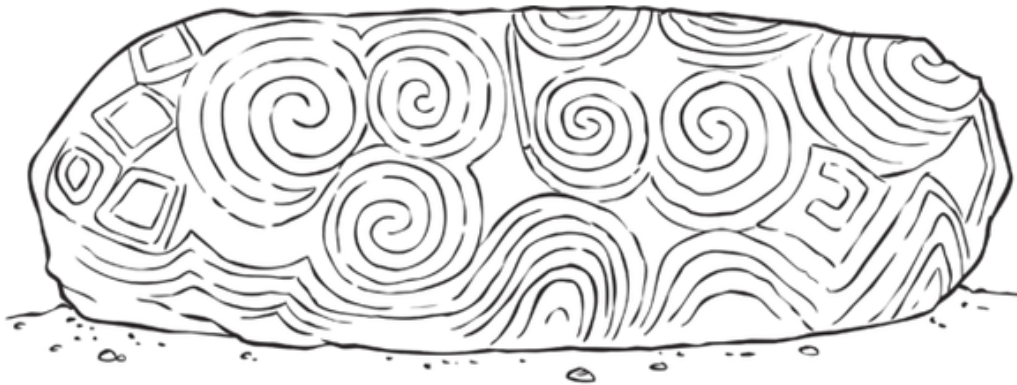


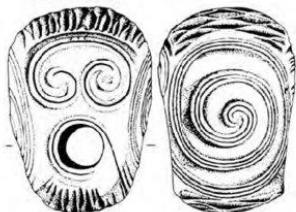
# Neolithic (New Stone Age)

## Megalithic tombs:

- Dolmens (Poulnabrone Dolmen Co. Clare)
- Court Cairns (Creevykeel, Co. Sligo)
- Passage Tombs (Newgrange, Co. Meath)
  - Location: on a bend of the River Boyne, west of Drogheda. The area is a huge Neolithic cemetery of more than 40 passage tombs. Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth are the biggest.
  - Function: hold remains of important people.  
Astronomically align with the sun for solstices or equinoxes.  
Hold pagan rituals relating to belief in afterlife
  - Structure: Passage + burial chamber covered by mound of earth.  
21 upright slabs lining passage on right  
22 on left.  
Burial chamber is cruciform (cross-shaped) with three side chambers off the central chamber  
Corbelled roof with capstone.
  - Entrance stone:  
Vertical line in centre  
3 anticlockwise double spirals on left  
2 clockwise double spirals on right  
Concentric half circles  
Lozenges



- Roof box: purpose is to allow the rising sun to travel up the passage and illuminate the burial chamber for about 17 mins. Happens from 19-23 December each year.
- Mace Head: made of flint. Circular hold carved through the stone for a wooden handle. Looks like a human head with the hole as the mouth. Two-line spiral as the eyes. Ceremonial object, highly polished. Motifs used: single spirals, lozenges, and C-shaped twin spiral. Knowth.



# Bronze Age

- Beaker people
- Copper
- Bronze (copper and tin), stronger than copper. Used for weapons, tools, jewellery + cauldrons.
- Gold (from Tyrone and Wicklow)
- Highly skilled metalworkers with great attention to detail. Used geometric motifs too like concentric circles, hatched triangles. Chevrons and squares.. Circles and dots.

## Early Bronze Age:

*Techniques: **Sheeting and cutting** (gold ingots hammered into thin sheets then cut), **Incision** (scratch on surface with a pointed bronze scribe), **Repoussé** (lightly hammer into back of metal with hammers and punches)*

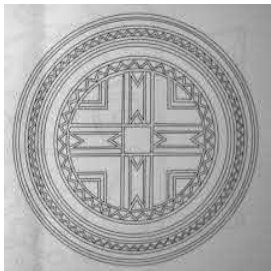
### Tedavnet Sun Disc Co. Monaghan:

**Form:** circular. Rises towards the centre. One of a matching pair.

**Function:** to decorate a garment. Two tiny holes in the centre show they were probably stitched to textile or leather.

**Decoration:** cruciform (cross-shape) motif in centre surrounded by concentric circles. Zigzag lines between concentric circles. Punched dots on the edges of the cross and circles.

