

The roots of the first Cambridge textbooks on European prehistory: An analysis of Miles Burkitt's formative trips to Spain and France

Las raíces de los primeros libros de texto de Cambridge sobre la prehistoria europea: un análisis de los viajes formativos de Miles Burkitt a España y Francia

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the roots of the first textbooks produced in Cambridge on European prehistory. The first dedicated lecturer in prehistoric archaeology in Britain, Miles Burkitt, authored these textbooks. Two types of information, archival and printed sources, will be used as the basis for the analysis. A description will be given of the events that made Burkitt's presence in Spain possible, as a companion of the French archaeologist Henri Breuil, and the program and itinerary they followed in 1913 and 1914 will be detailed. The last section of the article will explore the ways in which Burkitt subsequently translated the knowledge he acquired in his fieldwork into the textbooks that would be used by many generations of Cambridge students.

KEY WORDS: *History of archaeology. Production of knowledge. Dissemination. Reception. Networks. Breuil. University teaching.*

RESUMEN

El presente artículo analiza los orígenes de los primeros libros sobre prehistoria europea producidos en Cambridge escritos por el primer profesor de arqueología prehistórica en Gran Bretaña, Miles Burkitt. Sobre la base de información obtenida en archivos y fuentes publicadas, el presente trabajo describe los acontecimientos que hicieron posible la presencia de Burkitt en España acompañando al arqueólogo francés Breuil, así como el programa e itinerario que ambos siguieron en 1913 y 1914. La última parte del artículo explora cómo se tradujo el conocimiento adquirido por el trabajo de campo de Burkitt en España en los libros de textos que más tarde serían utilizados por sucesivas generaciones de estudiantes en Cambridge.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Historia de la Arqueología. Producción del conocimiento. Diseminación. Recepción. Redes. Breuil. Educación universitaria.*

1. Introduction

Geographers and historians of science have analyzed the means by which ideas that emerge in one place move to another. This may occur as a result of active or passive communication through a very wide range of methods, including conversations, relationships between professionals and between professionals and students, and participation in talks, seminars, excavations and publications. It can take place within a research team made up of people from the same country or from different parts of the world (Harris 1998; Livingstone 1995; Naylor 2005; Shapin 1998). The potential of such an investigation has already been seen in the analysis of how archaeological ideas moved between Spain and the United Kingdom in the twentieth century (Díaz-Andreu 2012).

This article examines the roots of Cambridge's first textbooks on European prehistory. It assesses how the transmission of knowledge in archaeology occurs in practice. The case study explored herein illustrates how knowledge of Paleolithic archaeology moved from France to the United Kingdom in the 1910s and how it was distributed. Central to the discussion is the first scholar to teach prehistoric archaeology in Britain on a permanent basis, Miles C. Burkitt (Cambridge, 27 December 1890-*ibid.*, 22 August 1971). Firstly, a detailed analysis is undertaken of the instruction he received in prehistoric archaeology before World War I. His period of learning was very short, but unique in its international nature. He was introduced to the subject by the prestigious French prehistorian, Abbé Henri

Breuil. Through him, the young apprentice became involved in one of the most dominant international networks in the field, which included scholars from France, Germany, Spain, Italy and the United States. Although brief comments about the impact of other countries' archaeologists on the young Burkitt can be found in the literature (Clark 1989: 34, 90; Schlanger 2003; Smith 2009: 17, 20-22), there is still scope to provide greater detail about this key phase of his education. Secondly, this study assesses how his period of training influenced the production of knowledge as noted in his textbooks. The examination of the textbooks, specifically of the selection of data that was included, is a type of analysis that, with a few exceptions (Lyman 2010, see also for a related topic Ruiz Zapatero and Alvarez-Sanchis 1997, Stoczkowski 1990, 2002), has been largely ignored by historians of archaeology.

2. Miles Burkitt in the archives

Much of the data gathered for this article comes from archival sources. A large part of the information has been obtained from the Cambridge University Library (hereinafter the CUL-BP¹). The documentation in the CUL-BP archive is a major source for tracing the activities that took place during Miles Burkitt's education. It contains his fieldwork diaries, some missives from the young Burkitt to his parents during his early archaeological expeditions and correspondence sent to him by archaeologists working in continental Europe, especially in France and Spain. There are letters from some of

