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MATERIAL TRACES OF PAST CULTURES AS A MOTIVE FOR THE CREATION OF SPANISH PLACE NAMES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The origins of traditional microtoponyms lie almost exclusively in the language spoken by the rural populations that have inhabited, in many cases, for centuries, the areas referenced by the place names. The lexical competence of these speakers equips them with a vocabulary capable of accurately identifying most of the realities relevant for life in a rural environment, providing terms which subtly differentiate between all possible terrain features, plants, animals, agricultural methods, natural resources, ownership statuses, etc. Sometimes, however, the most noticeable characteristics of a place to be named are alien to the speakers' habitual fields of experience, so they are unable to find terms that will allow a precise description. One example of such designata are the material traces of past cultures, such as fragments of tools and building materials, ruins of buildings, dolmens, menhirs, tombs, old coins, inscriptions, and engraved or painted cave art, elements which are widespread in areas like the Iberian Peninsula which have been inhabited by humans for thousands of years. Precisely because of their "strangeness" vis-à-vis day-to-day life, these traces also arouse great interest even among uneducated persons, to such an extent that they often become the feature that most heavily influences what a place will be called. The study of how creators

of toponyms use language resources to describe and interpret these elements is of interest from several perspectives: first, from a purely onomastic, linguistic point of view and secondly, in ethnographic, historical, and archaeological terms.

In the Spanish-speaking world, names of this type have already attracted the attention of several toponymists. Some researchers have carried out general studies into names associated with places of archaeological interest in specific regions,¹ while others have focused on toponyms inspired by certain kinds of discoveries — see, for example, the toponymical analyses of megalithic structures like dolmens and menhirs in Gordón Peral (2008, 2011). The seminal studies conducted by Gordón Peral offer a broad overview of the subject (Gordón Peral, 1990, 1995, pp. 278–380), while a rather more unusual approach, above all with regard to terminology, was adopted in those of Ballester (2014a). The subject has also been addressed in some general presentations on Hispanic place names, although not usually in any great depth (García Sánchez, 2007, pp. 201–217). Our intention is to systematically re-examine it within the framework of a specific research project. We are particularly interested in explaining what exactly inspired such names from the point of view of the speakers who created them.

In earlier studies, we focused on the comprehensive analysis of traditional microtoponyms for locations with cave paintings (Ruhstaller, 2021) and petroglyphs (Ruhstaller, 2022), and on the Iberian Peninsula's most important megalithic monument (Ruhstaller, 2015b). In this paper, we offer a systematic overview of name types characterized by their reference to material vestiges of past cultures. The names studied are traditional, orally transmitted Spanish microtoponyms adopted by archaeologists as a form of identifying dig sites. In this regard, scientific studies and institutional web sites with archaeological content constitute a source of information that is doubly useful for toponymists. Firstly, they provide numerous proper names referencing sites of proven archaeological interest, and secondly, they offer objective descriptions of the realities which inspired those names. By linguistically analyzing these toponyms, explaining their semantic and referential content, and comparing it with objective archaeological facts, it is possible to reveal how uncultured speakers idiosyncratically perceived and interpreted realities which lay far beyond their own intellectual and cultural horizons and were therefore impossible for them to understand objectively. As we will see, a number of important conclusions — not only of interest in the field of toponymy — can be drawn from the phenomena observed in this study.

¹ Place names of archaeological interest in the province of Cáceres were analyzed in Fernández Corrales, 1984; those in the province of Badajoz, in Fernández Corrales, 1985; those in the autonomous region of Murcia, in García del Toro, 1974–1975; and those in Huelva, in Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991.

2. DESCRIPTIVE NAMES

2.1. Fragments of materials

Due to natural erosion, agricultural activity such as ploughing, and the reuse of material by later generations, many old structures only remain visible in the form of scattered fragments. Most of the Spanish names used to designate such places refer directly to this type of debris, often simply by including the word *pedras* ‘stones’. *Haza de las Piedras* ‘Stone Field’, for example, is a place covered with the remains of Roman building materials, while *Cerro de las Piedras* ‘Stone Hill’ is an area of high ground with piles of stones that are now the only surviving evidence of ancient buildings. When stones are unusually shaped or positioned, the noun which forms the core of the toponym is semantically specified using an adjective. Thus, a name like *Piedras Labradas* ‘Carved Stones’ references a series of rectangular, dressed stones; *Piedra Horadada* ‘Perforated Stone’ refers to a stone structure with an arch-like aperture; *Piedras Caídas* ‘Fallen Stones’ alludes to the ruinous state of a building; and names like *Piedra/Peña Hincada* ‘Stone Driven into the Ground’ refer to the unnatural looking positioning of rocks or menhirs.² The word *canto*³ designates a large dressed stone, and in once inhabited places where this type of stone is the most prominent feature, we find names like *Los Cantos*, or derivatives with the collective suffix *-al* referencing an abundance of this building material (*El Cantal*, *Cantalejos*). When the material in question is specifically marble, this is explicitly indicated in the toponym, as in, for example, *El Mármol* ‘Marble’ and *Prado del Mármol* ‘Marble Meadow’. Building remains made up of mortar gave rise to names containing the word *argamasa* ‘mortar’, sometimes incorporating the diminutive suffix *-illa* (*La Argamasilla*) or the augmentative suffix *-ón* (*El Argamasón*, *Los Argamasones*).

Ever since Roman times, two of the most important building materials have been bricks and tiles, both of which can be found in abundance in most places of archaeological interest. The Spanish word *teja* ‘tile’ (from the Latin *TEGULA*), and *ladrillo* ‘brick’ are therefore present in numerous toponyms: *Bancal de las Tejas*, *Las Tejuelas* (diminutive of *teja*), *Los Ladrillos*, etc. To express large quantities of the material, these words too are modified with collective suffixes (*-ada*,

² Also, *Piedrahíta*; *hito* derives from the Latin participle *FICTUS*, from *FIGERE* ‘to drive into the ground’. Many menhirs are still standing in their original positions, hence place names like *Piedra Hincada* (El Granado, Huelva). Others, however, have fallen over or are now unrecognizable. The only remaining trace of these is often the toponym. In Spanish America, the sites of some similar, pre-Columbian monuments are known as *Piedra Parada*, which literally means ‘Standing Stone’ (*pararse* = ‘to stand’).

³ The word *cantero*, a derivative of *canto*, means ‘stonemason’.

-era, -ar) in names like *La Tejada*, *Tejada de Almaciles*, *La Tejadilla*; *La Ladrillera*, and *El Ladrillar*.

