bandua* is the native deity most often cited together with epithets referring to *uici*, *pagi* or *castella*, so that it can be concluded that there was a very special relationship between this god and the low-status indigenous communities. In regard to the large proportion of dedications to *Bandua* with epithets that characterize the deity as being associated with different settlements, there is a total absence of any appellatives of this deity relating to family, clan or tribal groups. Furthermore, a large number of epithets of *Bandua* are unknown, and among them could be found some family appellatives; this, of course, can not be confirmed by the evidence available today (De Hoz 1986: 41).

When investigating the religious significance of *Bandua*, it is very important to highlight the fact that in the Gallic provinces, where the native deities were associated with Roman gods, the deity that is most closely related through its epithets to population centres is *Mars*. Furthermore, the indigenous appellatives of this type in Hispania make up 24% of the total number referring to this god. This represents quite a high proportion, very different from the recorded percentages for the remaining the deities. These numbers reflect the fact that *Bandua* in Hispania and the indigenous god *Mars* in Gallia are the deities least frequently worshipped by women. In Hispania, of all the dedications in which the sex of the worshipper is known, only one out of 34 (3%) of the known dedications to *Bandua* can be ascribed to a woman, whereas north of the Pyrenees, only 10 dedications (5%) out of a total of 199 inscriptions to *Mars* were dedicated by women (Spickermann 1994: 393). These figures are much lower in relation to those we have for the rest of the deities, something that could be due to the character of these deities: they were protector gods of the local communities, the *uici* and the *pagi* (Derks 1998: 96-97).

The religious polarization that can be identified between the different places shows a direct relationship to the status (normally administrative) of these places. As we have already seen, no appellatives of *Bandua* refer to *municipia* or capitals of *ciuitates*. Therefore, concentrating on the areas where evidence of this deity has been clearly recorded, it can be seen that practically all of the finds come from places, often *uici* or *castella*, located relatively far from the main and/or more Romanized towns (Olivares 2002a: 164-166). It has been thought that *Bandua*, as a defender of local communities, had a warlike character. However, with the decline of the political power of the *castella* and the centralization of this power in select Romanized

*oppida*, the public and warlike character and significance of deities such as *Bandua* began to be lost and these gods only maintained their function as protector gods for the individual people of the *uici*, *pagi* and *castella*, which had now become identified as social groups in their own right.

In summary, it is in the communities such as the *castella*, *uici* or *pagi* that the native inhabitants continued to entrust their protection to the deities of their ancestors, while in the new *municipia* or in the capital cities of the *ciuitates* the Roman guardian deities were becoming progressively more established through the patronage of native elites.

The religious nature of *Cosus* has many similarities with that of *Bandua*. We have some evidence of this god near settlements, such as the find on a rock 500 metres from the site of Sanfins, Eiriz, Paços de Ferreira, Porto, (*CIL* II 5607; Cardozo 1935: n. 70), and another near the settlements of Meirás, S. Martin de Meirás, Sada, A Coruña (Luengo 1950: 8 ff.). We also know of some appellatives of this god which refer to local communities, such as *Conso S [...] ensi* in S. Pedro de Trones, Puente de Domingo Flórez, León (García Martínez 1998: 325-331) and *Coso Vacoaico* in Viseu (Vaz 1989: n. 140). This epithet possibly alludes to the *oppidum Vacca* that is referred to by Pliny. This *oppidum* was probably located near the place where the inscription of *Coso* was found, that is, near the river Vouga (Alarcão 1974: 91; Vaz 1989: n. 140). However, the relationship between the toponym and the appellative of *Coso* is not certain. Finally, there are two other finds from the village of Santo Tirso, Porto that refer to *Coso Neneoeco* (Blázquez 1962: 120 ff.; Encarnação 1975: 164 ff.). Alarcão has suggested the possible association of this epithet with Nine, the name of a place in this area (Alarcão 1974: 171; García 1991: n. 50); yet, this link so far cannot be substantiated.

However, there are some more important facts to be considered before a possible identification between *Cosus* and *Bandua* can be made. There is practically no overlap between the territories where the inscriptions relating to *Bandua* and to *Cosus* have been found. Hence, inscriptions referring to one of these deities are only found in areas where inscriptions dedicated to the other divinities have not been found. The cult areas of these two deities do not overlap but rather complement each other, occupying practically the whole of the western territory of the Iberian Peninsula where evidence of indigenous worship is found. Finally, no reliable evidence has been found of any women worshipping at any of the monuments dedicated to *Cosus*, a fact that further supports this theory.