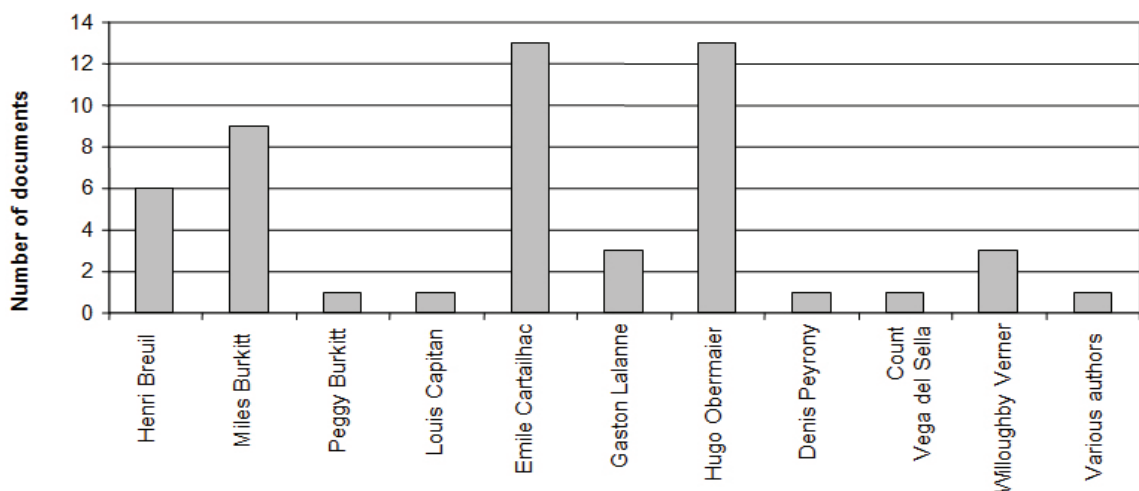


Figure 1. Correspondence relating to Miles Burkitt's early visits to France and Spain (CUL-BP). Horizontal axis relates to correspondents.

the most prestigious archaeologists of the time and they make references to other important researchers. It is interesting to note that not all the missives were addressed to Miles Burkitt; some were sent to his father, Prof. F.C. Burkitt, who had a major influence on his son's activities in the early years (figure 1). The documents from the CUL-BP were first analyzed by Pamela Jane Smith (Smith 2009), although the emphasis here will be on deepening our understanding of the international setting of Miles Burkitt's formative years.

The information from the CUL-BP archive has been complemented by that obtained from the Pericot Archive (*Fons Pericot* in the *Biblioteca de Catalunya*, Library of Catalonia; hereinafter the FP). The comparison of the contents of the different archives shows that there is much missing from the frequent correspondence between Breuil and Burkitt. While in the Breuil Archive in Paris there are around forty letters from Burkitt dating from 1913 to 1961, just before Breuil's death (Yann Potin, pers. comm.), in the CUL-BP there are only two letters and four postcards. Also, in the latter archive there are no letters from the Spanish archaeologist, Luis Pericot (1899-1978), whereas it is known that he corresponded with Burkitt from 1927 to 1971, as thirty of his letters and sixteen from his wife Peggy are stored in the FP.

3. Miles Burkitt's international training: France, Germany, Spain and Russia in his formative years (1913-1914)

3.1. Burkitt and Breuil: an encounter with long-lasting consequences

Miles Burkitt's introduction to and early involvement in prehistory was accidental and evolved only thanks to a series of coincidences. Burkitt had an early exposure to archaeology through his father, who had some interest in the subject. Francis C. Burkitt (1864-1935) was Norrisian Professor of Divinity and a Fellow of Trinity at Cambridge University. Burkitt Sr. was a member of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society and published several studies on Palestine in its *Proceedings* (Bethune-Baker 2004-11; Smith 2009: 35). Miles Burkitt was educated at Eton and gained a degree in natural science from Cambridge, after which he was dutifully yet dispassionately engaged in research into mineralogy at the university. This is how in late 1912 (Burkitt 1965: 289), while collaborating with the Sedgwick Museum, he came across some stone implements that attracted his attention. Thomas McKenny Hughes, professor of geology at Cambridge, told him that

they were all connected with a subject called *prehistory*, a word Burkitt admitted to never having heard before that day (Burkitt 1961a, 1965). Hughes arranged for him to attend a lunch a few days later organized by the Cambridge anthropologists James G. Frazer and Dr. Alfred C. Haddon. This is how Burkitt met their guest, the French abbot Henri Breuil (1877-1961). Breuil, one of the founders of the modern study of prehistoric archaeology and especially of Paleolithic studies (O'Connor 2007: Ch. 7), is remembered in history as a pioneer and leader in the systematization during the first half of the twentieth century of the Upper Paleolithic stone tool industries and cave art. There is some confusion about the date of that first meeting. Later on in his life, Burkitt stated that it had taken place in 1912 (CUL-BP, Add 7959, Boxes 4&5, Document "Address on History of Museum and Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1961" and Burkitt 1965: 1); however, Breuil had written that the year was 1913, and had happened after some talks on prehistoric art given at the University of London (Breuil 1925: xiv).