One particularly interesting example is *Tejada*, the name of a village of pre-Roman origin in Escacena (in the province of Huelva). Since this name already appeared in Arabic texts as *Talyata*, it is undoubtedly a Mozarabic term equivalent to the Spanish word *tejada* ‘place where tiles abound’ (Lat. TEGULATA > Mozarabic **Tellada* > Arabic *Talyata*; the Arabic form incorporated into Castilian Spanish following the *Reconquista* was phonetically adapted, producing the Spanish equivalent *Tejada*). This means that even as early as the time when the autochthonous Romance tongue of the southern Iberian Peninsula (and perhaps even Latin) was still a living language, such toponymic formations were habitually used to refer to places containing visible remains of abandoned settlements (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, pp. 180–181).

Other types of material present in many formerly inhabited places are fragments of earthenware recipients.⁴ Most Spanish terms for such recipients — *cántaro*, *cazo*, *cazuela*, *tinaja*, *botija*, *tiesto*, *alcuza* (in Catalan, *alcussa*), *olla*, both with their corresponding diminutives and augmentatives — can now be seen in toponyms: *Cerro del Cántaro*,⁵ *Molino de los Cazos*, *La Cazoleta*, *Las Tinajuelas*, *La Botija*, *El Botijón*, *Los Tiestos*, *Cerro Alcuza*, *Bastida de les Alcusses* and *Cerro de las Ollas* are just a few examples. The fragmentary nature of these earthenware objects is explicitly reflected in morphologically interesting formations of the *Verb* + *Noun*⁶ type, such as *Quiebrabotijos* and *Quiebracántaros* (translatable as ‘place where clay pitchers are smashed’). Documentary evidence exists that names like these go back to the middle of the 14th century, examples like *Quebranta Botijos* and *Quebranta Tinajas* appearing repeatedly in Alfonso XI’s *Libro de la Montería* (Ruhstaller, 1995, pp. 26, 163).

2.2. Traces of built structures

In places containing not only scattered debris but also actual parts of old buildings, it is these structures which usually inspire the creation of toponyms. The presence of walls or parts of walls is referenced in names containing the word *pared* (< Lat. PARIES, -TIS), often modified with augmentative or diminutive suffixes: *Las Paredes*, *Los Paredones*, *Las Paredejas*. Depending on what the

⁴ Monte Testaccio, in Rome, gives us an idea of the enormous number of earthenware vessels that were once in circulation.

⁵ One adjective derived from *cántaro*, ‘jug’ or ‘jar’, and found only in toponyms, is *cantarero* (*Cerro Cantarero* ‘Jars Hill’ or ‘Jarry Hill’).

⁶ This subject is studied monographically in Ruhstaller, 2014.

surviving remains of buildings look like, these kinds of locations were named using words like: *bóveda* ‘vault’, plur. *bóvedas* (*Las Bóvedas* is a site containing the remains of some Roman thermal baths), and dimin. *bovedilla* (*La Bovedilla*); *arquillos* ‘little arches’⁷ (in the place called *Los Arquillos* there are still traces of an old aqueduct); *torre* ‘tower’, sometimes complemented with adjectives like *quebrada* ‘broken’ (*Torre Quebrada*) or *mocha* ‘topless’ (*Torre Mocha*), or with diminutive or augmentative suffixes (*La Torrecilla*, *El Torreón*); *alcantarilla* ‘bridge’ (for example, *Alcantarilla Quebrada* ‘Broken Bridge’; Ruhstaller, 1990a, p. 27); or *cañerías* ‘pipes’ or ‘conduits’ (the name *Las Cañerías*, for example, refers to an aqueduct).

In the case of places where the whole structure of a building was recognizable at the time of their naming, we find toponyms like *Casas Viejas* ‘Old Houses’, while buildings still identifiable as defensive structures gave rise to names like *El Castillo* ‘The Castle’ and its various derivatives: diminutives like *Castillito*, *Castejoncillo*, *Castillejo*, *Castillejito*, and the feminine variant *Castilleja*; augmentatives like *Castejones*, *Castellón*, *Castellote*; and collective forms like *Castellar* (cf. Ballester, 2014a, p. 9). Names like *El Casar* (from *casa* ‘house’), *Los Casares*, the augmentative *Caserón* and the diminutives *Casarejo*, and also *Lugarico* [*Viejo*] ‘Little [Old] Place, Village’, usually identify locations with groups of ruined houses.

Traces of old roads gave rise to toponyms which include terms like *calzada* ‘paved road’ (*La Calzada*, *Calzadilla*), the synonymous Arabicism *arrecife* (*El Arrecife*), and *Camino Viejo* ‘The Old Path’ (cf. Ballester, 2014b, p. 132; 2014a, pp. 13–14).

2.3. Abandoned settlements

Hostilities between different areas, and especially between Christian and Muslim territories, were continuous during the Middle Ages and often resulted in the destruction of whole towns or villages. The generic term for a ruined, abandoned settlement was *villar* (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, pp. 200–205; Ruhstaller, 2015a). When the traditional macrotoponym had fallen into disuse, this term was often adopted as a new proper name for a location: *El Villar*, often also in its plural form (*Los Villares*) or modified with a diminutive suffix (*Villarejo*, *Villaricos*). The words *aldea* and *burgo* ‘small [inhabited] village, hamlet’, served the same

⁷ One case of particular interest is that of *Alaquaz* (today, *Alocaz*; Utrera, Sevilla) < Arab. *Al-Aqwās* ‘The Arches’. The name was created by the Arabs following their arrival in the 8th century and referred to an arch-like structure dating back to Roman times, it may have been a boundary marker between two administrative areas (Ruhstaller, 1990b).

purpose, although always accompanied by the adjective *Viejo* ‘old’ (*Aldea Vieja*), the participle *perdido* ‘lost’ (*Aldea Perdida*) or a diminutive suffix (*La Aldehuela*, *Las Aldehuelas*; *Burguillos*).

The addition of diminutive suffixes to modify lexemes (*Castillejo*, *Casarejo*, *Aldehuela*, *Lugarejo*, *Lugarico*) was surprisingly frequent. These suffixes indicated that the realities being referenced were not actually castles, villages, towns, houses, etc. in the strict sense of those words, but castles, villages, towns, houses, etc. in a state of ruin and abandon which therefore no longer served their original purposes. As highlighted by Gordón Peral (2002, p. 1516), the use of the diminutive form in these cases metaphorically expresses a negative (or derogatory) judgment of buildings which are no longer useful because of their inhabitability. This specific meaning expressed by diminutive suffixes is made even clearer by another type of toponym used to reference abandoned settlements: names derived from macrotoponyms for inhabited locations nearby. The name *Carmonilla*, for example, refers to the remains of a Roman villa near the city of *Carmona*, and *Zaragocilla* refers to a Celtiberian settlement in the area of influence of the city of *Zaragoza*.