*Reue* is one of the deities whose cult occurs in the same territory as *Bandua*. Thus, to

begin with we must consider them as different deities. In our opinion, the strongest arguments point to *Reue* as being equivalent to the Roman god Jupiter or to the Gallic god *Taranis*. This is first of all based on the god's association with certain mountainous areas, as seen in an inscription which links the indigenous god *Reue* to a geographical feature in the north of Portugal, the mountain Larouco, which from its height of 1538m dominates the whole of the surrounding region. This inscription, from Baltar, Orense, was dedicated to *Reue Laraucus* (Le Roux and Tranoy 1975: 271 ff.; *AE* 1976, 298) while in another inscription found in Vilar de Perdices, Montalegre, Vila-Real, *Laraucus Deus Maximus* is mentioned (Lourenço 1980: 7; *AE* 1980, 579). This last inscription was found together with another one containing an allusive reference to Jupiter. Both inscriptions share a number of formal characteristics and were found very close to the mountain. Therefore, these finds imply that the god *Reue* may have been identified with the supreme god of the Romans, Jupiter (De Hoz 1986: 43; Le Roux and Tranoy 1973: 278; Penas 1986: 126-127; Rodríguez Colmenero and Lourenço 1980: 30; Tranoy 1981: 281).

Another recently discovered inscription confirms the character attributed to this god. The altar comes from Guiães, Vila-real, very near the Sierra Marão mountain range and was dedicated to *Reue Marandicui*, which suggests a relationship between the epithet of the god and the name of the mountain (Rodríguez Colmenero 1999: 106). This may be another mountainous area representing a possible base of the Lusitanian-Galician deity *Reue*.

These are not the only cases in which *Reue* appears in connection with important mountains. In Cabeço das Fraguas, Pousafoles do Bispo, Sabugal, Guarda, a cave inscription found at a considerable altitude (1015m) includes dedications to several deities, one of which is *Reue* (Rodríguez Colmenero 1993: 104). The sacred nature of this place is confirmed by the finding of fourteen votive altars without inscriptions at the base of the mountain, far from any populated areas (Rodrigues 1959-60: 74-75).

In several dedications to Jupiter the appellatives refer to mountains or elevated areas. One example is that of *Iuppiter Candamius*, cited in an inscription found in Candanedo, León (*CIL* II 2695; Blázquez 1962: 87). The inscription was found in a mountainous area and furthermore the epithet of the god also derives from the name of the mountain. This information reveals the link between the deity and this mountain, whose name, according to Albertos, is derived from *\*kand* - "to shine, burn or glow" (Albertos 1974: 152-153; Sevilla 1979: 262). The same can be

assumed for the dedication to *Iuppiter Candiedo*, the exact origin of which is unknown (*CIL* II 2599; Albertos 1974: 149-150; Tranoy 1981: 305), and *Iuppiter deus Candamus*, mentioned in an inscription found on the outer side of a wall in Monte Cildá, Olleros de Pisuerga, Palencia (García Guinea 1966: 43-44; Iglesias 1976: 219).

Similar arguments can be used to establish that this same religious characteristic is hidden within another native denomination, *Salamati*. In the first place, *Salamati* is related directly to the modern name of the Jálama mountain range (1492 m.), which in antiquity was called Sálama. Sálama probably covered the area from the Sierra de Gata to the Sierra de Malcata or the Sierra de Las Mesas mountain ranges (Albertos 1985: 469-470; Melena 1985: 475 ff.), very near the places where the inscriptions were found. Secondly, if Melena's interpretation is correct, the name *Salamati* appears in an inscription as *D(eus) O(ptimus)* (Melena 1985: 475 ff.). Therefore, according to the information available, the most probable theory is that *Reue*, like the indigenous god *Iuppiter*, is associated with mountainous places where his power and his functions are clearly revealed. This relationship is supported by the location of various altars in these mountains or in their immediate surroundings (in one case an inscription was found next to another one dedicated to *Iuppiter*), and by the references to the god with epithets derived from the names of the mountains mentioned above.

The evidence regarding the deity *Salama* is similar to that for *Reue*. Therefore, the theory that an association existed between *Salama* and *Reue* can be supported by taking into account the fact that the territories where both gods were worshiped did not overlap, but were rather complementary. Furthermore, both gods coexisted with the same group of deities in each of their areas (Olivares 2002: 41). Therefore, *Salama* could simply be an appellative of *Reue*.