The lunch Burkitt enjoyed with Breuil proved a key event in the life of the former. This was despite the fact that at the time he spoke no French and Breuil's English was, in his own words, "infected" (Burkitt 1961a). Breuil appreciated Burkitt's recent but growing interest in prehistory and told him that Burkitt would not be able to "study the subject in England because nobody knows anything about it" (ibid.) Breuil advised the twenty-two-year-old to go to the continent to learn and invited him to participate in the excavations at the El Castillo cave in Puente Viesgo, Spain (ibid.). Discovered a few years earlier by the Spanish investigators Hermilio Alcalde del Río and Lorenzo Sierra, this cave was being excavated by Breuil's German colleague, Hugo Obermaier, with Breuil's collaboration and thanks to the sponsorship of Prince Albert I of Monaco. Breuil's proposal was readily accepted and a few months later Burkitt embarked on his first journey to Spain – a journey of no return on what would become a life-long dedication to prehistoric archaeology.

3.2. Burkitt's first trip to Spain (1913)

On 2 May 1913 Miles Burkitt arrived in Puente Viesgo, the village near the El Castillo cave. On his way there, probably on Breuil's recommendation, he had traveled via Perigord and Dordogne in France, where he had explored some prehistoric caves (figure 2). He had also visited Émile Cartailhac in Toulouse, who enthusiastically "took me over his museum (2 hours!!)" (CUL-BP, Box 1, M. Burkitt to his parents, 2-5-1913). Upon his arrival in Puente Viesgo, the

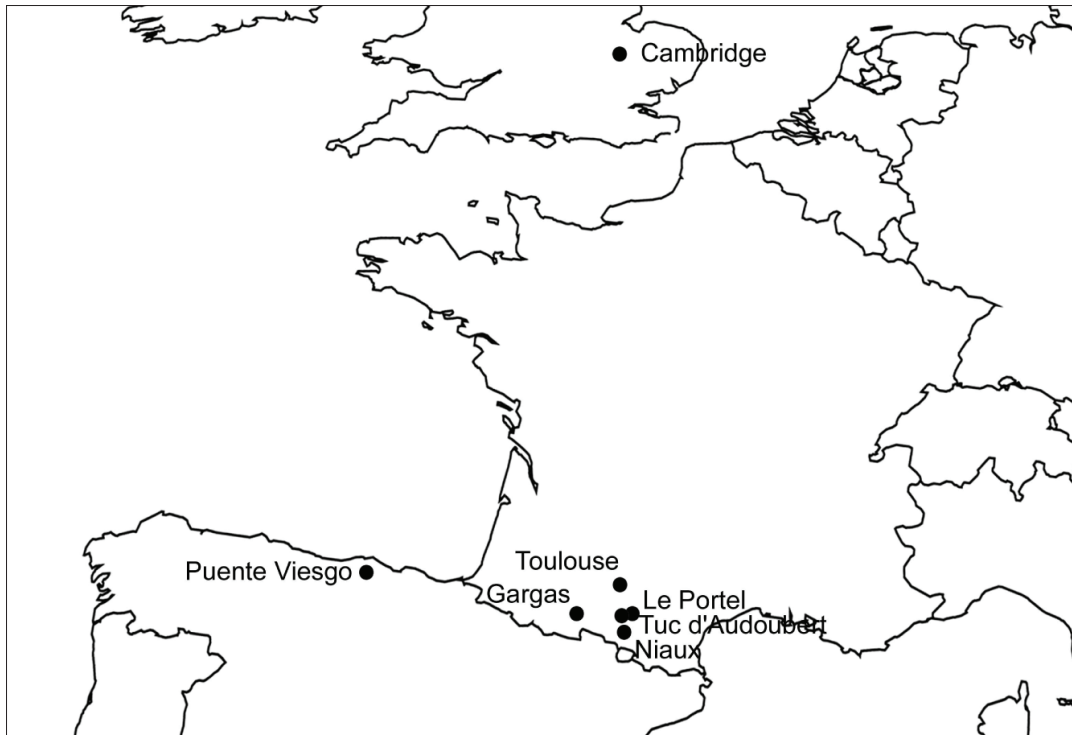


Figure 2. Places visited during Burkitt's 1913 journey, explicitly mentioned in the letters.

young Burkitt was picked up at the station by “Mr O. and his friend” (CUL-BP, Box 1, Miles Burkitt to his parents, 2-5-1913); the former referred to Hugo Obermaier and the latter possibly referred to Paul Wenert. Burkitt worked at the excavation for the whole season between May and September (Breuil 1925). Many years later he would confide to Prof. Luis Pericot, perhaps exaggerating, that he had been doing “all the photographing there” (FP-Burkitt to Pericot, 18-8-1951).