The same meaning of the diminutive suffix could also be expressed by the epithet *La Vieja*. Thus, *Sevilla la Vieja*, literally ‘Old Seville’, is the name the Castilians used to refer to the ruins of the old Roman city of Italica following their conquest of the region from the Muslims in the 13th century; *Córdoba la Vieja* is the name with which they redennominated the remains of the Arab palace-city of Medina Zahara (8 km. from Córdoba); and *Ronda la Vieja* became their new name for the ancient city of Acinipo (20 km. from Ronda). Such abandoned settlements were often repopulated in later periods (either because of their strategic location or in order to reuse the building materials still present there *in situ*). Since their original names had by then been forgotten, they continued to be identified by their more recently created toponym (which alluded, as has been explained, to their state of abandonment). As a result, it is not unusual to find macrotoponyms like *Villar de Cantos* (Cuenca), *Aldehuela de la Bóveda* (Salamanca), *Burguillos* (Badajoz), *Villarejo del Valle* (Ávila), and *Aldeavieja de Tormes* (Salamanca), even though, strictly speaking and taking into account their original meaning, such names designate abandoned settlements. One particularly interesting example of this type of toponym is *Murviedro*. Up until 1868, this was the name used to refer to the city of Sagunto (Valencia). Known to have appeared in medieval Arabic texts as *Murbīṭar* (Barceló, 2009, p. 242), and in the *Cantar de Mio Cid* (which predates the region’s definitive submission to Christian rule) as *Muruiedro*, this Mozarabic toponym must have been created at a time when the only remaining traces of the Roman city of Saguntum were some fragments of its old walls (< MURU VETERU; Nieto Ballester, 1997, p. 306).

2.4. Burial sites

Names of artificially formed round hills and mounds are often based on the (now obsolete) terms *motilla* and *toruño* (Gordón Peral, 1992, p. 152). Examples include *El Toruño* (a Turdetanian *oppidum*), *El Turuñuelo* (a diminutive of *toruño*, referring to an important Bronze Age place of worship) and *La Motilla* (a Bronze Age settlement, and also the name of several small, round hill sites in Andalusia). In many cases, tombs have been found inside these tumuli. Names containing the term *artesa* ‘trough’ or its augmentative *arteson* (*Los Artesones* and *Las Artesas de los Moros* ‘Moors’ Trough’) refer to rectangular burial sites built or carved into the rock. Places in which the contents of tombs were still present when the site was discovered were given names like *La(s) Tumba(s)*, *La(s) Sepultura(s)* and *El Sepulcro* ‘The Tomb(s)’ or ‘The Grave(s)’, and *Los Entierros* ‘The Burials’. More direct references to bones are evident in names like *El Muerto* ‘The Dead Man’ and its plural *Los Muertos*; *Los Difuntos* ‘The Deceased’;⁸ *Los Huesos* ‘The Bones’; *Las Calaveras* ‘The Skulls’; *Las Canillas* (from *canilla* ‘long human bone, especially the femur’); *El Zancarrón/Los Zancarrones* (from *zancarrón* ‘long bone stripped of flesh’); and *La Pernera/Cueva Pernera* (from *pernera*, a derivative of *pierna* ‘leg’, understood here to mean ‘leg bone’). The name *Las Reliquias*, designating a Roman necropolis, is particularly interesting because it shows that the discoverers of the bones associated them with a ritual ceremony, establishing a parallel with their own religious rites.

2.5. Real and imaginary treasure

Unearthed coins are another thing commonly referenced by the creators of toponyms in the Iberian Peninsula. Sometimes they are designated generically with the words *dineros* (popular plural form of *dinero* ‘money’: *Cabezo de los Dineros* ‘Money Hill’) or *moneda* ‘coin’ (*La Moneda*). However, old coins (most of which are of Roman or Arab origin) are more frequently equated with specific types of coins in circulation at the moment of the discovery. Such an anachronistic identification gives rise to names like *Cerro de las Pesetas* ‘Pesetas Hill’, *La Tostonera* (*tostonera* is a collective derivative of *tostón* ‘silver coin minted in Spain in the 16th century’, see Ruhstaller, 1992, p. 283), *Cerro del Ochavo* (an *ochavo* was a Spanish coin minted from the early 17th century to the middle of the 19th century). The toponym *Mala Moneda* ‘Bad [= Useless] Coin’, documented

⁸ The word *difunto* ‘deceased’ is not completely alien to popular language, as can be inferred from the “Atlas Lingüístico de Andalucía” (Alvar, 1961–1973, map 1482). The choice of this learned synonym for *muerto* when creating toponyms, reflects sentiments of respect and fear when confronted with a macabre discovery from an indeterminate past.

as early as 1344 (Ruhstaller, 1995, p. 128), could stem from the discovery of coins from an ancient culture which were therefore deemed to be totally lacking in practical value (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 119). When large quantities of coins were found, perhaps together with other valuable-looking objects, place names were often created based on the word *tesoro* ‘treasure’ (*El Tesoro*, *Tesorillo*). Naturally, such “treasures” may only have existed in popular imagination, fired by the discovery of enigmatic objects from unknown ancient cultures. Silver objects gave rise to names like *La Plata*, *Cerro Platero*,⁹ *La Platera* and *La Platosa* (derivatives of *plata* ‘silver’ by virtue of the collective suffixes *-era* and *-osa*). The term *plata* was used centuries ago (and still is in much of the Spanish-speaking Americas) as a metonym for ‘money’, so toponyms of this kind, like those mentioned earlier, may refer specifically to discoveries of old coins.

2.6. Representations and inscriptions

The discovery of statues is less frequent. In 1604, the humanist Rodrigo Caro reported the finding of a marble Roman head at a place traditionally known as *Cañada de los Ídolos* ‘Valley of the Idols’ (Ruhstaller, 1990a, p. 62). In the old center of the city of Seville, the torso of a Roman statue still forms part of the façade of a house, a feature which inspired the adoption of *Hombre de Piedra* ‘Man of Stone’ as the name of the street. According to chroniclers, another street nearby was called *Calle de las Piernas* ‘Legs Street’ in allusion to the legs of a marble statue that still stood there (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 119).

Toponyms can also be inspired by other types of anthropomorphic representations dating back to ancient cultures. The Canarian name *Cueva de los Ídolos* ‘Idols Cave’ refers to funerary objects found at a pre-Hispanic burial site, while elsewhere the discovery of hundreds of Iberian ex-votos inspired the name *Cueva de los Muñecos* ‘Cave of the Dolls’. Semantically similar terms were also used to create names referring to two-dimensional representations of human beings. Cave paintings depicting human figures have survived, for example, at *Cueva de los Niñotes* ‘The Dolls Cave’. Other paintings of human figures were found in caves which were subsequently given such significant names as *Cueva de las Mujeres* ‘The Women’s Cave’ and *Cueva de los Taconeros* ‘The [Flamenco] Dancers’ Cave’ (Ruhstaller, 2021, p. 120).