In addition to the link between *Reue* and mountainous areas, an association can also be established with river currents. In fact the root *\*Sal-*, as well as relating to mountains, could also be interpreted as "water course". This root is well represented in European hydronyms, where some of them appear with the suffix *-am*, such as the French river Salembre, which in the twelfth century was called *Salambra* (Dauzat et al. 1978: 81). A number of examples of this are also known in the Iberian Peninsula, some of them relevant to our proposed theory. These include the Salamanquilla, Toledo, or the *Salamantia*, probably the ancient name for the river Tormes and possibly the origin of the toponym *Salmantica* (Salamanca) (De Hoz 1963: 237 ff.).

The association with rivers is clearly confirmed by the theonym *Reue*. According to Fita,

*Reue* was probably a goddess who represented the deification of the *rivus*, or stream, and probably had the same meaning as the French feminine word *rivière* (river) or the Catalan *riera* (ravine) (Fita 1911: 513-514). Blázquez, although with some reservations, accepted that this deity had some sort of association with water (1962: 185).

According to Villar, *Reue* derives from the root *\*reu-* which probably means "flow, current, river and water current." (Villar 1995: 197). Villar has also shown, with some solid arguments and numerous examples, that the majority of the appellatives of *Reue* probably express not just the masculine gender of the god but also its link to certain rivers. Therefore, the epithet *Langanidaeigui* probably derives from the hydronyms *Langanida*, so that the inscription dedicated to *Reue Langanidaeigui* could be translated as "to the god *Reue* of the [river] *Langanida*" (ibid.: 169). The appellative of the dedication to *Reue Anabaraecus* probably contained the elements *ana* (with its obvious river connotation) and *bara*, which sometimes means "riverbank" and other times expresses a hydronym. Therefore, the dedication probably means "to the god *Reue* of the riverbank of *Ana*" or "to the god *Reue* of *Anabara*", or if *Anabaraecus* is broken down into two elements, "to the god *Reue Ana* [of the town] of *Bara*" or "to the god *Reue Ana* of the *Vera*". In either case there is evidence of the association between the god and a certain river or its surroundings (ibid.: 170-181). According to Villar, this theory can also be applied to *Reue Reumiraegus*. If at the time when the inscription was made the appellative term *\*reu-* (river) was in use, it probably means "to the god *Reue* of the river *Mira*", but if this meaning had been lost by then *\*Reumira* is more likely a hydronym and the dedication should be interpreted as "to the god *Reue* of the [river] *Reumira*" (ibid.: 181-186). Finally, *Veisutus* was probably formed from the roots *\*ueis-/uis-*, which are very popular hydronyms found throughout prehistoric Europe.

From the study of the theonym and epithets of *Reue*, Villar concludes that *Reue* was used as an appellative for "river", but "gradually the god stopped being the same physical reality as the river and changed, converting into a personal entity of divine character, that inhabited the river and was its protector or dispenser" (ibid.: 200).

In summary, besides the association of *Reue* with mountainous places, a link between *Reue* and rivers can also be seen from the etymological analysis of its theonym and its epithets. This second association with rivers is similar in nature to that of the mountains, which is to say that the river valleys probably were places where the deity's power would have been more

evident and where therefore the believer would feel a stronger spiritual contact with the deity.

Several writers have already noted the significant number of columns dedicated to Jupiter that have been found in springs or rivers in the Gallic and Germanic provinces (Cook 1925: 88). The relationship between these monuments and water channels was further explored by Drioux in his work on the territory of the *Lingones* (Drioux 1934: 51).

In a comprehensive study of the Jupiter columns found in Germania Superior, Bauchhenss (1981: 25-26) confirmed the relationship between these monuments and certain river sources and springs. However, the foundations of some of these monuments were not found right beside these water sources but were rather located in the immediate vicinity and furthermore sometimes the large-sized building materials of these monuments had been transported from distant territories. Therefore, it cannot be deduced from this information alone whether or not the relationship between the columns and the water sources is merely circumstantial.

According to Gricourt and Hollard (1991: 355), the link between many of the Jupiter columns and places with water is perfectly conceivable without minimizing the position of the deity in the religious hierarchy or implying that the god had certain characteristics which belong to the "healing" deities. The key, for these investigators, lies in the mythological and religious meaning contained in the sculptured image in the upper part of the columns. A horseman resembling *Iuppiter* is shown urging his mount toward a serpent-like monster in a scene with obvious affinities with the Vedic myth of the confrontation between the god *Indra* and the demon *Vritra* (*RV* 3, 33; 4, 18; Renou 1961: 17 and 20). However, *Indra* appears in this myth as the "conqueror of the waters", while the deity who regulates and sends the waters to man was the supreme Indo-Iranian god *Varuna* (Gonda 1974: 230).