Burkitt's participation in the El Castillo cave excavation season was a particularly good choice for his initial training in prehistory as this was one of the first archaeological sites to pioneer the stratigraphic method. There had been precedents (Coye 1997: ch. 2; Grayson 1983: chs. 2, 8; Groenen 1994) and parallel developments (cf. Bakker 2001), but the dig at El Castillo was undoubtedly one of the excavations that became of paramount importance for the dissemination of the stratigraphic method in Europe and the United States (Chazan 1995; Givens 2001). Moreover, the stratigraphic sequence obtained at El Castillo became key for the systematization of the Paleolithic industries in the north of Spain and western Europe (Breuil and Obermaier 1912; Breuil and Obermaier 1914; Obermaier 1916; Obermaier

1925; Lanzarote Guiral 2011). Visits to the site became one of the ways in which information about the new method spread. The excavators constantly received visits from major international specialists, including Dr. Robert Rudolf Schmidt (University of Tübingen), Baron Gian Alberto Blanc (University of Rome), Prof. MacCurdy (University of New Haven) and Prof. Henry Fairfield Osborn (University of New York, later the Natural History Museum, New York) – together with the Spanish prehistorians Count Vega del Sella, Jesús Carballo and Eduardo Hernández Pacheco (Cabrera, Bernaldo de Quirós, and Hoyos 1996, for the context see Díaz-Andreu forthcoming).

This flow of international visits to the El Castillo cave meant that during Burkitt's time at the excavation he was able to meet some of the most prestigious European and American scholars of prehistoric archaeology at the time. His participation in the excavation was the beginning of many long-term relationships with those involved, including Breuil and especially Hugo Obermaier (1877-1946), its director, and others, including Obermaier's follower, Paul Wernert (1889-1972), Nels C. Nelson (1875-1964), later conservator at the Natural History Museum, New York, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Jean Bouyssonie (figure 3).



Figure 3. A photograph from the 1913 excavation at El Castillo (Photograph courtesy of the Hugo Obermaier-Archiv, c/o Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte, Universität Erlangen). From left to right, Nels C. Nelson, Paul Wernert, Hugo Obermaier, Miles Burkitt and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

During the 1913 season Burkitt not only excavated at El Castillo, but also took the opportunity to visit other archaeological sites in the north of Spain. Sometimes he went to sites with Breuil, who was pleased to see that by then Burkitt had read and was appreciative of his works on Paleolithic cave art (Burkitt 1925: xiv).

3.3. Burkitt's parents in France (1913)

In August 1913 Burkitt's parents came for a visit (CUL-BP, Box 1, Burkitt to his parents, 13-7-1913). Together they traveled to the south of France with the intention of seeing cave paintings near the Pyrenees. For a second time Burkitt met Cartailhac, who acted as their host on this short trip, showing them around some key cave art sites, including Niaux, Le Portel and Tuc d'Audoubert (CUL-BP, Box 3, Cartailhac to Burkitt, n.d. See also Burkitt 1922). As a result of these meetings with Cartailhac, Burkitt was invited to participate in his excavation of the Paleolithic cave of Gargas, which he joined in September (CUL-BP, Box 1, Burkitt to his parents, 19-9-1913). The young Englishman's willingness to learn greatly impressed Cartailhac, who wrote a let-

ter to Burkitt Sr. pointing out the discoveries made by the English apprentice, especially of a new gallery that he intended to name *l'entente cordiale anglofrançaise* in his honor (CUL-BP, Box 3, Cartailhac to Francis Burkitt, n.d.). More importantly, Cartailhac stated that he was “*particularly delighted to have found in your son a true and serious friend of the science that has occupied all my life” (CUL-BP, Box 3, Cartailhac to Francis Burkitt, n.d.) Cartailhac's friendship with Miles Burkitt would last until the former's death in 1921, as indicated both by the correspondence they maintained (which dates up to that year) and by the obituary Burkitt wrote in *Man*:

One can recall incident after incident that would illustrate the charm or the scientific value of this remarkable man of the old school, but I will only add that his death has left a void, both in the lives of great prehistorians like Breuil, and in those of us lesser folk. I cling to the remembrance of my friendship with him, and am proud to remember that I could sign myself: ‘Votre dévoué’ (Burkitt 1922).

During the excavation at Gargas, Burkitt also had the chance to meet Henri Neuville, who was the

secretary of the Institut de Paléontologie Humaine (IPH) in Paris and a collaborator of Marcellin Boule (1861-1942), head of the IPH (CUL-BP, Box 3, Cartailhac to Burkitt, n.d.).

Miles Burkitt also met Count Begouën and his sons during his August visit to the south of France. The Begouëns were then actively engaged in the research and discovery of the newly found decorated Paleolithic caves of Tuc d'Audoubert and Trois-Frères. Finally, and probably through his friendship with Breuil and Cartailhac, Burkitt was introduced to other French prehistorians such as the previously mentioned Louis Capitan and Denis Peyrony, and the amateur archaeologist and psychologist Dr. Gaston Lalanne. As the documentation in the CUL-BP archive indicates, for years after their first meetings, Burkitt exchanged letters, information and archaeological material with all of them.