In cases where toponyms were inspired by inscriptions carved into stone, one of the most recurrent names is *Piedra Escrita* ‘Written Stone’. Considering that many microtoponyms were created hundreds of years ago by illiterate countryfolk,

⁹ The noun *La Platera* (‘place where things made of silver are found’) and the adjective *platero* in [*Cerro*] *Platero* (‘Silvery [Hill]’) are both forms exclusively present in proper names.

it is hardly surprising that even cave paintings which only comprise schematic figures should be interpreted as writing. This is corroborated in names like *Peña Escrita* ‘Written Rock’, *Las Letras* ‘The Letters’ and *Los Letreros* ‘The Signs’ (Ruhstaller, 2021, p. 115). In contrast, when cave art depicts something specific, this is reflected plastically in toponyms such as *Cueva del Ciervo* ‘Deer Cave’, *Los Toricos* ‘The Little Bulls’, *Cabras Pintadas* ‘Painted Goats’, etc. (for more examples, see Ruhstaller, 2021, pp. 116–118). Names like *Cueva Pintada* ‘Painted Cave’ and *Las Figuras* ‘The Figures’ contain generic references to the existence of cave paintings.

3. INTERPRETATIVE NAMES

The names analyzed in the previous chapter served to provide a description (as objective as possible, taking into account the limited vocabulary available to their creators) of the realities they designate. In this section, however, we will look at names which express an interpretation of the striking traces of the past. Although these speakers were completely lacking in scientific culture and displayed a somewhat naive attitude towards archaeological realities, the questions they asked themselves were essentially similar to those asked by scientists today: How old are those enigmatic discoveries? Who created them? What were they for?

3.1. Names containing an answer to the question of “when”

The answer to the “when” question necessarily had to be sought within the limited time span available to the creators of the toponyms, a time span restricted to their own generation and the one of their parents and grandparents: they knew what they had experienced personally, and they had information about things experienced directly by people close to them. All other historical knowledge took the form of narrative material of either legendary or epic nature.

In the popular consciousness of the inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula, the only preceding culture about which at least a vague memory survived was that related to the Islamic period. It is not surprising, therefore, that in place names practically all traces of previous cultures should have been attributed to *los moros* ‘the Moors’ — regardless of whether they really were remains from the Arab period, or material dating back to the Visigoths, the Romans, pre-Roman peoples, or even prehistoric cultures¹⁰ (cf. Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, pp. 120–125;

¹⁰ Cf. Ballester, 2014a, p. 12; 2014b, p. 61. The hypothesis that names like *Cerro de la Mora* and *Cuesta de la Mora* (referring to archaeological sites) contain a pre-Roman word for ‘hill’ are not plausible. All names based on *mora* are unmistakably Castilian Spanish formations (a conclusion supported by the gender-specific forms *moro-mora*, and the word’s integration into an authentically

García del Toro, 1974–1975, p. 152). In the places traditionally known as *Cueva de los Moros* and *Roca dels Moros* ‘The Moors’ Cave’ and ‘The Moors’ Rock’, for example, we find prehistoric cave paintings (Ruhstaller, 2021, p. 124); *Plaza de Moros* ‘Moors’ Fort’ is the name of an Iron Age settlement; *Mesa de los Moros* ‘The Moors’ Table’ refers to a dolmen; *Pared de los Moros* ‘The Moors’ Wall’ refers to a Roman villa; and *Tejar de los Moros* ‘The Moors’ Tile Factory’ to a place with numerous fragments of pottery (which, by mere coincidence, actually did date from the Arab period).

3.2. Names containing an answer to the question of “who”

The surprising thing about names that associate old objects with the previously dominant Arab culture is that most of them do not refer generically to *los moros* ‘the Moors’, as an ethnic community but to a single individual from that community. This can be seen in examples like *Cerro de la Mora* ‘The Moorish Woman’s Hill’; *Pico de la Mora* ‘The Moorish Woman’s Peak’; *Cueva del Moro* ‘The Moor’s Cave’; *La Tumba del Moro* ‘The Moor’s Tomb’; *Fuente del Moro* ‘The Moor’s Fountain’; and many other toponyms. Moreover, if we consider names like *Cueva del Rey Moro* ‘The Moorish King’s Cave’ (an Iberian place of worship) and *Baños de la Reina Mora/Bañadero de la Reina Mora* ‘The Moorish Queen’s Bathing Pool(s)’ (both names refer to stone structures reminiscent of water tanks), it becomes clear that for the creators of such names the important thing was not so much to assign the discovered remains to a specific period as to associate them with some legendary being from a remote, unknown past (Ruhstaller, 2021, pp. 124–126). Indeed, legends attempting to explain enigmatic discoveries survived in the oral tradition right up until the modern period.¹¹

The association of traces of the past with beings believed to have superhuman strength is especially understandable in the case of dolmens built with stones weighing several tons (Gordón Peral, 2011, pp. 616–619). In the Iberian Peninsula, megalithic burial sites were attributed not only to giants (through names like *Tumba/Sepultura del Gigante* ‘The Giant’s Grave’; *Sepultura de la Giganta* ‘The Giant Woman’s Grave’; and *Hoyo del Gigante* ‘The Giant’s Hollow’), but also to witches (*Caseta de las Brujas*, *Chabola de la Hechicera* ‘The Witches’/Witch’s Hut’), and, once again, to *los moros* (*Casetón de los Moros*

Romance syntactical structure). No documentary evidence exists that *mora* has ever been used to mean ‘hill’ in Spanish.

¹¹ For a specific example of this, see <http://www.laliebana.com/la-reina-mora/>. The Romantic author Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer (1836–1870) produced a literary rendering of a popular legend of this type in his short story “La Cueva de la Mora”.

‘The Moors’ House’). For the creators of these names, the capacity to erect monuments of this type implied not only physical strength but also, and primarily, magic. Together with the general air of mystery which shrouded the sites in question, this resulted in old (and not only megalithic) monuments being considered the settings for activity by supernatural beings, or at least by certain humans with access to the supernatural world. To designate such beings, however, and due to their extremely limited vocabulary and cultural horizons, rural speakers had to borrow terms from their own Catholic religion, hence such curious popular expressions as *Cocinilla del Obispo* ‘The Bishop’s Kitchen’; *Casillas del Cura* ‘The Priest’s Huts’; *El Fraile* ‘The Monk’; *Mata del Fraile* ‘The Monk’s Field’; *Cueva del Monje* ‘The Monk’s Cave’; *Torre del Monje* ‘The Monk’s Tower’; and *Letrero de los Mártires* ‘The Martyrs’ Signpost’, all of which are traditional names for important, well-known archaeological sites. Similarly, foot-shaped engravings on rocks received names like *Pisada de la Virgen* ‘The Virgin Mary’s Footprint’, and *Pisada de Santa Apolonia* ‘St. Apollonia’s Footprint’),¹² while a horseshoe-shaped engraving was interpreted in its toponym as a mark left by a saint’s horse (*Herradura del Caballo de Santiago* ‘Hoofprint of St. James’s Horse’) (Erkoreka, 1995; Ruhstaller, 2022).