Myths that embody the fight between the God of the Tempest and a dragon, or an amphibious serpent with anthropomorphic features, are quite characteristic not only of Celtic and Indo-Iranian areas, but are also found in different Indo-European religions (Bernabé 1998: 31-32, 38 and 77-78). Based on the arguments mentioned above, we can reasonably conclude that Jupiter, the supreme god of the Gallo-Romans, had a definite association with rivers and that this relationship was strongest in certain places, such as confluences or river-sources. The nature of this relationship probably derives from the fact that in those places, one of the deity's main functions was asserted. This function was on the one hand that of benefactor and guarantor of the rains and the survival of the community and, on the other hand, that of creator of storms and



catastrophic floods. It is logical that in those places where the believer could best perceive the power of the god, the cult was expressed through the erection of votive altars, monumental columns or through the construction of sanctuaries.

This explanation fits in well with the fact that many of the places where the Jupiter columns are located, such as river sources or confluences, were of vital importance to the people who inhabited those lands. One example is the column of Cussy, found next to the source of the river Arroux that passes through *Augustodunum*, Autun, the capital of the *Aedui* in Roman times (Thévenot 1968: 36). A second column, now lost, was located at the confluence of the Sena and Marne Rivers (Duval 1961: 203 and 227), while another example is the column of the *nautae Parisiaci* (Duval 1960: 1).

In accordance with these notions, it could be etymologically asserted that the theonym *Taranis*, associated with *Iuppiter* in Gallia, is related to rivers. This could have been the original name of the Tarn River (a tributary of the Garonne River), which Pliny called *Tarnis*, or the Tanaro River (a tributary of the Po River), which also appears in Pliny and in the *Itinerary* of Antoninus as *Tanarus* (Sevilla 1979: 264-265). In Sevilla's opinion, "in both cases it seems most likely that these hydronyms owed their origin to a place related to the cult of this deity, located in the source or course of these fluvial currents." (ibid.: 265). Other hydronyms can also be linked to the theonym *Taranis*, such as a second Tarn River, the Ternain (a tributary of the Arroux, which in its upper course is called the Tarène), the Ternau (a tributary of the Marne River) and the Ternoise River.

Therefore, if we can establish a relationship between *Bandua*, local native communities and the Celtic god *Mars*, we can also confirm that *Reue*, as a deity that belonged to the same religious pantheon as *Bandua*, was associated with mountainous places, rivers and the Celtic deities related to *Iuppiter* such as *Taranis*.

In regard to the third deity of the Lusitanian pantheon, *Arentius*, the first point that we can establish about his religious character comes from his frequent epigraphic association with the goddess *Arentia*. We can obtain some information about this relationship if we compare it with evidence from outside the Iberian Peninsula. Studying the votive offerings found in the Gallic and Germanic provinces and in Britannia, it is observed that among all of the male native deities who have inscriptions dedicated to them in which they appear with female deities as divine couples, the majority correspond to gods associated with Apollo, the next most common

association is with Mercury and lastly with Mars. Those where the indigenous god Mars forms a divine couple make up 4% of the total number of dedications to this god. The "Celtic Apollo" is linked to a female deity in 29% of inscriptions while Mercury forms a couple in 26% of inscriptions. Hence, if we study the data in proportion to the total number of finds which refer to each deity, we see that Apollo and Mercury appear more regularly in inscriptions associated with a female deity. The fact that in the eight known inscriptions dedicated to *Arentius* this god forms a divine couple in 50% of the cases suggests that he probably had a similar character to that of the non-Hispanic native deities associated with Apollo or Mercury. In addition, Apollo and the Gallo-Roman god Mercury are the only gods that appear to have been worshiped together with goddesses in the same inscriptions and are also referred to by the same theonym as the female deity, such as Mercury *Visucius* and *Visucia* or Apollo *Bormanus* and *Bormana* (Olivares 1999b: 145 ff.).

Due to the scarcity of reliable data and the fact that our evidence does not account for about a dozen inscriptions, the conclusions proposed here must be supported in other ways. In the first place, dedicatory inscriptions to *Arentius* can be attributed to women in two out of a total of seven altars in which the name of the devotee is known (28.5%). This agrees more closely with the data that we have for Apollo and the Gallo-Roman god Mercury (15.7% and 22.7% respectively) than with the data for the indigenous god Mars (5%). However, the appellative *Arentius Tanginiciaecus* certainly derives from the anthroponym *Tanginus*, which also shows the religious affiliations of the dedicator of another altar to the god (Proença 1907: 176-177). This would indicate a definite association between the god and a family group and probably a link with the private setting, which would then also relate the god to the two Gallo-Roman deities Apollo and Mercury.