3.4. Burkitt's second trip to Spain (1914)

In January 1914, not long after his return to England from his first fieldtrip to Spain and France, the young Burkitt went back to Spain, although this time he started in a different part of the country. The study of Upper Paleolithic art, which had initially focused on the Franco-Cantabrian area, was soon extended to other parts of the Iberian Peninsula. This was partly due to the discoveries made by Willoughby Verner (1852-1922), including the Pileta cave and the Tajo de las Figuras rock art (Breuil and Obermaier 1913; Breuil, Obermaier, and Verner 1915). Through Breuil's letters to George Bonsor it is known that the former invited Burkitt to join his expedition to Cádiz and the Sierra Morena in 1914: "A young and very educated young Englishman, Mr Miles Burkitt, son of a Cambridge professor, who this year helps me with my fieldwork" (in Maier 1999:104). During this expedition they visited and recorded the sites that had been discovered in the previous months. Miles Burkitt arrived in Gibraltar early in January; in a postcard sent from there on 6 January, he told his parents that he had "arrived safe after a splendid voyage less shaking than in a train. I go on this afternoon. I hope you are all very well. Hope to return in 3 or 4 months" (CUL-BP, Box 1, M. C. Burkitt to his parents, 6-1-1914).

Burkitt's second journey through Spain, still in the company of Henri Breuil, was indeed intense. During the following three months they visited a good number of rock art sites in Andalusia (e.g. Tajo de las Figuras, Las Mujeres, Palomas, Vélez Blanco), Murcia (Tío Labrador, Los Paradores, Cueva del Mediodía), Albacete (Alpera, El Queso), Aragon (Albarracín) and Catalonia (Cogul), ending up again in Puente Viesgo for a few days be-

fore Burkitt returned home via Paris at the end of March. This itinerary was well documented by the young apprentice, who kept a list of all the sites visited during his trip (CUL-BP, Box 1, M. C. Burkitt, 1914, notes). The keeping of these lists seems to have been something of a habit for him and a similar one must have existed for his previous trip to Spain and France, as he had explained in a letter to his parents from Puente Viesgo, probably dated in 1913: "As regards a diary. I never was able to keep one but things of scientific importance such as lists of various 'gisements' [archaeological sites] of course I make and keep carefully" (CUL-BP, Box 3, M. C. Burkitt to his parents, n.d.) The list he made on the 1914 journey tells us that in addition to schematic painted rock shelters, he also visited a good number of sites featuring Levantine art in Murcia, Albacete, Aragon and Catalonia (figure 4).

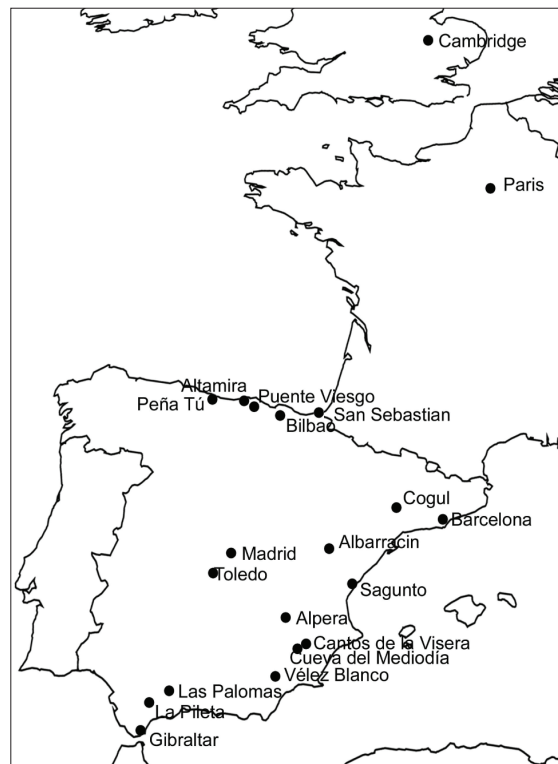


Figure 4. Places visited during the 1914 journey.

As Burkitt himself said years later in reference to what, according to the notes that accompany his itinerary, was an intense but exhausting journey: "We recorded, traced and copied for publication scores of sites, mainly of the Copper Age. We lived primitively, sometimes in smugglers' smoke-filled cabins" (CUL-BP, Box 3, Transcript

of a radio broadcast, 'L'Abbé Henri Breuil', by M. C. Burkitt, 1962). In one of his publications, more specifically, Burkitt pointed out the tasks undertaken when referring to schematic paintings:

Our main job was to study and trace the third group which consists of paintings belonging to the Copper Age which are also found on the walls of rock shelters (...) We started work at Tajo Figuras which lies not far from the northern end of the Laguna de la Janda. The paintings are all conventionalised and comprise animals, human figures and the like (Burkitt 1965: 289-290)