In several cases, the legendary beings considered responsible for the building of ancient monuments (and even thought still to inhabit the places in question) had specific proper names (Ruhstaller, 2015b): *Cueva de Menga* ‘Menga’s Cave’ (a dolmen); *Piedras de Gilica* ‘Gilica’s Stones’ and *Piedras de Gil* ‘Gil’s Stones’ (remains of walls built with large stones); *Baños de Gilico* ‘Gilico’s Baths’; *Cabezo de la Pascuala* ‘Pascuala’s Hill’; *Piedras de Cuca* ‘Cuca’s Stones’. These first names were not chosen randomly. They always constituted anthroponyms with strong connotations: *Mingo*, *Menga*, *Gil* and *Pascuala* are archaic, rustic sounding names, which, precisely for that reason, were also used in the pastoral literature of the 16th century to identify fictional characters living in wild, natural environments. Another interesting aspect is the tendency for toponyms to feature hypocoristic forms of these names: for example, *Mingo* and *Minga* instead of *Domingo* and *Dominga*, *Cuca* instead of *Francisca*, and the diminutives *Gilico* and *Gilica* instead of *Gil* and *Gila*. Superstitious speakers may have used diminutive and hypocoristic forms in an attempt to ingratiate themselves with fearsome supernatural beings. For the same reason, certain wild animals are known to have been

¹² The hagnonyms found in names of this type are extremely varied and almost certainly related to local figures of devotion. The material gathered and studied by Erkoreka (1995), gives some idea of the richness of their variety. Markings carved into rock are also sometimes associated not with a Christian saint but with a legendary Moorish woman, as illustrated in a toponym like *Pisada de la Mora* ‘The Moorish Woman’s Footprint’ (Ruhstaller, 2022).

traditionally designated using proper names of people or euphemistic alternatives instead of their “real” names.¹³

Another mythical figure whose name is sometimes linked to traces of ancient cultures is VETULA, as studied in detail by several scholars, including G. Rohlfs (1966). This mythical figure has been associated, for example, with the impressive cave paintings at *Cueva de la Vieja* ‘Old Woman’s Cave’, hence the name of the location. In other regions, cave paintings are attributed to a legendary child (*niño*); this almost certainly explains the name *Sierra del Niño*, which refers to a mountain range near Tarifa (Cádiz) with several caves containing some remarkable schematic paintings reminiscent of a child’s scrawling (Ruhstaller, 2021, p. 118).

3.3. Names containing an answer to the question of “what for”

No less imaginative are the explanations offered by traditional place-names as to the supposed purpose of the material found at these sites. Discovered objects did not belong to the speakers’ own culture and were generally in a very fragmentary, damaged condition (which made them difficult to identify). Inevitably, therefore, their purpose or use could only be speculated upon. A dolmen, for example, could be interpreted as a dwelling (*chabola* ‘hut’; *casa* ‘house’; *casetón* ‘box’ or ‘chamber’), as a kiln (*horno*), as a table (*mesa*), or as the tomb (*tumba*) of some fantastic being (*Chabola de la Hechicera*, *Casa del Moro*, *Casetón de los Moros*, *Horno de los Moros*, *Mesa de los Moros*, *Tumba del Gigante*), while a rectangular stone structure could be taken for a water tank (*pila*, *alberca*, *alberquilla*) or as a bathing pool (*Los Bañuelos*, *Baños de la Reina Mora*, *Bañadero de la Reina*). The remains of walls made of large stones believed to have formed parts of dungeons gave rise to the toponyms *Las Mazmorras* ‘The Dungeons’ and *Cerro Calabozo* ‘Dungeon Hill’. The discovery of different stone tools in a cave inspired the name *Botiquería dels Moros* ‘The Moors’ Pharmacy’; a site with the surviving structural remains of some Roman baths is popularly known as *Carnicería de los Moros* ‘The Moors’ Butcher’s Shop’; while another cave, this time housing some impressive wall paintings, was denominated *Cocinilla del Obispo* ‘The Bishop’s Kitchen’. In other caves, cave art was popularly interpreted as written texts, and its presumed creators were accordingly identified as

¹³ For example, the French word *renard* ‘fox’ is known to derive from a person’s name (< *Renart*). The French and Spanish terms for ‘weasel’ (*belette* ‘little beauty’; *comadreja*, literally ‘godmother’, ‘close female friend or neighbor’), and the English word *bear* (literally ‘the brown one’), among many others, are also based on euphemistic references to feared animals. Hoffmann-Krayer & Bächtold-Stäubli (1937, pp. 882–886) provide an extensive review of similar lexical creations in German.

escribanos (scribes), as at *Cueva del Tío Escribano*, or as *libreros/llibreres* (booksellers), as at *Cueva de Los Libreros* and *Abric de les Llibreres* (cf. Ruhstaller, 2021, p. 126); and in Mexico, a place with numerous petroglyphs was interpreted as *La Biblioteca* ‘The Library’ (Ruhstaller, 2022).

As has been seen in some of the names already mentioned (*Las Reliquias*, *Cocinilla del Obispo*, *Caseta de las Brujas*, *Chabola de la Hechicera*, etc.), many of these mysterious sites were intuitively seen as places of religious worship or witchcraft. The stones referenced in the name *Piedras del Altar* ‘Altar Stones’ were thought to be part of an old altar, while the structures conserved at *Morro de la Mezquita* ‘Mosque Hill’ were identified as the remains of an old mosque, as was material dating from between the Chalcolithic period and the Middle Ages found in the cave called *Las Mezquitillas* ‘The Little Mosques’. A popular alternative name for the already mentioned *Botiquería dels Moros* ‘The Moors’ Pharmacy’ was *Confesionario de los Moros* ‘The Moors’ Confessional’. The anthropomorphic wall paintings visible at *Cueva del Santo* ‘The Saint’s Cave’ were considered representations of a saint (probably because they reminded their discoverers of frescoes in Catholic churches).

In several cases, the apparently *naive* creators of toponyms were not so far off the mark, as two particularly eloquent examples from Portuguese show. The name *Capela dos Mouros* ‘The Moors’ Chapel’ refers to a prehistoric burial place in the form of a dolmen. And *Igreja dos Mouros* ‘The Moors’ Church’ given to a cave with its walls richly decorated with primitive paintings may be anachronistic and inaccurate from a cultural perspective, but it is very likely that the cave in question was indeed used as a shrine (Ruhstaller, 2021, p. 126).

4. CONCLUSIONS

A traditional microtoponym generally contains a description of the place it refers to as it was at the time when that name was first created. Naturally, therefore, attention is often drawn to the fact that toponymy is immensely useful in helping us to understand the historical aspects of locations. Yet equally useful is the information toponyms contain regarding the speakers who created them. The analysis of the lexical components of place names allows us to learn more about the linguistic profile of a specific speech community, and toponomastic research thus has the potential to contribute a great deal to the study of a language and its dialects. Such analysis also tells us how places were perceived by the creators of their names. A single location usually has numerous different features, but the name created to identify it alludes only to the one of greatest importance to the speakers. The vocabulary chosen to express that feature indicates what bonds existed

between the place and its inhabitants, how they used it, what they thought and felt about it, and what it meant to them.