Another indication that *Arentius* was a god related to the private or family setting is the archaeological context in which the altar of "Zebras", Orca, Fundão was found. This altar was discovered in a domestic context beside the *impluvium* of the inner courtyard of a house (Alarcão 1988: 72, n° 4/428; Rocha 1909: 289).

Once the features of *Arentius* have been identified as complementary to those established for *Bandua* and *Reue*, we can examine the evidence of theonyms in other areas that are also related to anthroponyms, to determine whether they present a similar profile to that of *Arentius*.

An example similar to that of *Arentius Tanginiciaecus* is *Caesariciaecus*, an epithet that

appears without its theonym in an inscription from Martiago, Salamanca, derived from the *cognomen Caesarus* (Del Hoyo 1994: 53-57), recorded in the Lusitanian-Galician region (Abascal 1994: 309). Another anthroponymic appellative is *Tritiaecius*, recorded without its theonym in Torremenga, Cáceres (AE 1965, 74). It is related to the *cognomen Tritius/Tritia*, of which 31 recorded finds are known, a number of which have been found in the province of Cáceres (Abascal 1994: 532). The epithet *Aracus Arantoniceus* can also be linked to the anthroponym *Arantoni*, of which there are a number of recorded examples in Lusitania, mainly in the modern day district of Castelo Branco. And finally we have *Tabaliaenus*, cited as an appellative of the god [...]ouio found in Grases, Villaviciosa, Asturias, deriving from the *cognomen Tabalus*, which has been recorded in this area.

No appellatives of this kind are known for *Bandua*, *Cosus* or *Reue* despite the large number of known inscriptions with epithets referring to these gods. The only appellatives accompanied by their indigenous theonyms that are known north of the Duero River are the allusive appellatives of *Lug*, such as *Lucubo Arquienob(o)*, which refers to *Arquius*, a cognomen ubiquitous in Hispania (ibid.: 286), and the already cited [...]ouio *Tabaliaeno*, which could be interpreted as another dedication to the god *Lugus*.

Therefore, as has been seen, *Arentius* presents some close similarities to *Lugus*. This god appears in diverse places in the Celtic world; however, although the evidence for *Lugus* is widespread throughout this whole area, few votive offerings are known for this god. For this reason, if we had to calculate the extent of the cult to this god from the number of dedications found, we would greatly undervalue his importance. Fortunately, we have other information that indicates that *Lugus* was one of the most important gods of the Celtic pantheon (De Vries 1963: 58 ff.; Gricourt 1955: 63 ff.; Loth 1914: 205 ff.; MacCana 1983: 24 ff.; MacKillop 1998: 270 ff.; Ó hÓgáin 1991: 272-77; O'Riain 1978: 138 ff.; Sjoestedt 1949: 43 ff.;).

In the first place, we have to consider the large number of toponyms with the term *lucu-*, *lugu-*, *loucu-* or *lougu-* related to the name of the god that have been found throughout western Europe (Longnon 1968: 29-31; Olmsted 1994: 310 ff.; Tovar 1982: 594). In Hispania there are also toponyms known to derive from this theonym: *Lucus Augusti* (Lugo), *Lucus* (Lugo de Llanera, Asturias), the *ciuitas Lougeiorum*, *Louciocelum*, *Lucocadia*, Lugones (Siero, Asturias, which is probably derived from the ancient *Luggoni*), Logobre, Santa María of Lugo and Lugás. Further to the south near the sanctuary of *Lugus* located around Peñalba de Villastar, Teruel,

there are also the locations called Luco de Bordón and Luco de Jiloca (Marco 1986: 742; Sagredo and Hernández 1996: 186 ff.).

There is also evidence of a number of anthroponyms related to the theonym *Lugus*: *Lugaunus*, *Lugenicus*, *Lugetus*, *Lugidamus*, *Lugiola*, *Lugissius*, *Lugius* or *Luguselva* (Evans 1967: 220). According to Olmsted; *Lugenicus* means "born of *Lugus*" or "conceived of *Lugus*" (when it is in the form of "*Lugu-gene-ico*") and *Luguselva*, probably means "elect of *Lugus*." (Olmsted 1994: 310). In Hispania, there are also some anthroponyms derived from the name of this deity, including *Lougeius*, *Lougo*, *Lougos*, *Lucus*, *Lugua* and *Luguadicius* (Abascal 1994: 402 ff.).