Although Burkitt indicated in his 1965 article that he had participated in the making of tracings, at the time his role was defined as photographer. That is how he was referred to by Verner in the first of a set of accounts of this survey, written for the British magazine *Country Life* (Verner 1914a). It is worth noting that this mention as Breuil's photographer in the report raised the concern of Miles' father, Burkitt Sr., who was perhaps wary of the connotations that photography had as a middle-class entertainment (as opposed to a more "respectable" involvement with antiquities) (Edwards 2006). In correspondence with Burkitt Sr., Verner had to explain that he called Miles the photographer "because he came with us to photograph & he *did* photograph" (CUL-BP, Box 3, W. Verner to Francis Burkitt, 4-8-1914), despite Francis' suggestion that the young Burkitt was "an extremely poor photographer" (ibid.) Facing Francis' apparent insistence on that point, Verner felt obliged to say "As a matter of fact, I believe that I was the photographer! This judging from the number of plates which will be reproduced" (ibid.) In his subsequent reports, Verner was careful to mention Miles only as Breuil's assistant (Verner 1914b; 1914c). As regards the tracings, those included in the young Burkitt's ensuing publications were made by Breuil (Breuil and Burkitt 1929; Burkitt 1925: plates XXXIV-XXXVI, XXXVIII-XXXIX)². Breuil himself did not provide much information about what exactly Burkitt was doing. He simply introduced him to Verner as "a pupil" of his (Verner 1914a). However, in his preface to Burkitt's *Prehistory*, Breuil mentions "the Neolithic people whose paintings we traced" (Breuil 1925: xv, emphasis added).

In any case, in addition to his work assisting Breuil and taking photographs, during this journey Burkitt also found one of the star sites of Levantine art, Cantos de la Visera. Years later he explained:

When I was travelling with Breuil many of these rock shelter sites were already known, e.g. Cogul, Alpera, etc. But I did myself have the luck to find Cantos de la Visera, one of the best, at a time when I had left Breuil for home, and on the way was visiting a site near Yecla. Breuil insisted in my returning with him immediately to study the new discovery. Certainly it was a lovely site where a number of horses and other animals, including a bird, were depicted. The new find so stirred up our excellent explorer Juan [Jiménez Llamas] that soon afterwards he replied to Cantos de la Visera with the discovery of Minateda (Burkitt 1965: 289).

Breuil and Burkitt published an article on the Cantos de la Visera rock art in *L'Anthropologie* in 1915 (Breuil and Burkitt 1915, but see Cabré 1915:20).

The start of World War I brought a complete halt to Miles Burkitt's fieldwork training in continental prehistory. As Burkitt himself recalled much later, when war was officially declared he was "in the forests of north Russia copying rock-engravings and heard nothing about it, but ultimately managed to get home and joined Breuil in the French Red Cross" (Burkitt 1961a; see also Burkitt 1961b). One of the last tasks they embarked on during this period was the classification of the collection of stone implements from the site of Laussel (Dordogne) gathered by Gaston Lalanne. It is unclear how long this work took them, as in 1916 Burkitt was in Cambridge when Gaston Lalanne wrote informing him that Breuil had left for Spain (CUL-BP, Box 3, Lalanne to Burkitt, 12-2-1916). In fact, during part of World War I Breuil was attached to the French Embassy in Madrid, where he managed to keep active in the survey of new sites (Breuil 1925; see also Garrod 1961).

After the war Burkitt's training was over, as was his fieldwork. Although he returned to Spain on several occasions (Díaz-Andreu 2012: 171-181) – and for the rest of his life continued to travel to visit archaeological sites on different continents and attend conferences in other countries – he never again embarked on any field projects, not even as Breuil's assistant. In 1919 he turned down Breuil's invitation to join him on his excavations the following year (CUL-BP, Box 1, Breuil to Burkitt, 26-11-1919). Burkitt's work in 1913 and 1914 was therefore all he could claim as fieldwork experience, and it would become the major basis on which he built a personal understanding of prehistoric archaeology. This base knowledge, as demonstrated below, remained key over the following decades.

4. Producing and disseminating knowledge: Burkitt as a textbook writer (1919-1957)

Miles Burkitt was the first dedicated lecturer in prehistoric archaeology in Britain. He started in 1914 by giving a short series of lectures on 'The Further Exploration of the Caves of France and Spain' at the Sedgwick Museum: "The Upper Palaeolithic Culture" and "The Art of Cave Man" (Clark 1989: 37; Smith 2009: 22). Importantly, this series resulted in three of his lectures being officially included by the Cambridge Board of Anthropology for the 1915-16 academic year (Clark 1989: 37), marking the beginning of a forty-three-year career as a lecturer in archaeology. To begin with, Burkitt taught on a voluntary basis at the Board of Anthropology. In 1920 the recently established Board of Archaeology and Anthropology decided to pay him a salary of 10 guineas for his work. In 1926, when the Faculty of Anthropology and Archaeology was established and an Archaeology and Anthropology Tripos course was set up, his position was made a permanent lectureship, in which he remained until his retirement in 1957 (Clark 1989: 29, 30, ix; Smith 2009: 22, 24).