One group of toponyms particularly interesting in this regard (and one which, at least in Spanish-speaking regions, is enormous) comprises place names referring to material traces of past cultures that were still visible, usually after centuries of abandonment. As we have seen, these toponyms can be divided into two clearly distinguishable types: those which simply describe discoveries, and those which evaluate and interpret them. Naturally, names of the first type do not describe their referents objectively or with any degree of scientific accuracy. The speakers who created them possessed neither the vocabulary nor the historical and archaeological knowledge required to do so. Instead, they used the most semantically appropriate terms available to them, within the limits of their own lexical competence, identifying found objects with comparable realities with which they were familiar in their everyday lives. Things that archaeologists would describe as fragments of different types of objects and materials, for example, are referenced in toponyms as simple stones, tiles, bricks, pots, walls, etc., and what specialists would call the remains of an aqueduct or of some Roman baths become merely “little arches” or “vaults”, thus extending the semantic scope of lexical items which, in everyday language, have clearly defined meanings. The names created sometimes express disdain for the objects discovered (which were seen as unusual but ultimately lacking in value and practical usefulness) through the addition of appreciative suffixes or certain adjectives to the core lexis. In contrast, place names of the second type show that speakers did not stop at merely naming and describing the strange objects they had found, but attempted to explain them, although, given their own severely limited lexical resources, historical knowledge and intellectual horizon, their interpretations of archaeological traces (specifically with regard to creatorship, age, and purpose) were inevitably subjective and irrational. Such interpretations, however, despite being very different from those offered by scientists, nevertheless show that any human being, whether learned or totally uncultured, is capable of looking at manifestations of ancient cultures and essentially asking the same questions: What is it? Who made it? When was it made? What was it made for? The group of toponyms studied in this paper is of interest not only in terms of anthropology or ethnography, but also from a linguistic perspective. Their study helps us to discover how speakers went about designating realities totally alien to their own culture (and therefore for which no exact terms existed) using only the limited lexical resources available to them. From a strictly onomastic point of view, it also provides us with an outstanding opportunity to analyze the mechanisms involved in the creation of toponyms, thus shedding light on a key field of onomastic research: onymic motivation.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DESIGNATA OF THE NAMES ANALYZED
IN THE FIRST SECTION¹⁴

- Haza de las Piedras* (Huévar del Aljarafe, Seville). Remains of building materials from a Roman villa scattered over a large area. IAPH.
- Cerro de las Piedras* (Córdoba). Iberian, and later Roman, settlement. IAPH.
- Piedras Labradas* (Jarilla, Cáceres). Built structure containing numerous stones carved into rectangular blocks. <https://www.celtiberia.net/es/multimedia/?id=546>
- Piedra Horadada* (Guillena, Seville). Stone structure with an arch-like opening (Ruhstaller, 2013, pp. 150–151).
- Piedras Caídas* (Macael, Almería). Ruined medieval watchtower. IAPH.
- Peña Hincada* (Valdeolea, Cantabria). Menhir. <http://www.ayuntamientovaldeolea.com/?q=content/ruta-de-los-menhires>
- Los Cantos* (Bullas, Murcia). Roman villa. https://www.um.es/cepoat/loscantos/?page_id=81
- El Mármol* (Utrera, Seville). Site containing different types of material, located near the old Roman city of Siarum. IAPH.
- Las Tejuelas* (Nueva Carteya, Córdoba; Priego de Córdoba). Roman settlement; large numbers of *tegulae*. IAPH.
- La Tejadilla* (Mairena del Alcor, Seville). Remains of Roman building materials, especially *tegulae*. IAPH.
- Los Ladrillos* (Tirgo, La Rioja). Fragments of Roman building materials (Porres, 2000).
- La Ladrillera* (Carmona, Seville). Fragments of bricks and tiles on surface (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 101).
- El Ladrillar* (Torrecampo, Jaén). Roman settlement. Fragments of bricks and tiles. IAPH.
- Tejada* (Escacena, Huelva). Fortified settlement founded in the pre-Roman period (and finally abandoned in the 16th century). IAPH.
- Cortijo de la Argamasilla* (Carmona, Seville). Roman settlement with remains of buildings. IAPH.
- Cerro del Argamasón* (Santiago de Calatrava, Jaén). Roman settlement with a large water tank. IAPH.
- Los Argamasones* (Gilena, Seville). Roman settlement with numerous remains of walls. IAPH.
- Cerro del Cántaro* (Benalúa de las Villas, Granada). Roman villa with numerous fragments of pottery and other materials. IAPH.
- Molino de los Cazos* (Lora del Río, Seville). Numerous fragments of amphorae and terra sigillata (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 79).
- La Cazoleta* (Carmona, Seville). Fragments of pottery and other remains (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 79).
- Las Tinajuelas* (Bormujos, Seville). Fragments of amphorae and other materials. IAPH.
- La Botija* (Corral de Almaguer, Toledo). Numerous fragments of pottery and other materials. http://www.corraldealmaguer.es/recursos/documentos/urbanismo/POM/02_Carta_Arqueologica/02_PROTECCION_DEL_PATRIMONIO_MUNICIPAL.pdf
- El Botijón* (Posadas, Córdoba). Fragments of pottery, together with other materials (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 62).
- Cerro de las Ollas* (Encinasola, Huelva). Roman necropolis. IAPH.
- Cerro de los Tiestos* (Níjar, Almería). Settlement dating from the Arab period. IAPH.
- Cerro Alcuza* (Málaga). Bronze Age settlement. Remains of different materials. http://www.malaga-historia.com/pdf/catalogo_proteccion_arqueologica_malaga.pdf

¹⁴ The municipal district and province in which each site is located are shown between brackets. More detailed archaeological information can be found in the sources provided in the bibliography.