Some family names derived from *Lugus* also appear throughout the whole of the Celtic world (Marco 1986: 741-742). In Hispania, the following are known: *Lougeidocum* (Saelices, Cuenca), *Lougesteric(n)* (Coruña del Conde, Burgos) and *Lougesteric(um?)* (Pozalmuro, Soria) (González 1986: 70, n. 133-135; Marco 1986: 741; Sagredo and Hernández 1996: 186).

Keeping in mind the evidence of the toponyms, anthroponyms, and the family names derived from the theonym *Lugus*, we notice that the information obtained from the votive inscriptions in which this god is mentioned does not generally agree with the intensity of this cult found in the whole of the Celtic territory. D'Arbois de Jubainville (1996: 117 and 199-200) hypothesized that the god *Lugus*, who appears in Irish mythological texts, corresponds to the Gallic deity interpreted by Caesar as Mercury, the "inventor of all the arts" (*BC VI*, 16). D'Arbois' theory was accepted by numerous investigators during the twentieth century and still remains a strong theory today (De Vries 1963: 59 ff.; Loth 1914: 226; MacCana 1983: 24-25; MacKillop 1998: 270; Marco 1986: 738; Tovar 1982: 593).

One piece of epigraphic evidence that reinforces the theories discussed above is the inscription from Osmá, Soria, in which the dedication to the *Lugoues* was made by a guild of shoemakers (*CIL II* 2818; Jimeno 1980: 38-40; Marco 1986: 741). Recently, Gricourt and Hollard have presented numismatic evidence that seems to confirm the relationship between *Lugus* and this profession (1991: 223 ff.). These coins have on the obverse side a radiated bust of *Posthumous* and on the reverse, a beardless male figure with wavy hair and large hands. The god holds a trident upright in his left hand and in the right one a bird. On his left shoulder there is another bird from which two belts hang. According to Gricourt and Hollard, the deity is *Lugus*, and the legend of the coins reads *SVTVS AVG*, which means *Sutus Aug(ustus)* or "divine

shoemaker". Thus, some fragments of the *Mabinogi*, written in Wales around the twelfth or thirteenth centuries can be interpreted in a similar vein. As in the case of the Irish medieval manuscripts some authors have argued that the tales in the *Mabinogi* were based on legends that had circulated orally a few centuries before. In these texts a character named *Llew Llaw Gyffes* appears who is similar to *Lug*. His name also signifies "the shining one" and, like *Lugus*, *Llew* is disguised as a shoemaker in one of the tales (Gricourt and Hollard 1991: 228).

Some years after D'Arbois established his description of *Lugus* as a multifunctional deity identified with Mercury, Reinach went one step further in defining the characteristics of the Gallo-Roman god Mercury. He identified him with a series of sculptural representations in which one of the most prominent characteristics was his triple face (Reinach 1913: III, 160 ff.). Reinach concluded his proposed theory by generalizing about all the forms of this type of sculptural evidence (1913: 165). Reinach's statement is supported by Caesar, who considered the Gallic god Mercury to be the most worshipped god because there were in *Galliae* more images of Mercury made of stone and bronze than of any other deity (1913: 165-169). Years later, Lambrechts agreed with Reinach's theory (Lambrechts 1942: 35-36, n. 20, 31 and 32).

Therefore, we argue that *Lugus* was associated more closely with Mercury than with any other Roman deity. Based on the conclusions drawn by D'Arbois and Reinach, *Lugus* was a multifunctional god with numerous forms that transcend all specific functions, and he can appear as a single or triple deity, as shown in the Gallo-Roman representations of Mercury with whom he is most closely associated. This triple characteristic of the god is reflected clearly in the epigraphic evidence where his name appears in plural, such as in the altars dedicated to various *Lugoues* in Avenches, Switzerland (*CIL* XIII 5078) and to *Lugouibus*, written in the plural dative form in Osma, Soria (*CIL* II 2818).

We can also detect the plurality of the god in the altars found in the province of Lugo, Galicia, Spain, in which the god is cited as *Lucoubu Arquiēni*, *Lugubo Arquiēnobo* and [...]*u Arquiēnis* (Ares 1972: 185-187). Still more important are the three *foculi* which Martínez Salazar identified in the upper part of two of the altars, which allow us to hypothesize that the plural dedications found in Lugo are comparable to those dedicated to the denomination *Matrebo Nemausikabo* found in Nîmes (Ares 1972: 188).