**Metalwork techniques:** cut from a thin sheet of gold that was hammered. Used repousse and punching to decorate.



### Ross Lunula Co. Westmeath:

- **Form:** 'Lunula' means 'little moon' in Latin. Flat sheet of gold cut into a crescent shape. It tapers toward each end. Spoon shaped ends are twisted at right angles to the body of the lunula.
  - **Function:** worn for ceremonial or religious occasions probably by high-status individuals.
  - **Decoration:** abstract geometric motifs
    - Border incised with zigzags
    - Border is parallel to the inner and outer edges
    - Narrow ends have hatched triangles and squares
    - Little decoration on the broadest part
- The balance and symmetry of the decoration and the contrast between the textured areas and smooth areas are carefully planned. This shows a strong sense of design.
- **Metalworking techniques:** a gold ingot was beaten into a thin sheet from which the crescent shape was cut out. The decoration was incised with a pointed metal scribe. Use of a compass evident in the cutting and laying out of the surface decoration.



# Middle Bronze Age

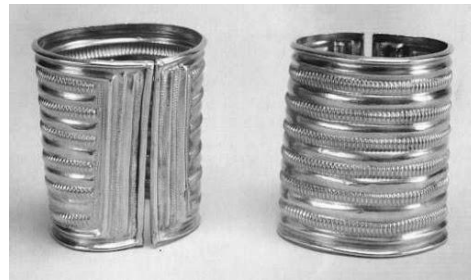
## Ribbon Torc Belfast:

- **Form:** a spiral-twisted gold band narrowing towards the ends. Has locking clasps that are thicker than the rest of the torc.
- **Function:** neck ornament in ceremonies or rituals. Worn by high status individuals.
- **Decoration:** spiralling movement. No decoration applied to the surface.
- **Metalwork techniques:** gold was beaten into a long ribbon and then twisted using a corkscrew movement. The twisted ribbon was heated and given a circular form - this is called the \*°◇ ribbon-twisting\*°◇ technique.



## Derrinboy Armlets Co. Offaly:

- **Form:** a corrugated (furrowed) band of gold was curved into an open cylinder
- **Function:** worn on the wrist or upper arm.
- **Decoration:** armlet has smooth furrows and textured raised ridges, the cord-like texture was made by parallel repousse marks. The punched dots and raised bands that frame the opening create a pleasing contrast with the corrugated pattern around the armlet.
- **Metalwork techniques:** ingots were beaten into thick sheet gold and a rectangle cut out. Decoration was created by repousse and punched dots.



## Late Bronze Age:

**Casting** (molten gold into clay or stone mould), **Soldering** (two pieces of metal joined by melted metal), **gold foil** (sheets of gold to cover less valuable objects), **Riveting** (broad conical heads inserted into hole overlapping bronze sheets and pin ends are hammered down to secure the sheets).

### Castlederg Cauldron (bronze):

- **Form**: rounded base, curves in at shoulder, rim slopes outwards. Two rings attached to loops on the rim.
- **Function**: for boiling food or for carrying cooked food. Or kept for ceremonial use.
- **Decoration**: rim decorated with punched holes. Conical rivet heads on the exterior.
- **Metalwork techniques**: riveting is used to join rectangular sheets into the form of the cauldron.



FIG. 107.

### Clones Dress Fastener (fibula):

- **Form**: two large concave terminals joined by a gold bow
- **Function**: slipped into two button holes to hold a garment closed. Kept for ceremonial use.
- **Decoration**: irregular pattern of raised concentric circles at the edges of the terminals. Double zig zags where the bow joins the terminals.
- **Metalwork techniques**: the connecting bow was cast in solid gold. Surface highly polished. Raised concentric lines made by repoussé. Concentric circles made by incision by rotating a special tool.



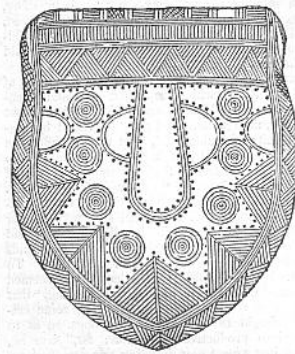
### Gleninsheen Gorget:

- **Form**: U-shaped gold collar with two large decorated disks, one at each end.
- **Function**: there are ties at the back of the disks indicating it was worn around the neck. Probably worn for ceremonial religious reasons
- **Decoration**: raised punched points in a u-shape on the inner and outer edges. Cord pattern between raised smooth ridges. Disks decorated with concentric circles. There is a cone at the centre of each disk.
- **Metalwork techniques**: made from sheet gold. Repoussé and punching.