During his first twenty years as a lecturer Burkitt wrote a series of comprehensive textbooks on European prehistory. His first and most substantial book (Clark 1989: 37), *Prehistory* (Burkitt 1921, with a second edition in 1925), was followed with three others, *Our Forerunners* (1923), *Our Early Ancestors* (1926) and *The Old Stone Age* (1933, with two later editions in 1949 and 1955). He wrote all four with his students in mind. As he explained to Prof. Pericot in Barcelona when he sent him the second edition of *The Old Stone Age*, "it is mainly intended for teaching, but may perhaps amuse you. You will receive it direct from the University Press" (FP-Burkitt to Pericot, 14-7-1949). All of these textbooks showed the long-lasting effect of his short yet formative years in the field.

In the preface to his first textbook, *Prehistory*, Burkitt mentioned that he had volunteered to write down a complete overview of the 1914 trip as soon as he was back in Cambridge. He went on to explain that soon after he had already completed a "short popular text-book guide to Prehistoric Art"; however, due to the delay imposed by the start of World War I, he ended up incorporating this text into a larger work (Burkitt 1925: x, see also Breuil 1925: xv-xvi). All the sites visited during his fieldwork were mentioned in this larger work. For example, the first seven sites named in his 1914 itinerary (CUL-BP, Box 1, Burkitt 1914, notes) were included on pages 292 and 293 (the pages refer to the second edition). The site of El Castillo was referred to as "the most

complete station known (...). Nearly all the different ages known are represented" (Burkitt 1925: 38). The archaeological sequence at this site featured extensively and Miles' archaeological experience at Gargas was also reflected, as the book dealt extensively with the cave's Mousterian deposits and its engravings and paintings, which, following Breuil, he considered to be from the Aurignacian Age (Burkitt 1925: 198). He advocated to students that learning prehistory in the field was essential for their training and he especially recommended the areas he had visited. As he put it:

Prehistory is a subject which in great part has to be studied in the field, and especially is this true in respect to the problems of Prehistoric Art (...) for the student, in process of learning his subjects there is no place like France or North Spain (Burkitt 1925: ix-x)

Although less obviously connected to his Spanish and French experiences, his two following books, *Our Forerunners* (Burkitt 1923) and *Our Early Ancestors* (Burkitt 1926), also kept closely to the idea of prehistory that Burkitt had received from Breuil. Most of these two books were devoted to the periods the French consider as properly prehistoric – the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods – and only one chapter focused on the Copper and Bronze Ages, never paying any attention to the Iron Age. In *The Old Stone Age* (Burkitt 1933), Burkitt mentioned El Castillo cave as "the most important cave site yet excavated" (Burkitt 1933: 19) and the archaeological sequence at this site was again extensively described. There were also anecdotal suggestions that came from his then two-decade-old experience. For example, in 1913 Cartailhac had advised him that in order to visit the caves of Tuc d'Audoubert and Trois-Frères, it was absolutely necessary to ask the Begouën family: "nobody, without their presence, can go inside a cave with such a difficult access." Twenty years later, Burkitt echoed Cartailhac's words (Burkitt 1933: 197).

5. Discussion

In this article it has been possible to follow a particular case study to illustrate how traditions of knowledge can move from one country to another, sometimes even representing a break with the expertise developed by research groups in the receiving country. All four of Burkitt's textbooks were presented as detailed compilations of prehistoric sites and sequences known in continental Western Europe at the time; however, a detailed analysis

shows that they were all largely based on the field knowledge the author had acquired during his 1913-1914 journeys to Spain and France. They dealt with the archaeological periods he had learned about on his fieldtrips, mainly the Paleolithic to the Neolithic, and even the Copper Age, which was covered in his second trip to Spain. Significantly, the great majority of the sites alluded to in his textbooks were either in France or Spain.

The views Burkitt expressed in his books not only relate to the period and the places he had been shown, but he also faithfully repeated the theories put forward by his French and Spanish colleagues. Thus, like Breuil in his many publications on this subject, Miles Burkitt explained Paleolithic art primarily as a result of sympathetic magic making use of selected ethnographic analogies. Burkitt was particularly impressed by the representations of human hands, often mutilated, that covered many prehistoric walls and that suggested to him (again following Breuil's opinion) an early form of sympathetic magic (Burkitt 1925: 260). Breuil's influence was also evident in Burkitt's Paleolithic chronology and the association with the African Capsian (an archaeological culture first defined in 1910-11 by Morgan, Capitan, and Boudy (1910-11)). It was linked to the European Aurignacian by Breuil (1912) and proposed by Burkitt for the Eastern Spanish style (now known as the Levantine style). The theories that Burkitt expounded in his books showed a remarkable continuity throughout the 1920s and 1930s (and later), indicating his failure to develop his own ideas. The content of his *Prehistory* (1921, 1925) shows remarkable similarities to that of *The Old Stone Age* (1933), despite their publication more than a decade apart. There are, however, some minor additions in the latter. For example, *The Old Stone Age* includes a change as regards to the extension of the Solutrean in Spain. In 1932 Pericot sent a new publication to Burkitt in which he demonstrated the existence of this Paleolithic industry in eastern Spain (FP – Burkitt to Pericot, 8-11-1932). This advance in research resulted in Burkitt adding a new sentence to the 1933 publication: "Solutrean man does not seem to have penetrated beyond the Pyrenees, except at their extreme eastern end, where a trickle down the east coast of the Spanish Peninsula as far as Valencia seems to have taken place" (Burkitt 1933: 151, Eastern Spain also added in fig. 17).