Taking these plural dedications into consideration, Loth tried to extend his research to construct a theological definition of *Lugus*. According to him, the *Lugoues* probably represented

a type of deity like the *Matres* that were related to *Lugus*, who, as the son of *Talltiu* the Earth Mother, was probably as much a chthonic god as a heavenly one (Loth 1914: 224-225). In this sense, according to Loth, the dedication to the goddesses *Maiabus* found in Metz should be interpreted in the same way, as they are probably related to Maia, the mother of Mercury, with whom he appears to be associated in numerous Gallic inscriptions (Hupe 1997: 93 ff.; Loth 1914: 227). Lambrechts (1942: 170) has also observed that a close relationship existed between the evidence for the three-headed Gallo-Roman god and the *Matres*, and he questioned whether these goddesses might perhaps even be a transposition of the great Celtic ternary god.

In fact, the theories that have identified the plural denominations of *Lugus* with the cult of the *Matres* have gained considerable support with the recent discovery of a votive altar dedicated to *Lugunis deabus* in Atapuerca, Burgos (Solana et al. 1995: 191-194). According to the evidence of a large number of inscriptions that have been found, Atapuerca is right in the heart of the Hispanic territory where the cults of *Lugus* and the *Matres* were at their most intense (Gómez-Pantoja 1999: 422 ff.).

If Caesar's assessment of Mercury as the most worshipped Gallic god whose main characteristic was his "talent for all the arts" leads us to the identification of Mercury with *Lugus*, then the physical characteristics, the similarity of attributes, as well as the similarity between the mythological events involving him and the god Apollo, imply a second identification of *Lugus* with Apollo. This hypothesis, well developed with solid arguments by Sergent (1995), allows us to fit together various pieces of evidence of Hispanic epigraphy and Gallo-Roman iconography that otherwise would be difficult to find any sense for.

From this point of view, it is possible to fit together some of our theories regarding the gods *Arentius* and *Arentia*. We have established that these Lusitanian gods, given the frequency with which they appear as a couple in the inscriptions, resemble the Gallo-Roman divine couples of Apollo *Grannus/Sirona* and Apollo *Boruo/Damona*, as well as the pairing of Mercury and *Rosmerta*. If the theory regarding the identification of *Lugus* with Mercury and hence with the Gallo-Roman god Apollo is correct, then our conclusions follow logically in that *Arentius* is a deity comparable to Apollo and Mercury, as well as being equivalent to *Lugus*.

It is possible that the same profile can be applied to *Endouellicus*. The first thing that is seen from his inscriptions is the relationship of the god with the private or family environment. Of the 51 inscriptions to the god that have a named dedicator, 17 were by women, some 33% of

the dedications. This is a very high proportion, much higher than for the rest of the Hispanic deities (excluding *Arentius* and therefore *Vaelicus*) and is similar to the data that we have for the dedications to the indigenous gods Apollo and Mercury in the rest of western Europe. The oracular and healing character of *Endouellicus*, and his association with the individual and the family are, in our opinion, the most outstanding features of the inscriptions, and they profile a divine typology comparable to that which we have for *Lugus* or *Arentius*, which is not contradicted by the location of the sanctuary of this god on a small hill.

We have succeeded in establishing a religious profile for three of the four male deities known from the Lusitanian area as well as the similarities that some of them have with gods worshipped in other areas. However, since reliable evidence is lacking for the fourth god, *Quangeius*, who was worshipped in the central region of Lusitania, we cannot confirm anything about his nature.

*Nabia* is the most frequently recorded female deity in the western area of Hispania and one of the first aspects of this goddess that must be highlighted is the diversity of geographical and archaeological contexts in which the epigraphic evidence has been found. Some inscriptions originate in mountainous places, sometimes in elevated areas far away from any population centres. In summary, we have seen how the inscriptions relating to *Nabia* have been found in different contexts, such as in probable sanctuaries located in uninhabited forested mountainous areas, in settlements or towns and finally, next to sacred springs. In addition, we have to take into consideration that *Nabia* is mentioned twice together with Jupiter in an inscription found in Marecos, Peñafiel, Porto. The double invocation to *Nabia* in this inscription indicates that two different divine entities were being worshiped by that name from different functional points of view: the supreme *Nabia* related to Jupiter (see Alberro 2003: 80 ss.) and another incarnation of the deity more directly linked to the protection and defence of the community or to more private aspects, such as health, fertility or wealth. According to Le Roux and Tranoy (1974: 255), this implies that *Nabia* probably had an association with water, the sky and the earth.