### Bulla, Bog of Allen (gold sheet over lead)

- **Form**: heart shaped with a cylindrical opening across the top
- **Function**: opening indicates it was worn as a pendant, probably to encourage fertility or protect the wearer from evil.
- **Decoration**: decorated on the sides, rear and front with concentric circles, semicircles, triangles and other motifs.
- **Metalwork techniques**: lead core covered entirely with gold foil. Decorated using repousse and punching.





# Iron Age

- The Celts - from mainland Europe - introduced mining and working iron - spoke Celtic language from where modern Irish and Scots Gaelic developed.
- Stone forts
- Dún Aonghasa Co. Galway- fort on a high cliff overlooking the Atlantic. Fort encircled by three massive dry-stone walls. Inside the fort there are defensive ramparts accessible by stairs. Fort built for defensive purposes and possibly pagan rituals.



- **La Tène style :**

Developed by the Celts in Switzerland, France and Germany.

Includes spiral, pelta, triskele, stylised bird's head, leaf shape, scroll, trumpet shape.

Insular La Tène (Britain + Ireland) less geometrical than Irish Bronze Age art. More abstract curvilinear decoration.

## Turoe Stone Co. Galway

- **Form:** carved from a naturally rounded Connemara boulder. Vertical sides and spherical top.
- **Function:** may have been used in pagan rituals
- **Decoration:** stepped pattern at base. Curvilinear La Tène decorations about the base. Four separate panels of designs with leaf shapes, triskeles, spirals, circles and trumpet ends.
- **Stone carving techniques:** smoothed the surface with iron chisels (process is called 'dressing the stone'). Background of the motifs carved away, resulting in positive and negative shapes. Stepped pattern at base has been incised.



## Corleck Head Co. Cavan

- **Form:** a stylised carving of a three-faced head. Eyes carved in slight relief with a simple thin line around them broad noses stand out, thin lines as mouths.
- **Function:** hole in base suggests it once stood on a pedestal as a religious idol.



### **Broughter Collar Co. Derry:**

- **Form:** two semicircular cylinders. A hinge (now lost) once joined the two cylinders. There is a two-part locking device at the terminals
- **Function:** ornamental collar indicated status. Fastened around the neck. Probably worn for pagan rituals or was an offering to the sea God Manannán.
- **Decoration:** decorated with curvilinear La Tène style with interlocking s-shaped scrolls and trumpet motifs. Spirals and stylised foliage appear in high relief. Textured cross hatching in background contrasts with and emphasises the smoother relief decoration.
- **Stone carving techniques:**
  - Gold sheets decorated using the chasing method. The metal was worked on the front with a variety of tools to raise the patterns in relief.
  - Sheets were rolled into a cylinder and soldered together at the seams. The tubes were probably filled with sand or soft resin for support to safely bend them into shape.
  - Background hatching incised using a pointed scribe.



### **Petrie Crown (bronze and enamel)**

- **Form:** at the base- two linked rectangular pieces of a band which may have gone around a person's head. There are two flat disks in each rectangle. Two concave circular disks are attached to the band at the base in front. There is also a conical horn behind one of the disks. There was probably a second horn originally.
- **Function:** two small holes on the band suggest it was probably stitched onto an elaborate head dress.
- **Decoration:** repetitive symmetrical decoration. The crown is in curvilinear La Tène style. There is a red enamel stud on the raised central boss of one disc. Enamel studs would originally have been placed in the eyes of the stylised birds heads. There are spirals on the horn, base band and two concave discs.
- **Stone carving techniques:** crown made from sheet bronze cut to shape. Horn was folded into a conical shape and secured with rivets and solder. Bird's heads have holes drilled into the eyes, probably to receive enamel. The spiral motifs end in the bird's head. Outlines have been raised in low relief by the chasing around them.