- Bastida de les Alcusses* (Moixent, Valencia). Ibero-Roman settlement. Numerous fragments of earthenware vessels. <https://www.valenciaturisme.org/blog/moixent-y-la-ciudad-iberica-de-la-bastida-de-les-alcuses/>
- Cerro Cantarero* (Porcuna, Jaén). Fortified Ibero-Roman settlement. IAPH.
- Quiebrabotijos* (Jódar, Jaén). Numerous fragments of pottery and *terra sigillata*. IAPH.
- Quiebracántaros* (Villanueva de los Infantes, Ciudad Real). Numerous fragments of pottery (Heras Mora & Gil Montes, 1996, p. 126).
- Los Paredones* (Palacios de la Sierra, Burgos). Remains of walls standing up to 5 meters high (Roman villa). <https://www.arlanza.com/es/contenido/?idoc=1334>
- Rambla de los Arcos* (Tabernas, Almería). Remains of buildings dating from the Roman period. IAPH.
- Paredes* (Siero, Asturias). Roman necropolis (Requejo Pagés, 1999).
- Torre Paredones* (Baena, Córdoba). Tower. Numerous remains of walls (the site is assumed to be a Roman *oppidum*). IAPH.
- Las Paredejas* (Medinilla, Ávila). Iron Age hillfort. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castro_de_Las_Paredejas
- La Bóveda* (Carmona). Remains of a Roman homestead with thermal baths. IAPH. (Cf. Ruhstaller, 1992, p. 68).
- Las Bóvedas* (Marbella, Málaga). Remains of roof vaulting (originally part of some Roman baths). IAPH.
- Bovedilla* (Benaocaz, Cádiz). Remains of a vaulted chamber. IAPH.
- Los Arquillos* (Chiclana, Cádiz). Remains of a Roman aqueduct. IAPH.
- Torre del Risquillo* (Mancha Real, Jaén). Ruins of a 13th century tower. IAPH.
- Torre Quebrada* (Estepona, Málaga). Ruins of a medieval tower. IAPH.
- La Torrecilla* (Getafe, Madrid). Remains of a Roman villa. <https://museo.getafe.es/omeka/exhibits/show/villa-romana-de-la-torrecilla/villa-romana-de-la-torrecil>
- El Torreón* (Jerez del Marquesado, Granada). Ruins of a tower dating from the Roman period. IAPH.
- Las Cañerías* (Gerena, Seville). Remains of an aqueduct which once supplied the city of Italica. IAPH.
- Castillejo del Villar* (Puertollano, Ciudad Real). Fortification from the Islamic period. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Castillejo_de_El_Villar
- Los Castillejos* (Teba, Málaga). Ruins of a fortification built in a strategic location. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Castillejos_Teba
- Los Castejones* (Calatañazor, Soria). Fortified settlement dating from the late Roman period. <http://revistas.uned.es/index.php/ETFI/article/view/14393>
- Cerro de Castejoncillo* (Nieva de Cameros, La Rioja). Bronze Age settlement inhabited up until Roman times. <https://nievadecameros.com/montemediano>
- El Castillejito* (Santa Ana la Real, Huelva). Fortified Bronze Age settlement in a strategic location. IAPH.
- El Castellón* (Hellín, Albacete). Bronze Age fortification. <https://cultura.castillalamancha.es/patrimonio/catalogo-patrimonio-cultural/el-castellon>
- El Lugarejo* (Íllar, Almería). Remains of a town dating from the Arab period. IAPH.
- Lugarico Viejo* (Antas, Almería). Remains of a fortified Bronze Age settlement. IAPH.
- Carmonilla* (Utrera, Seville). Roman homestead. IAPH.
- Zaragocilla* (Munébrega, Zaragoza). Remains of a Celtiberian village. <https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mundobriga>
- Villarejo* (Santisteban del Puerto, Jaén). Remains of a Roman villa. IAPH.
- Villaricos* (Cuevas del Almanzora, Almería). Remains of the Roman city of Baria. <http://www.arraezeditores.com/baria/apart/baria.php>
- Aldea Vieja* (Puebla de Alcocer, Badajoz). Roman settlement. http://www.mancomunidadesiberia.com/portal_turismo/puebla/patrimonio.htm

- Aldea Perdida* (Cortegana, Huelva). Roman settlement. IAPH.
- Torre de la Aldehuela* (Torredelcampo, Jaén). Fortification from the Islamic period. <http://www.red-jaen.es/francis/?m=c&o=20819>
- Las Aldehuelas Altas* (Montellano). Remains of a Roman necropolis. IAPH.
- El Toruño* (Alcalá de Guadaíra, Seville). Turdetanian *oppidum*. IAPH.
- El Turuñuelo* (Guareña, Badajoz). Important Bronze Age place of worship. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/El_Turu%C3%B1uelo
- La Motilla* (Daimiel, Ciudad Real). Bronze Age settlement (Nájera Colino, 2006).
- Los Artesones* (Villanueva de la Reina, Jaén). Roman (and later Arab) settlement. IAPH.
- Las Artesas de los Moros* (Almendral de la Cañada, Toledo). Three rectangular tombs carved from the surrounding rock. <https://enricvillanueva.wordpress.com/2017/08/11/las-artesas-de-los-moros-almendral-de-la-canada-toledo/>
- Calzadilla de la Cueva* (Cervatos de la Cueva, Palencia). Village next to a Roman road. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calzadilla_de_la_Cueva
- Pilar del Arrecife*. Remains of a Roman road (Martínez Castro, 2005, pp. 59, 62).
- Camino Viejo* (Villanueva de los Castillejos, Huelva). A stretch of paved Roman road. IAPH.
- Cuesta de los Muertos* (Cortes de Baza, Granada). Islamic necropolis. IAPH.
- La Pernerá* (Antas, Almería). Necropolis. IAPH.
- Cueva Pernerá* (Mazarrón, Murcia). Cave, inhabited in prehistoric times (remains of bones were found there), (Eiroa, 1995, p. 46).
- El Zancarrón* (Trigueros, Huelva). Dolmen. IAPH.
- Los Zancarrones* (Alhama, Murcia). Burial site belonging to a nearby Ibero-Roman settlement. <http://descargas.alhamademurcia.es/baja/09-CATALOGO%20ARQUEOLOGICO.pdf>
- Olivar de la Tumba* (Álora, Málaga). Roman villa. IAPH.
- Loma de las Sepulturas* (Guadix, Granada). Late Roman settlement with tombs. IAPH.
- Las Calaveras* (Renedo de Esgueva, Valladolid). Roman villa with necropolis. <https://cultura.castil-lalmancha.es/patrimonio/catalogo-patrimonio-cultural/el-castellon>
- Las Reliquias* (Cartaya, Huelva). Late Roman necropolis. <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/export/drupaljda/Anuario-arqueologico/Anuario-2004-1/Huelva.pdf>
- Cortijo del Dinero* (Fuentes de Andalucía, Seville). Roman villa. Discovery of coins. IAPH.
- Cabezo de los Dineros* (Belchite, Zaragoza). Numerous remains of different types of archaeological material (Ferreruela Gonzalvo, 2003, p. 383).
- Cerro de las Pesetas* (Los Molares, Seville). Iberian settlement, and later a Roman villa. IAPH.
- La Tostonera* (Carmona, Seville). Settlement from the Roman period. IAPH (Ruhstaller, 1992, pp. 283–285).
- Cerro del Ocho* (Nerva, Huelva). Discovery of coins (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 140).
- Chozo de la Moneda* (Espeluy, Jaén). Discovery of different materials dating from the Roman period (Gordón Peral & Ruhstaller, 1991, p. 119).
- Pedazo de las Monedas* (Valeria, Cuenca). Discovery of coins (Rodríguez Casanova, 2014, p. 85; Blázquez Cerrato, 2004, p. 323).
- El Tesoro* (Morales del Rey, Zamora). Dolmen with a hoard of coins. <http://enbuscadelhadazul.blogspot.com/2014/01/el-dolmen-del-tesoro-en-morales-del-rey.html>
- El Tesorillo* (Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Cádiz). Place of worship dating from the pre-Roman period. IAPH.
- Tesorillo de la Llaná* (Alozaina, Málaga). Megalithic burial site. IAPH.
- Cortijo de la Plata* (Quéntar, Granada). Roman settlement. Different types of materials. IAPH.
- La Platera* (Estepa, Seville). Numerous materials associated with an important Roman villa. IAPH.
- Cerro Platero* (Jaén). Different kinds of archaeological remains. IAPH.
- La Platosa* (Marchena, Seville). Settlement dating from the Roman period, with different kinds of material. IAPH.