In some other altars where the Lusitanian-Galician goddess was associated with indigenous communities due to the epithets or to the locations where the inscriptions were found, her protective and political character would have stood out. However this does not in any way prejudice the interpretation of other dedications in which the aspects relating *Nabia* with other goddesses are highlighted. According to Melena's theory (Melena 1984: 244 ff.), it is highly

probable that on certain occasions *Nabia* could be identified with Diana. But she could also be identified with Juno (as indicated by Tranoy in the altar of Marecos), with Tutela, with Victoria, or with other deities of the Roman pantheon. In other contexts *Nabia* is not associated with any specific deity, because she would have assumed multiple functions comprising the different characteristics of various Roman deities.

*Trebaruna*, the second most recorded Lusitanian female deity in votive inscriptions, appears in the cave inscription of Cabeço das Fraguas, where there is evidence of only two deities: *Trebaruna* and *Reue*. The fact that one is male and the other one female suggests that they could have been a divine couple. This is very important because as both theonyms have a similar semantic content, the religious significance of *Reue* may provide us with clues about the nature of *Trebaruna*. Bearing these premises in mind, the evidence specific to *Trebaruna* places her in the same context as that relating to *Reue*. Evidence has been found of etymological links to flowing water, such as inscriptions found beside springs, in mountainous areas such as the find at Cabeço das Fraguas, and associated with *Reue* in an inscription. Similar arguments have led us to consider that *Reue* was a Lusitanian-Galician sovereign deity comparable to the Gallic god *Taranis* and therefore associated with the Roman god *Iuppiter*. Thus, we should consider *Trebaruna* as a sovereign goddess partner of *Reue*, who transcends the private and even local environment. In this sense, *Trebaruna* never appears with local epithets and some of her worshippers are those who cite their *origo* in their votive offerings. In addition, evidence of the goddess appears in Romanized towns such as *Capera* or *Augustobriga*.

As we have already seen, two of the three inscriptions to *Epona* were found in Celtiberian territory. Most of the altars dedicated to the *Matres* (15) come from the same area, while three of the altars found in the south of Hispania have appellatives (*Aufaniae*, *Augustae* and *Veterae*) that appear in Central Europe, something that could be due to the movement of people throughout these areas. Given that the gods *Epona*, the *Matres* and *Lug* are pan-Celtic and that they appear mainly in Celtiberia, we can conclude that this is the region of Hispania more similar to Celtic Europe from a religious point of view. However, it is possible that the pantheon of indigenous gods in this area is not reflected accurately in the votive inscriptions found, since there are very few inscriptions and the theonymic character of the denominations in them is unclear.

## **Conclusion**



To conclude, there are some male deities in Western Hispania that allow us to outline a structured religious pantheon. *Reue* is the god linked to mountainous areas and rivers, whose appellatives are not confined to a single location but extend throughout a large area. He can be considered to be a supreme, stellar and sovereign god with a juridical pre-eminence that could have covered a number of populated areas. Secondly, *Bandua* can be characterized as the god of the local community and considered through his epithets as the god of fortified settlements of which he was the exclusive protector; his tutelage probably also extended to the environment of war. In the third place, *Arentius* and *Lugus* show more of a link with the private and family environments and to fertility and health. We have to take into consideration that the characteristics proposed for each of these deities are not seen in the others. Finally, *Quangeius* does not present any features that could allow us to identify his function. In the regions that do not coincide with the areas where these gods were worshipped, the god *Lugus*, displaying a similar profile to that of *Arentius*, would have been present. The pantheon of the female deities appears to have a structure similar to that of the male deities. However, more problems are seen in this case for two reasons: first, the evidence of the goddesses presents a much less clear picture regarding their function and, second, the functionality of the Celtic female deities of Hispania is less clearly defined. Therefore it is more difficult to visualise the hierarchy and the functional scheme of the goddesses in Hispania.

However, the outline of the pantheon based on a functional interpretation of the Celtic deities of Hispania is not the only one that can be drawn. Since it is possible to establish that the sphere of influence of these gods arose from different socio-political settings of the indigenous Hispanic *populi*, *Reue* could be presented in this sense as a god linked with regional, social and political settings, with characteristics that are unknown. Or *Bandua* could be the god who represents the *castellum* and together with *Arentius-Lugus*, even though neither has any community-specific characteristics, could be gods linked to the individual, the family or non-family groups which exist in the context of the local community. This would not have affected the popular character that made them one of the principal deities of the pantheon.

Finally, all the information presented and analysed in this work has allowed us to establish at least an outline of the functioning of the religious pantheon of the Celtic *populi* of Hispania. Only evidence that may surface in the future will allow us to make corrections and adjustments, and broaden the general vision that we have sketched here regarding the religious

phenomenon of the native societies of the Iberian Peninsula. We hope that further studies can serve to test and possibly confirm some of the theories presented here.

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