Burkitt's textbooks show that his understanding of prehistory was more akin to the French meaning of the word *préhistoire*, which excluded the metal ages (placing these in the *protohistoire*). This contrasted with the common use of the word in Britain at the time (and still today) that included

all periods before the Roman invasion, from the Paleolithic to the Iron Age. As a consequence of this definition of prehistory, Burkitt's books always presented a marked imbalance favoring the information devoted to Paleolithic archaeology, especially to Paleolithic cave art, versus that dealing with later periods.

Burkitt's dependence on the French tradition of prehistoric research was criticized by fellow prehistoric archaeologists in Britain. Despite acknowledging the synthetic value of his books, they criticized the lack of evidence from other authors and areas, especially the British Isles. In his review of *Prehistory*, the archaeologist Harold Peake claimed that:

Mr. Burkitt has given us the latest information available at the Institute of Human Palaeontology in Paris, and the views held by its professors on many questions still in dispute (...) One would imagine, however, from reading his account that the French theory was the only one in the field" (Peake 1921).

Also, as someone who had worked on the metal period (Peake 1922), he snapped:

The Neolithic and Bronze Ages are so inadequately dealt with that one could have wished that the subjects had been altogether omitted (...) The volume is really a work on the Paleolithic Age, with special reference to Upper Paleolithic art, and its title is somewhat misleading (Peake 1921).

Burkitt's book *Our Early Ancestors* received similar criticism from Sir Arthur Keith (1927). Despite the criticism, Burkitt was extremely influential. He was the main lecturer in prehistoric archaeology until 1926, when José M. de Navarro was appointed to a university lectureship to teach the Bronze and Iron Age in the Faculty of English (not in the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology like Burkitt) (Clark 1989: 40). It was only in the 1930s that prehistorians dealing with periods before the Copper Age besides Burkitt started to teach. In 1935 Grahame Clark was made assistant lecturer and in 1939 Dorothy Garrod obtained the Disney Chair. Up to the mid-1930s it had been Burkitt's role to train all students in prehistoric archaeology and these included many of the key figures in the development of prehistoric archaeology in the middle decades of the twentieth century: Grahame Clark was his student, as well as Glyn Daniel, J. Desmond Clark, Astley John Hilary Goodwin, Jacquetta Hawkes, Louis Leakey, John Mulvaney, Charles McBurney and Thurstan

Shaw (Clark 1989; O'Connor 2007: Chapter 7; Smith 2009: 17, Chapter 2).

Although Burkitt was not considered an original scholar and the use of other archaeologists' work in his publications sometimes raised misgivings (Schlanger 2003: 5-26), he was known as a good synthesizer. His standing as a lecturer was praised by his pupils (Clark 1971; Smith 2009: 131-6; Schlanger 2003). Through his students, Burkitt transmitted Breuil's understanding of pre-

historic archaeology. For many years Cambridge prehistorians significantly focused their research on the earliest prehistoric periods, from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic. This emphasis lasted for two decades after his books. The production of new knowledge is nevertheless a question of many individuals and many influences; it seems clear that from the 1960s onwards, archaeologists in Cambridge had moved beyond Burkitt's world of prehistoric archaeology.

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NOTES

1. M.C. Burkitt Papers, Cambridge University Library, Ms Add. 7959, Boxes 1-5. From now on, these documents will be quoted with the reference CUL-BP, usually including the author of the document, the addressee and the date on which it was produced. All quotations originally written in a language other than English have been translated by the author and marked with an asterisk (*) at the start of the quotation. Words in brackets [...] are additions by the author. The CUL-BP archive was donated by Burkitt's family after his death. Unfortunately it has large gaps. As far as I know, Pamela Jane Smith was the first one to study this archive (see Smith 2009).

2. In Burkitt's *Prehistory*, all the tracings from the 'Eastern Spanish style' and 'Spanish Third Group' are attributed to Henri Breuil; only those from Lake Onega (Russia) are mentioned as his own (Burkitt 1925).

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