- Cueva de los Ídolos* (Fuerteventura). Pre-Hispanic burial sites with funeral urns. <https://fuerteventuraanimagenes.com/el-monumento-del-malpais-de-la-arena/>
- Cueva de los Muñecos* (Santa Elena, Jaén). Cave containing hundreds of ex-voto figures. <http://www.redjaen.es/francis/?m=c&o=14019>
- Cueva de los Niñotes* (Ayna, Albacete). Cave with cave art (anthropomorphic images). <https://ayna.es/cueva-nino.php>
- Cueva de las Mujeres* (Medina Sidonia, Cádiz). Cave with images of female figures. IAPH.
- Piedra Escrita* (Las Tres Villas, Almería). Rock with different engravings. IAPH.
- Santa María de Piedra Escrita* (Robledo del Mazo, Toledo). Place of pilgrimage (shrine) containing a tombstone with an inscription in Latin. <https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piedraescrita>
- Peña Escrita* (Fuencaliente, Ciudad Real). Cave with numerous schematic wall paintings. <http://www.ciudad-real.es/lugares/peniaescrita.php>
- Cinto de las Letras* (Dos Aguas, Valencia). Cave with rock paintings. <https://dosaguasayuntamiento.es/es/pinturas-rupestres-dos-aguas/>
- Las Letras de Malacena* (Oria, Almería). Rock with prehistoric paintings. IAPH.
- Cueva de los Letreros* (Vélez-Blanco, Almería). Cave with rock paintings. IAPH.
- Los Toricos* (Albarracín, Teruel). Cave art depicting bulls. IAPH.
- Cabras Pintadas* (La Alberca, Salamanca). Cave art depicting goats (and other motifs). <http://www.laalberca.com/cabrasPintadas>
- Cueva Pintada* (Gáldar, Gran Canaria). Cave with numerous wall paintings. IAPH.
- Tajo de las Figuras* (Benalup-Casas Viejas, Cádiz). Cave with over 900 wall paintings. IAPH.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DESIGNATA OF THE NAMES ANALYZED IN THE SECOND SECTION

- Tejas de los Moros*, also called *Tejar de los Moros* (Larva, Jaén). Settlement dating from the Arab period with numerous fragments of pottery and other materials. IAPH.
- Cueva de los Moros* (Valle de Hecho, Huesca). Cave with wall paintings. PCA.
- Roca dels Moros* (Cretas, Teruel). Cave with wall paintings. PCA.
- Plaza de Moros* (Villatobas, Toledo). Iron Age settlement. [https://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/23463/1/Plaza de Moros TP 2004 \(1\).pdf](https://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/23463/1/Plaza%20de%20Moros%20TP%202004%20(1).pdf)
- Pared de los Moros* (Niharra, Ávila). Roman villa. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villa_roman_de_Pared_de_los_Moros
- Cerro de la Mora* (Moraleda de Zafayona, Granada). Settlement inhabited from the Bronze Age until the Roman period. IAPH.
- Pico de la Mora* (Peñaflor, Valladolid). Fortification dating from the pre-Roman period. <https://arqueologiaenred.paleorama.es/2016/09/el-pico-de-la-mora-nuevo-yacimiento.html>
- Cueva del Moro* (Tarifa, Cádiz). Prehistoric cave paintings. IAPH.
- Mesa de los Moros* (San Martín del Rey Aurelio, Asturias). Dolmen. <https://www.smra.org/etnografico>
- Cueva del Rey Moro* (Ayora, Valencia). Place of worship dating from the Iberian period (Esteban, Ocharan, 2018).
- La Tumba del Moro* (Cabrera, Madrid). Visigothic necropolis (Martín Viso, 2005–2006, p. 85).
- Fuente del Moro* (Colmenar Viejo, Madrid). Fountain near a Visigothic necropolis (with tombs carved out of rock) (Martín Viso, 2005–2006, p. 85).
- Baño de la Reina Mora* (Utrera, Seville). Remains of buildings from a Roman city (Ruhstaller, 1992, pp. 129–130).
- Baño de la Reina Mora* (Jimena de la Frontera, Cádiz). Cave carved out of rock. IAPH.

- Baños de la Reina Mora* (Calpe, Alicante). Water tank dating from the Roman period, used to breed fish. <http://www.masalladelaciudad.com/2015/09/banos-de-la-reina-calpe.html>
- Bañadero de la Reina Mora* (Pizarra, Málaga). Water tank dating from the Roman period. IAPH.
- Pila de la Reina Mora* (Ulea, Murcia). Remains of a fortification dating from the Arab period. http://www.ulealegendaria.com/pdf/patrimonio_ulea.pdf
- Tumba del Gigante* (El Gastor, Cádiz). Dolmen. IAPH.
- Sepultura del Gigante* (Morón de la Frontera, Seville). Dolmen. IAPH.
- Cocinilla del Obispo* (Albarracín, Teruel). Cave with wall paintings. PCA.
- Casillas del Cura* (Venta del Moro, Valencia). Pottery kilns dating from the Iberian period. <http://www.ventadelmoro.org/historia/historia1/hornos.html>
- El Fraile* (Chirivel, Almería). Copper Age settlement. IAPH.
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SUMMARY

Place names referencing the material traces of past cultures are relatively common in the microtoponymy, of Spanish-speaking areas. Since they were created by rural speech communities completely lacking in historical and archaeological culture, they make it possible to reconstruct how realities of archaeological interest (fragments of tools and building materials, ruins of buildings, dolmens, menhirs, tombs, old coins, inscriptions, engraved or painted cave art, among others) were popularly perceived and interpreted long before becoming objects of scientific study. Taking an extensive toponymic corpus as its starting point, this paper presents an exhaustive classification of such names, differentiating those of a purely descriptive nature from those intended to provide answers to questions concerning the origins, age, and purpose of the enigmatic discoveries. This toponomastic analysis facilitates the rigorous study of the process of onymic creation and its underlying motives.